

ACTS

General Synod 1989

ACTS

General Synod 1989

OF THE

Canadian Reformed Churches

Winnipeg, Manitoba

1989

General Synod 1989
of the Canadian Reformed Churches

Acts

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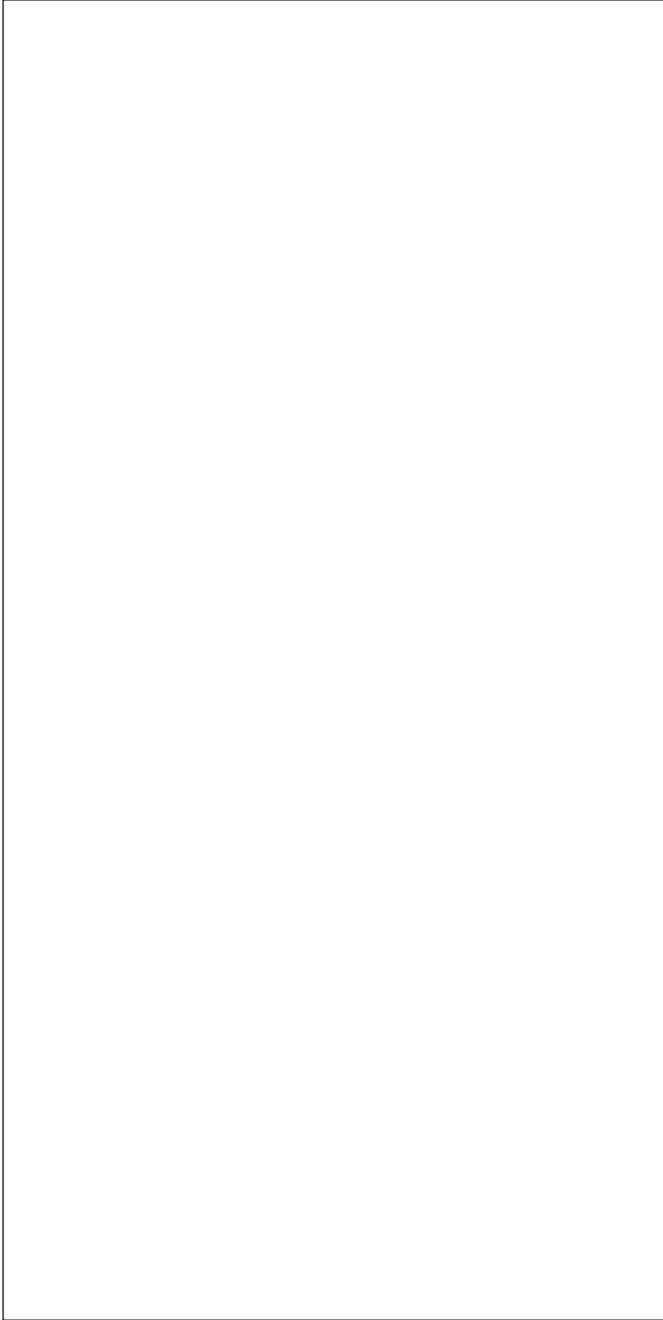
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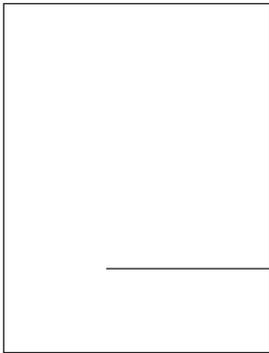
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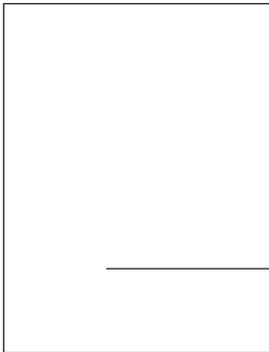


Seated (l-r): Rev. R. Aasman, Rev. P.K.A. de Boer, Rev. M. VanderWel, Rev. Cl. Stam, Prof. Dr. J. Faber, Mrs. J. Faber.
Standing (l-r): Mr. L. Stam, Mr. J.F. De Leeuw, Mr. A. Witten, Rev. J.J. Peterson, Rev. W. den Hollander, Drs. J. De Jong, Mr. W. Gortemaker, Mr. A. Poppe, Rev. B.J. Berends, Mr. A. VanEgmond, Rev. D.G.J. Agema, Mr. J. Schutten, Mr. J. van der Kolk, Mr. G.J. Nordeman.



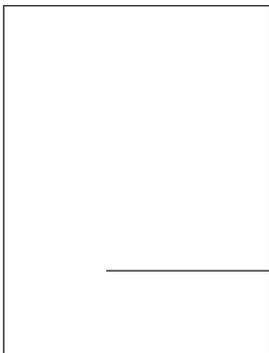
DR. J. FABER

*Retiring Professor of
Dogmatology*



DR. N.H. GOOTJES

*Appointed Professor of
Dogmatology*



DRS. J. DE JONG

*Appointed Professor of
Ecclesiology and
Diaconiology*

ACTS

of the
General Synod
of the
Canadian Reformed Churches
held at
Winnipeg, Manitoba
April 18, 1989 - May 5, 1989

MORNING SESSION - TUESDAY, APRIL 18, 1989

ARTICLE 1

Opening

On behalf of the convening church at Winnipeg, Rev. W. den Hollander calls the meeting to order. He requests the singing of Hymn 2:1,3. He reads Matthew 28:16-20 and leads in prayer.

He welcomes the delegates with the following words:

Esteemed Brothers in the Lord:

As fellow elder in the service of our Master Jesus Christ, and minister of the convening church, I welcome you most heartily to General Synod Winnipeg, 1989. I speak on behalf of the consistory and the congregation of the Church at Winnipeg when I say that we have looked forward to this day in eager anticipation and in busy preparation. It is our sincere hope that as convening church we may be good hosts to you, brothers delegates, and that you make ample use of our offer to facilitate the work of General Synod to the utmost of our abilities.

General Synod Winnipeg 1989 begins on this 18th day of April, i.e., during that time of the year in which we remember the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, His ascension and the outpouring of His Spirit. The words of the Scripture passage we read were spoken at a time when our Lord had finished His work of reconciliation on the cross and had received all authority in heaven and on earth. We find our passage at the end of the Gospel according to Matthew which began with our Lord's genealogy as Son of David and as Son of Abraham. In the gift of all authority, the promises to David are fulfilled in that our Lord became King of kings and the Lord of lords, while in the universality of His authority the promise given to Abraham is fulfilled in that He becomes a blessing to the nations. Before His ascent to the throne He gives His mandate to His disciples to proclaim this blessing to the nations and to recruit the peoples in the coming of His kingdom. Charging His office-bearers to use the Word and promising them that with His Word and Spirit He would be at no time absent from them, the exalted Lord continues His church-gathering work among the nations in the world. In that work our Lord and Saviour in heaven has made steady progress, reaching even the ends of the earth.

Brothers, delegates, ministers and elders, it is in that framework of His mandate that I would like to place your task. Together we are here as stewards of Jesus Christ, whom we confess is "the only universal Bishop and the only Head of the Church" (Art. 31 B.C.) He governs His church by His Spirit and Word. Your work as Synod is a task assigned to you by the churches, but in service to Jesus Christ and in submission to His Word. That is your mandate. But the Lord never gives a command without a promise at the same time. We recognize Him as our covenant LORD in that. We may see Mt. 28:16-20 as a renewed covenant making

of our Lord in which the words “all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me” is the prologue, on par with the prologue to the Ten Words of the Covenant; and the command to His disciples for initial teaching and continued instruction serves to establish the people in the covenant with God. Likewise, we may be assured of His covenant promise; “Lo, I am with you always to the close of the age.” Thus we receive here not only a mandate to serve our Lord for the edification of the churches, but we also receive a promise of the blessing, His support, and His presence in carrying out our mandate.

The matters on the agenda for General Synod, brothers, are very much in line with the mandate of our Lord in this text. The baptismal formula, which we find in our text, is directly connected with the Apostolic Creed, a baptismal confession, which in turn is the basis in the covenant of grace for the continued teaching which our Lord put in the charge of the church. The doctrine as contained in the Old and New Testament is the doctrine to which we must hold according to the apostolic instruction (2 Thess. 2:15) which we have summarized in the confessions of the Great Reformation for the preservation of this mandate of our Lord. These confessions will play a major role in our discussions. By the grace of God this true doctrine of salvation was preserved in our midst and passed on from one generation of office-bearers to another. As General Synod we will be called as well to entrust the instruction in this doctrine to faithful men who will be able to teach others also (2 Tim 2:2). Our exalted Lord instructed His church to continue in this teaching: “to observe all that He has commanded us.” This includes as well the faithful worship of His Name among the true gathering of His people, “So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the tradition which you were taught by us,” the Apostle Paul exhorts us in 2 Thess. 2:15. Obedience to the Lord’s will in His church-gathering work will be a fruit of thankfulness by which we may here serve the upbuilding of the churches. In both appeals concerning such obedience and in reports pursuing it with a view to the OPC and our contacts with churches abroad, we will be given the task to show our faithfulness to doctrine and confession. However, as General Synod we are called as well to heed the apostolic admonition “in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from any brother who is living in idleness and not in accord with the tradition that you received from us” (2 Thess. 3:6). Thus we find ourselves involved in an assignment of our Lord Jesus Christ which requires the utmost obedience and dedication to His authority and the total dependence on His promised presence and power.

Brothers, when the names of the delegates to General Synod Winnipeg 1989 became known, the Synod was soon labeled “the Synod of baby-boomers.” May this expression denote in one way the youthfulness of most of the delegates and on the other hand may it also reflect the faithfulness of our Lord who continues to provide and recruit a new generation of servants called to the preservation, defense and increase of His church. “Let no one despise your youth,” says the Apostle Paul, “but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.” (1 Tim. 4:12) And that the churches have not despised our youth is clearly evident from the fact that since the delegation by both Regional Synods, the churches have placed on our table many serious and heavy matters, trusting that with the help of the Lord we will be able to serve the churches. Synod Winnipeg 1989 has also been called the “appeals Synod”, which expresses also a certain amount of confidence in the integrity and sincerity of its members to deal with the appeals in a manner which is in accordance with our mandate from our Lord Jesus Christ! Brothers, may all things be done here decently and in good order, for the peace of Jerusalem, for the upbuilding of the gathering of Christ’s disciples, and to the greater glory of our Lord and Saviour, who wants to use our work for the day on which He will put all things in subjection to the Father.

He requests the singing of Hymn 2:4,5.

ARTICLE 2

Examination of Credentials

The chairman of the convening church requests brs. H. De Leeuw and A. Poppe to help examine the credentials. The primi delegates present are:

From Regional Synod East:

Ministers:

Rev. R. Aasman, Rev. D.G.J. Agema, Rev. J. De Jong, Rev. Cl. Stam

Elders:

br. G.J. Nordeman, br. J. Schutten, br. A. Van Egmond, br. A. Witten

From Regional Synod West:

Ministers:

Rev. B.J. Berends, Rev. P.K.A. de Boer, Rev. W. den Hollander, Rev. M. VanderWel

Elders:

br. J.F. De Leeuw, br. W. Gortemaker, br. A. Poppe, L. Stam

All the delegates sign an attendance list.

ARTICLE 3

Election of Officers

The following officers are elected:

Chairman: Rev. Cl. Stam

Vice-chairman: Rev. M. VanderWel

First clerk: Rev. P.K.A. de Boer

Second clerk: Rev. R. Aasman.

ARTICLE 4

Constitution of Synod

The chairman of the convening church, Rev. W. den Hollander, declares Synod constituted. He invites the officers to take their seats. The chairman, Rev. Cl. Stam, addresses Synod with the following words.

Esteemed brothers, members of General Synod 1989:

First of all, let me express gratitude to you, members of Synod, for the confidence which you have placed in us as members of the moderamen to serve Synod as its officers. With your help, and above all with God's blessing, we hope to do a good job. I am grateful for the good spirit which so far has manifested itself among us and I trust that it will continue fully.

This Synod has been referred to by Rev. den Hollander as a Synod of "baby boomers". Well, fortunately, I have beside me in Rev. M. VanderWel one of the "baby boosters", and we look to his maturity and wisdom for help and support.

This Synod has been billed as one of inexperience. Some also feel that this is a very "conservative" Synod, whatever that means. I believe that we must be a faithful Synod—faithful to the Word of God, as we have it summarized also in our Reformed confessions. We must do everything in a proper fashion, according to our adopted Church Order. Sometimes some inexperience may show, but this doesn't matter. As long as our faithfulness is evident, we will do okay.

I will not deliver a long speech here. There is something, however, which I now as your chairman feel I must stress. Ecclesiastical assemblies never stand on their own, by themselves, isolated as it were, including Synods! Each General Synod is an assembly on its own, yes, but still it stands in a historical line, in a continuity. Many items on the agenda of this Synod have served in some way on the agenda of previous Synods. Many appeals are against decisions of previous assemblies.

Our Synod 1989 must reckon with this aspect of continuity. We should not break radically with the past nor chart out new, unexpected and controversial courses, but we must stress unity in continuity.

“Bad” Synods are those which make rash decisions that have not been properly prepared and are not at all expected in the churches. I could give you some examples, but I will not. Let us pray that we do not make rash judgments but carefully weigh all the aspects of every matter to come to responsible and balanced decisions. Remember to listen carefully to each other, to see the value of the argumentation of the other, even if you do not agree with it. Treat every submission and appeal with respect, without consideration of persons. Be impartial and let justice prevail. Then we will have a good Synod and may be proud—in a humble sense—of the work which we have done.

I want to thank the convening church for all the preparations made and for the excellent reception which we have received until now: it holds great promise!

At this time I may also express gratitude to Rev. M. Van Beveren who conducted the prayer service for the work of Synod. Rev. M. Van Beveren showed that although he is retired, he can still be very active and alive on the pulpit. In response to the preaching we express the hope that in all our “observations” we may do justice to all the facts, that in all our “considerations” we follow the only norm, and so indeed may decide what is pleasing to the Lord. We thank you for your words, for the preaching of the Word, and we solicit from all your outgoing prayers.

ARTICLE 5

Greetings from Abroad

The chairman reads a letter with greetings and blessings from Die Vrije Gereformeerde Kerke van Suid Afrika.

He also reads a letter from the Free Reformed Churches of Australia with greetings and the Lord’s blessings.

Fraternal greetings are received from the Free Church of Scotland, as expressed by Rev. C. Graham and conveyed by Rev. M. Van Beveren.

It is noted that Rev. J.J. Peterson will be visiting Synod, D.V., April 24-28 as a fraternal delegate from the OPC. Rev. M. VanderWel will introduce Rev. Peterson and Rev. R. Aasman will reply to him.

It is also noted that br. Jac. van der Kolk hopes to visit Synod as a delegate from the Gereformeerde Kerken (Vrijgemaakt) in the Netherlands. Rev. B.J. Berends will introduce this delegate and Rev. M. VanderWel will reply to him.

ARTICLE 6

Time Schedule and Procedures

Synod adopts the following arrangements:

- a. The final date for incoming material for Synod is set for Wednesday, April 19, 1989, at 12:00 p.m. Central Standard Time.
- b. The time schedule will be:

| | |
|------------------|------------------------|
| Monday to Friday | 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. |
| | 2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. |
| | 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. |
| Saturdays | 9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. |

Upon the request of the Foundation for Superannuation, Synod will not convene on April 22, 1989.

Upon request of the Church at Winnipeg, Synod will not convene on the evening

of April 26, 1989.

Upon request of the Church at Carman, Synod will not convene on the evening of May 4, 1989, Ascension Day.

- c. Synod shall begin and close each day with prayer and thanksgiving in plenary sessions.
- d. Press Release will not be published until after Synod has been closed.
- e. Advisory committees shall provide each delegate with a copy of their report, plus three copies for the first clerk, before it is dealt with in plenary sessions.
- f. Copies of documents are available only to members of Synod.
- g. For all procedures the Guidelines as adopted by the General Synod of Cloverdale 1983, Acts Art. 45, will apply.

ARTICLE 7

Adoption of the Agenda

The following Agenda is adopted:

- I. Opening on behalf of the Convening Church of Winnipeg at 9:00 a.m.
- II. Examination of Credentials
- III. Election of the Officers
- IV. Constitution of the Synod
- V. Information from the Convening Church
- VI. Adoption of the Agenda
- VII. A. Arrangement of Time Schedule and Procedures
B. Letter from the Foundation for Superannuation re date for tri-annual meeting, Saturday April 22, 1989 at 9:00 a.m.
- VIII. Mail Received:
 - A. Theological College
 1. Nominations for the Board of Governors
 - a. Regional Synod East
 - b. Regional Synod West
 - c. Letter from the Church at Abbotsford, BC, re same.
 2. Board of Governors
 - a. Report to General Synod 1989
 - b. Confidential letter from the Board of Governors of the Theological College, re nominations for professors.
 - B. *Book of Praise*
 1. Report of the Standing Committee for the publication of the *Book of Praise*. (Creeds and Confessions)
 - a. Letter from the Church at Hamilton, ON, re same.
 - b. Letter from the Church at Attercliffe, ON, re same.
 - c. Letter from the Church at Chilliwack, BC, re same.
 - d. Letter from the Church at Orangeville, ON, re same.
 - e. Letter from the Church at Brampton, ON, re same.
 - f. Letter from the Church at Smithville, ON, re same.

- g. Letter from the Church at Burlington West, ON. re same.
 - h. Letter from the Church at Cloverdale, BC, re same.
 - i. Letter from the Church at Burlington East, ON. re same.
 - j. Proposals from the Church at Chatham, ON, re Art. 1 and Art. 9 of the Apostles' Creed. (plus letter dated March 7, 1989)
 - k. Letter from Rev. J. Van Rietschoten, Chatham, ON, re title Apostles' Creed.
2. Revised translation of the Canons of Dort, prepared by the Standing Committee for the publication of the *Book of Praise*.
 - a. Letter from the Church at Chatham, ON, with comments on the report of the committee on the Canons of Dort.
 - b. Letter from the Church at Brampton, ON, re same.
 - c. Letter from the Church at Ottawa, ON, re same.
 - d. Letter from the Church at Smithville, ON, re same. (see B.1.f.)
 - e. Letter from the Church at Burlington West, ON, re same. (see B.1.g.)
 - f. Letter from the Church at Cloverdale, BC, re same. (see B.1.h.)
 3.
 - a. Letter from the Church at Burlington, ON, (Ebenezer) re Acts General Synod Burlington West 1986 Art. 144, ad Form for the Public Profession of Faith and the Form for Baptism
 - b. Letter from the Maranatha Canadian Reformed Church at Surrey, BC, re Acts Smithville 1980 (Art. 129, 130), Cloverdale 1983 (Art. 145), Burlington West 1986 (Art. 144), re same.
 - c. Letter from the Covenant Canadian Reformed Church at Lower Sackville, NS. re same.
 - d. Letter from br. and sr. L. Moes, Langley, BC, re same.
 - e. Letter from the Church at Smithers, BC, re same.
 - f. Letter from the Church at Langley, BC, re same.
 4. Report of the Standing Committee for the publication of the *Book of Praise* (Report 3: Publication and Distribution; Corporate Status and Financial Matters; Hymn 1A; Further Recommendations.)
 - a. Letter from the Church at Coaldale, AB, re Hymn 1A.
 - b. Letter from the Church at Cloverdale, BC, re same. (see C.1.k.)
 - c. Letter from sr. D. Jansen, re alternative Hymn 1A.
 - d. Letter from br. R. Dijkstra, re notations for the *Book of Praise*.
- C. Church Order
1. Report of the Standing Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise*. (Church Order and Supplementary Report on the Church Order.)
 - a. Letter from the Immanuel Canadian Reformed Church of Edmonton, AB re same.
 - b. Letter from the Church at Attercliffe, ON, re same. (see B.1.b.)
 - c. Letter from the Church at Ottawa, ON, re same.
 - d. Letter from the Church at Chilliwack, BC, re same.
 - e. Letter from the Church at Brampton, ON, re same. (see B.1.e.)

- f. Letter from the Church at Chatham, ON, re same.
 - g. Letter from the Church at Smithville, ON, re same. (see B1f.)
 - h. Letter from the Church at Burlington West, ON, re same. (see B1g.)
 - i. Letter from the Church at Orangeville, ON, re same.
 - j. Letter from the Church at Grand Valley, ON, re same.
 - k. Letter from the Church at Cloverdale, BC, re same.
 - l. Letter from the Church at Burlington, ON, (Ebenezer) re same.
2. Letter from the Church at Burlington, ON, (Ebenezer) re Acts General Synod Burlington West 1986 Art. 95 ad Art. 13 C.O.
 3. Letter from the Church at Brampton, ON, re same.
 4. Letter from the Church at Fergus, ON, re same.
 5. Letter from the Immanuel Canadian Reformed Church of Edmonton, AB, re same.
 6. Letter from the Church at Burlington, ON, (Ebenezer) re Acts General Synod Burlington-West 1986 Art. 95 ad Art. 72 C.O.
- D. Protests and Appeals
1. Letter from the Church at Chatham, ON, re Acts General Synod Burlington-West 1986, Art. 186, 187.
 2. Letter from brs. M. and J. Kamphuis, Orangeville, ON, re Acts General Synod Burlington-West, 1986, Art. 184, 185.
 3. Letter from Rev. R. Boersema, Philadelphia, U.S.A. re Acts General Synod Burlington-West, 1986, Art. 185.
 4. Letter from br. R. Bosman, Orangeville, ON, re Acts General Synod Burlington West, 1986, Art. 184.
 5. Letter from br. J. Hendriks, Surrey, BC, re Acts General Synod Burlington West, 1986, Art. 184, 185.
 6. Letter from br. E.C. Baartman, Surrey, BC, re Acts General Synod Burlington West, 1986, Art. 184, 185.
 7. Letter from R. Duker, Edmonton, AB, re Acts General Synod Burlington West, 1986, Art. 184, 185.
 8. Letter from Rev. S. DeBruin, K. Duker, J. Hoeksema, H. Kippers, Edmonton, AB. re Acts General Synod Burlington-West, 1986, Art. 184, 185.
 9. Letter from br. H. de Jong, Edmonton, AB, re Acts General Synod Burlington-West 1986, Art. 184, 187.
 10. Letter from the Church at Coaldale, AB, re Acts Regional Synod West (Chilliwack, March 31 - April 3, 1987) Art. 13, 14.
 11. Letter from br. J. De Vos, Winnipeg, MB, re Acts Regional Synod West (Chilliwack, March 31 - April 3, 1987) Art. 4.
 12. Letter from the Orthodox Reformed Church, Edmonton, AB, re Acts Regional Synod West (Chilliwack, March 31 - April 3, 1987).
 13. Letter from the Church at Brampton, ON, re Acts Regional Synod East of October 15, 16 and 22, 1987, Art. 6e VI, 3.
 14. Letter from the Church at Orangeville, ON, re Acts Regional Synod East Oct. 1988, Art. 5.
 15. Letter from C. J. Burger, Grand Rapids, MI, U.S.A., re Regional Synod East, Oct. 1987.

16. Letter from G. Kruyswijk, Grand Rapids, MI, U.S.A., re Regional Synod East, Oct. 1987.
 17. Letter from br. H. Boersma, Hamilton, ON, re Classis ON. South, (Sept 11, 12, 1985) admitting the Blue Bell congregation into the Federation of the Canadian Reformed Churches.
 18. Letter from br. J. Vander Meulen, Carman, MB, re Form for the Ordination of Elders and Deacons.
 19. Letter from br. L. Van Zandwijk, Burlington, ON, re Acts General Synod Burlington-West, 1986, Art. 101, 71, 159.
 20. Letter from the Church at Langley, BC, re Acts General Synod Burlington-West, 1986, Art. 101. (inclusion of the word "Christian")
 21. Letter from the Church at Grand Rapids re availability of documentations concerning a disciplinary matter.
- E. Overtures
1. Letter from the Church at Burlington, ON, (Ebenezer) in connection with Acts General Synod Burlington-West 1986, Art. 163: consultation of professors for advice.
 2. Letter from the Church at Lynden, WA. U.S.A. re same.
 3. Letter from the Regional Synod West, Coaldale, November 8, 1988, re Art. 46 C.O.
 4. Letter from the Covenant Canadian Reformed Church at Lower Sackville, NS, re Art. 13 C.O. and the support for retired ministers and their dependents.
 5. Letter from the Church at Houston, BC, re same.
 6. Letter from the Church at Calgary, AB, re guidelines for General Synod (Cloverdale, 1983, Art. 45): quotes in foreign languages in appeals and the like.
 7. Letter from the Church at Hamilton, ON, re procedure of giving notification to the delegates of nominations for new professors.
- F. Contact - Orthodox Presbyterian Church
1. Report from the Committee for Contact with the O.P.C.
 - a. Letter from the Church at Attercliffe, ON, re same.
 - b. Letter from the Church at Chilliwack, BC, re same.
 - c. Letter from the Church at Smithville, ON, re same.
 2. Overture from the Canadian Reformed Church at Hamilton, ON, re the temporary relationship called "ecclesiastical contact" with the O.P.C.
- G. Report on the archives of the Canadian Reformed Churches
1. Report submitted by br. T. Vanden Brink, Burlington, ON.
 2. Letter of endorsement of this report from the Ebenezer Canadian Reformed Church, Burlington, ON.
 3. Letter from the Church at Burlington-West, ON, re inspection of the archives.
- H. Report of the Committee on Bible Translations
1. Letter from the Church at Smithville, ON, re same. (see B1f.)
 2. Letter from the Church at Carman, MB, re overture to give the mandate to scrutinize New King James Version.

- I. Report from the Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad.
 - 1. Letter from the Church at Hamilton, ON, re the International Conference of Reformed Churches
 - 2. Letter from the Church at Carman, MB, re Acts General Synod Burlington West, 1986. Art. 178 (Contact Free Church of Scotland)
 - J. Report Finance Committee:
 - 1. General Synod Burlington West, 1986.
 - 2. General Synod Winnipeg, 1989
 - K. Report from the Address Church, including 2 submissions.
 - L. Report from the Church appointed for General Fund.
- IX. Appointments
 - X. Censure according to Art. 44 C.O.
 - XI. Publication of the Acts of Synod.
 - XII. Financial Matters of General Synod.
 - XIII. Preparation for the next General Synod.
 - XIV. Adoption of the Acts of Synod.
 - XV. Approval of the Press Release of Synod.
 - XVI. Closing of General Synod Winnipeg 1989.

ARTICLE 8

Advisory Committees

The following Advisory Committees are appointed:

Committee I

Rev. J. De Jong (convener)
 Rev. M. VanderWel
 Elder W. Gortemaker
 Elder G.J. Nordeman

Material:

Agenda items: VIII D 17, F, G, H, I, J, K.

Committee II

Rev. B.J. Berends (convener)
 Rev. W. den Hollander
 Elder A. Poppe
 Elder A. Van Egmond

Material:

Agenda items: VIII B 1, 2, 3, D 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21.

This committee is informed to note that:

Agenda Item VIII B 1, regarding the request of the Committee that one of its members be invited to Synod, be dealt with first.

Committee III

Rev. P.K.A. de Boer (convener)
 Rev. R. Aasman
 Elder L. Stam
 Elder A. Witten

Material:

Agenda items: VIII A all, B 4, C all, D 13, 14, E all.

This committee is informed to note that:

Agenda items VIII B 1, 2, the requests that professors be invited to Synod to give advice be dealt with first.

Committee IV

Rev. D. Agema (convener)

Rev. Cl. Stam

Elder J. Schutten

Elder J.F. De Leeuw

Material:

Agenda items: D 1-12, L.

ARTICLE 9

Invitation for Dr. and Mrs. J. Faber

The moderamen proposes, seeing that Prof. Dr. J. Faber will retire and that he has faithfully worked at the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches since its foundation that

Synod decide:

to invite Prof. Dr. and Mrs. J. Faber to Synod as an appropriate way to thank Dr. J. Faber for the many years he has served the churches. They will be invited to attend Synod April 27 through May 2 or 3rd.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 10

Request

Elder L. Stam asks to be excused from Synod on May 1, 1989 through the morning of May 2, 1989, for business purposes. His request is

GRANTED

AFTERNOON SESSION - TUESDAY, APRIL 18, 1989

ARTICLE 11

Reopening

After dinner, during which time Rev. W. den Hollander, minister of the hosting church, introduces the ladies who served a delicious meal, roll call shows all the delegates are present.

ARTICLE 12

Adjournment

After the various committees have been assigned their respective meeting rooms, the chairman adjourns the meeting to give the committees the opportunity to begin their work.

EVENING SESSION - TUESDAY, APRIL 18, 1989

ARTICLE 13

Adjournment for the day

At 9:00 p.m. the delegates come together to close the day. The chairman reports that Prof. Dr. and Mrs. J. Faber have accepted the invitation and will try to make arrangements to be at Synod from April 27, 1989 to May 1, 1989. He furthermore reports that Committee IV has a proposal regarding agenda item VIII, D, 1 and Committee III has a proposal regarding agenda items VIII, E, 1, 2.

After the delegates sing Psalm 48:1 and 4 the chairman leads in thanksgiving prayer.

MORNING SESSION - WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19, 1989

ARTICLE 14

Reopening

The chairman requests the singing of Hymn 37:3,4. He reads Galatians 5:13-26 and leads in prayer.

Roll call shows that all members of Synod are present.

ARTICLE 15

Adoption of the Acts

The Acts, Articles 1-13 are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 16

Committee III presents:

Agenda Items VIII, E, 1, 2

A. MATERIAL

1. Letter from the Church at Burlington-East in connection with Acts General Synod Burlington-West 1986, Art. 163
2. Letter from the Church at Lynden, WA, re same.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. The Church at Burlington-East proposes "that it will be made part of the rules for meetings of our general synods that in matters which touch the subjects which are taught by them the professors could be invited to be present in an advisory capacity and that future general synods will avail themselves of their advice whenever this would be wise and feasible".
2. The Church at Lynden, WA, petitions General Synod:
 - i. to invite the professors as advisors to General Synod, and to request their advice on those subjects which fall in the disciplines which they are appointed to teach at the College, and furthermore,
 - ii. to appoint a committee to investigate how we as federation of churches can best benefit from the presence of the professors at synods. Perhaps this could be done in light of the report which will be presented to the next Synod of our sister churches in the Netherlands by a similar committee appointed by General Synod of Spakenburg-Noord 1987

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. In the Guidelines for Synod (Acts of Synod 1983, Art. 45) Art III, A, 9 which reads, "If anyone has been requested to advise Synod on any matter, he shall address Synod on this point only when asked to do so by the chair" it is

implied that the Advisory Committee can request and receive advisors. These advisors may also be present at plenary session and speak only when asked to do so by the chair.

2. In Art 48 of Acts of Synod 1986, Synod gave advisory committees permission to take up contact with members of standing committees, "if it is deemed profitable in the preparation of an advisory report".
3. We should not conclude from Art. 163 of Acts of Synod 1986 that a professor may never be present during plenary session to give advice when called upon to do so.
4. Even though our Dutch sister churches may have made more use of the professors of theology at general synods, it has not been proven that professors are always required at synods and that therefore we need additions to the "Guidelines for Synod".

D. RECOMMENDATION

Not to make any changes in the "Guidelines for Synod" because the present "Guidelines for Synod" adopted in 1983 do not prevent professors from giving advice to advisory committees or plenary sessions when requested to do so.

MOTION TO AMEND

The following motion to amend the Committee proposal is made and duly seconded:

Article 163 of Acts Synod 1986 does not state or imply that professors were not called upon for advice by the advisory committee; to add this as consideration "4" and make the present consideration "4" into "5."

DEFEATED

The Committee's proposal is

ADOPTED

EVENING SESSION - WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19, 1989

ARTICLE 17

Reopening

The chairman requests the singing of Psalm 107:1. The roll call shows that Rev. J. De Jong is absent. The chairman informs Synod that Rev. J. De Jong is absent because the matters to be dealt with concern his person.

ARTICLE 18

In restricted closed session Committee III reports on agenda item VIII A. 2, b, the appointment of professors for the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

(See Articles 22 and 25)

ARTICLE 19

Adjournment

The chairman requests Rev. M. VanderWel to close the evening. After the assembly sings Psalm 92:1, 2, Rev. M. VanderWel leads in prayer.

MORNING SESSION - THURSDAY, APRIL 20, 1989

ARTICLE 20

Reopening

The chairman requests the assembly to sing Psalm 36:2,3. He reads Matthew 16:13-28 and leads in prayer.

The roll call shows that all delegates are present.

ARTICLE 21

Adoption of the Acts

The Acts, Articles 14-19 are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 22

Information

In closed-restricted session the chairman passes on some information regarding the appointment of professors for the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

(See Article 25)

ARTICLE 23

Adjournment

Synod is adjourned for committee work.

AFTERNOON SESSION - THURSDAY, APRIL 20, 1989

ARTICLE 24

Reopening

The chairman requests the assembly to sing Psalm 135:1,6.

Roll call shows that Rev. J. De Jong is absent. It is noted that he is absent because the matters to be dealt with involve his person.

ARTICLE 25

In closed-restricted session the following proposal is presented:

Committee III presents:

Agenda VIII, A, 2, b

A. MATERIAL

Letter from the Board of Governors of the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches with proposal appointments of a new professor of:

- i. Dogmatology
- ii. Ecclesiology and Diaconiology.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. The Board of Governors presents the following:
 - a. The information that Dr. J. Faber, professor of Dogmatology has made known his desire to retire, after he has reached the normal retirement age of 65, and that his retirement will be effective as of January 1, 1990.
 - b. The information that Dr. K. Deddens, professor of Ecclesiology and Diaconiology, hopes to return to the Netherlands at the end of May 1990, in accordance with the terms of his appointment.
2. The Board of Governors requests Synod in accordance with the advice of the

Senate of the College and pursuant to the Canadian Reformed Theological College Act, 1981, Section 5 (11) (d), to direct the Board to appoint:

- a. as professor of Dogmatology as per September 1, 1989, Dr. Nicolaas Hendrik Gootjes of Pusan, Republic of Korea.
- b. as professor of Ecclesiology and Diaconiology as per May 1, 1990, Rev. Jacobus De Jong of Burlington South, Ontario, Canada.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. a. On the advice of the Senate, the Board of Governors has addressed the 1989 General Synod with a recommendation to direct the Board of Governors to appoint Dr. N. H. Gootjes of Pusan, Republic of Korea, as professor of Dogmatology as per September 1, 1989.
b. From the information given by the Board of Governors, it appears that Dr. N.H. Gootjes is qualified to occupy the chair of professor of Dogmatology in faithfulness to the Holy Scripture as confessed in the Three Forms of Unity of the Canadian Reformed Churches.
2. a. On the advice of the Senate, the Board of Governors has addressed the 1989 General Synod with a recommendation to direct the Board of Governors to appoint Rev. J. De Jong of Burlington South, Ontario, Canada as professor of Ecclesiology and Diaconiology as per May 1, 1990.
b. From the information given by the Board of Governors, it appears that Rev. J. De Jong is qualified to occupy the chair of professor of Ecclesiology and Diaconiology in faithfulness to the Holy Scripture as confessed in the Three Forms of Unity of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide:

to direct the Board of Governors of the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches to appoint:

- a. Dr. N.H. Gootjes of Pusan, Republic of Korea, as professor of Dogmatology as per September 1, 1989.
- b. Rev. J. De Jong of Burlington South, Ontario, Canada, as professor of Ecclesiology and Diaconiology as per May 1, 1990.

MOTION TO AMEND

The following motion to amend is made and duly seconded:

To change the date of recommendation “b” from May 1, 1990 to March 1, 1990.

DEFEATED

The Committee proposal is

ADOPTED
(See Articles 26, 29, 101, 168)

ARTICLE 26

Announcement

The chairman suggests that a public announcement of the appointments to professors be made during the evening session. However, upon the ruling of the chair, Rev. Drs. J. De Jong is invited into the meeting. He is informed and congratulated with his appointment. The chairman informs him that it is customary to receive ten days to come to a decision.

ARTICLE 27

Adjournment

After the singing of Psalm 81:1, Synod is adjourned to continue committee work.

EVENING SESSION - THURSDAY, APRIL 20, 1989

ARTICLE 28

Reopening

The chairman requests the assembly to sing Psalm 86:2,4.

Roll call shows that all members are present.

The chairman expresses a word of welcome to the guests.

ARTICLE 29

Announcement

The chairman publicly announces the appointments of Prof. Dr. N.H. Gootjes as professor of Dogmatology and Rev. Drs. J. De Jong as professor of Ecclesiology and Diaconiology. He addresses Rev. Drs. J. De Jong with the following words:

Esteemed Drs. J. De Jong,

It is a sincere pleasure for me as chairman of General Synod 1989 to congratulate you publicly with the fact that you have been appointed as professor of Ecclesiology and Diaconiology per May 1, 1990, in the forthcoming vacancy of Dr. K. Deddens. It is a pleasure for me personally, for our acquaintance of one another goes back very far to our early youth. We grew up in the same town, attended the same church, and went through the same schools. It is even more a pleasure for me to address you on behalf of Synod, for we have found in you a dedicated academician, a sincere office-bearer, and a qualified teacher.

We had some discussion on the fact that with this appointment you would have to switch in your field of expertise from Dogmatology to Diaconiology from what is perceived to be more theoretical to what is seen as being more practical — but we expressed confidence that you will be able to do this and may grow into this new field more and more. The Lord willing, many years still lie ahead of you, and we hope and pray that you may serve the churches as professor for many years to come. You have in your studies made a solid beginning, and we wish you the Lord's blessing also as you prepare the final text of your dissertation and its defense in Kampen. You know, as we all do, that doctrine and life are one, "theory" and "praxis" are in our lives never to be separated. Your studies in dogmatics and in the history of dogma may help you greatly in Ecclesiology and lead you into a further understanding of the diaconiological disciplines.

Diaconiology has been called "the crown of the theological study". May you enthusiastically seek to place this crown, the finishing touch as it were, on the preparation of many students in their training for the ministry.

I say these things perhaps somewhat presumptuously, so it may sound, as if you have already accepted this appointment. You have, of course, the right to con-

sider it — and we expect your reply within ten days — but we trust and we hope that the answer will be positive. What may sound presumptuous on our part today is only our expression of joy and meant as encouragement to you.

We congratulate also your wife, your parents — whom I also know personally — and your parents-in-law. It will be a great joy for them to hear of this appointment, I'm sure. I may assure you that the Faculty of our College and the Board of Governors are delighted with this decision of Synod.

We hope Rev. De Jong that your many “professorial” deliberations will not make your “synodical” deliberations impossible, but should you seem somewhat absentminded in the next few days, we will forgive you.

May the Lord guide you with His wisdom and enable you to come to a definite decision which we may hear in due time.

Thank you.

Rev. Drs. J. De Jong replies with the following words:

Esteemed Brothers:

Although I have had some discussion with faculty and board officials about this appointment, I realize that it only becomes effective with your decision here today. I am honoured by this appointment and I express my gratitude to the churches for the confidence that they have shown towards me in judging me worthy for this task. At the present time it still seems for me quite a formidable one, yet the LORD promises His help and guidance in all things. I promise that I shall give your decision due consideration, and I pray for God's help and wisdom in this consideration. I also solicit your prayers, that this, too, may serve the well-being of the churches, and the coming of God's kingdom.

Thank you.

ARTICLE 30

Committee IV presents:

Agenda Item VIII D 1

MATERIAL

Letter of Ebenezer Canadian Reformed Church of Chatham, re: Acts of General Synod Burlington 1986, Art. 186, 187.

MOTION TO AMEND

A motion to amend the Advisory Committee's Report so that it would read as follows is made and duly seconded:

A. MATERIAL

Letter of Ebenezer Canadian Reformed Church of Chatham, re: Acts of General Synod Burlington 1986, Art. 186, 187.

B: OBSERVATION

The Church at Chatham requests Synod to “register” its objections of the fact that appeals of brs. J. Werkman and H. De Jong were declared admissible by Synod 1989, even though they had withdrawn themselves from the Church at Edmonton.

C. CONSIDERATION

An ecclesiastical assembly is not called to register objections.

D. RECOMMENDATION

To declare the submission of the Church at Chatham inadmissible.

DEFEATED

The Advisory Committee takes its report back for reconsideration and revision.

(see Article 34)

ARTICLE 31

Adjournment

The chairman requests br. W. Gortemaker to close the day. He requests the assembly to sing Psalm 111:1,2 and leads in prayer.

MORNING SESSION - FRIDAY, APRIL 21, 1989

ARTICLE 32

Reopening

The chairman requests the assembly to sing Psalm 89:1,7. He reads Ezekiel 36:22-32 and leads in prayer.

The roll call shows that all delegates are present.

ARTICLE 33

Adoption of Acts

Articles 20-31 of the Acts are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 34

Committee IV presents:

Agenda Item VIII, D, 1

A. MATERIAL

Letter of Ebenezer Canadian Reformed Church of Chatham, re: Acts of General Synod Burlington 1986, Art. 186, 187.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. The Church at Chatham objects to the fact that appeals of brs. J. Werkman and H. De Jong were declared admissible, even though they had withdrawn themselves from the Church at Edmonton.
2. Synod 1986 declared the appeals admissible since these brothers withdrew "owing to difficulties directly related to the issues of the appeal" and in the hope that it might lead to reconciliation with the consistory of the Immanuel Church at Edmonton.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. The Church at Chatham does not appeal decisions of Synod 1986, but wishes "to register" its objection to Synod dealing with appeals from members who have withdrawn themselves from the church.
2. When members withdraw from the federation of churches they indeed disrupt the way of appeal as accepted in Art. 31 C.O. However, special circumstances may allow dealing with an appeal to a major assembly.

D. RECOMMENDATION

Synod decide:

with the above considerations, Synod takes note of the objection of the Church at Chatham.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 35

Adjournment

Synod is adjourned for committee work.

EVENING SESSION - FRIDAY APRIL 21, 1989

ARTICLE 36

Reopening

The chairman requests the assembly to sing Psalm 92:1,6.

Roll call shows that all the delegates are present.

The chairman welcomes the guests. He informs the assembly that the Advisory Committee II has a report on Agenda item VIII B 1 a-i, and Committee IV is ready with Agenda item VIII D 11. He also provides the delegates with a tentative schedule for next week's work.

ARTICLE 37

Committee III presents:

Agenda Items VIII, E, 4, 5

A. MATERIAL

1. Letter from the Covenant Canadian Reformed Church at Lower Sackville, NS., re Art. 13 Church Order and the support for retired ministers and their dependents.
2. Letter from the Church at Houston, BC, re same

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. The Covenant Church at Lower Sackville "has several concerns regarding the present method of providing for the needs of retiring ministers and their dependents. Therefore, General Synod is overtured to study and if necessary change Church Order Article 13"
2. The Covenant Church at Lower Sackville overtures General Synod to study "the whole matter of supporting retired ministers (or establish a committee with a mandate to report to the next synod)"
3. The Church at Houston expresses her agreement with the submission from Lower Sackville, quoting: "the system as it now functions means that the smaller churches subsidize the larger churches with retired ministers through the superannuation fund. The churches contribute a larger share per communicant member but do not stand to benefit from the fund".

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. A principle of article 13 C.O. is that a minister is bound to and supported by the church which he served last. However, this article does not preclude that all the churches could become involved in sharing the financial burden for retired ministers.
2. The Church at Lower Sackville and the Church at Houston could approach the Foundation for Superannuation with their concerns and suggestions in order to have a more equitable arrangement drawn up for the support of retired ministers.

D. RECOMMENDATION

Synod decide:

that it is not necessary to change Art. 13 C.O. for the reasons mentioned by the

Church at Lower Sackville and the Church at Houston and that any concerns and suggestions concerning the retirement of ministers and/or the care of their families should be presented to the Foundation for Superannuation.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 38

Committee IV presents:

Agenda Item VIII, D, 7

A. MATERIAL

Letter from Mr. R. Duker.

B. ADMISSIBILITY

1. Art. 31 C.O. implies that an appellant is a member of the churches against whose decision he appeals and that he maintains the bond with these churches during the time of appeal despite alleged wrongs.
2. It is evident from the submission of Mr. R. Duker that he ceased to be a member of the Canadian Reformed Churches because of decisions with respect to appeals made to General Synod 1986. It is inconsistent with the rule and spirit of Art. 31 C.O. to withdraw from the churches and appeal decisions of major assemblies.

C. RECOMMENDATION

Synod decide:

that therefore this submission is inadmissible.

MOTION TO AMEND

The following motion to amend the Advisory Committee's proposal is presented and duly seconded:

To add the following Consideration

3. In his appeal Mr. R. Duker speaks of wrongs that may still be corrected, but he does not make clear that a correction of these wrongs will bring him back to the Canadian Reformed Churches.

DEFEATED

The committee report is

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 39

Adjournment

The chairman wishes all the Synod members a pleasant time of relaxation and a blessed Sunday. Noting that brothers have also arrived from elsewhere in connection with a meeting of the Foundation of Superannuation to be held, D.V., tomorrow, he wishes all those involved with this meeting strength and wisdom in all their discussions and deliberations.

He requests br. J. Schutten to close the day. Br. J. Schutten requests the delegates to sing Hymn 40:1,5 and leads in prayer.

MORNING SESSION - MONDAY, APRIL 24, 1989

ARTICLE 40

Reopening

The chairman requests the delegates to sing Psalm 139:1,4. He reads Ezekiel 37:1-

14 and leads in prayer. He welcomes the delegates back to another week of hard work and wishes them all the strength needed to do it to the glory of the Lord and for the edification of His church.

The roll call shows that all the delegates are present.

ARTICLE 41

Expression of Appreciation for Dr. and Mrs. J. Faber

The moderamen makes the following proposal:

Synod decide:

to offer Dr. and Mrs. J. Faber a trip to visit the sister churches in Australia through a special gift.

Grounds:

1. This may express the appreciation of the churches for twenty-one years of faithful and dedicated service.
2. This may enhance the bond between the College and the Australian churches.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 42

Adoption of the Acts

The Acts, Articles 32-39 are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 43

Adjournment

Synod is adjourned for committee work.

EVENING SESSION - MONDAY, APRIL 24, 1989

ARTICLE 44

Reopening

The chairman reopens the meeting by requesting the delegates and visitors to sing Psalm 1:1,2.

Roll call shows that all the delegates are present.

ARTICLE 45

Welcome

Rev. M. VanderWel welcomes Rev. J. J. Peterson of San Antonio, Texas as a delegate from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church with the following words:

Esteemed Rev. Peterson:

As I remarked earlier this afternoon, it is my pleasure to bid you a hearty welcome as a delegate of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church to General Synod 1989 of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

The fact that you have met with several of us before, also within the official framework of a General Synod, must give you the feeling, I trust, that you are not a stranger anymore in our midst. So, at least, it is felt from our side! After General Synod Cloverdale in 1983 had been closed, I still remember, that some of my colleagues spoke of their meeting with "Texas Jack". That may sound rather disrespectful, but please, take it as an indication of the free and friendly communication

which we were allowed to have with you personally at that time.

But Rev. Peterson, also in your quality of being a representative of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, you may feel “related” to us. As we both know, the relationship between our churches has not yet developed into a full sister-church relationship. There are still the so-called “divergencies”. It is not my task to go into that now. This is just a word of welcome. But the relationship which we do have is of such a character that there is a mutual appreciation for each other’s endeavour to work for and maintain the Reformed and Scriptural distinctiveness in the life of our churches.

Br. Peterson, we wish you a pleasant stay in our midst and may also this contact lead to a further growing together in the service of the LORD!

Thank you.

The chairman extends a special welcome to Rev. S. Allison, a minister of the Reformed Church in the United States who is visiting Synod:

I want to mention that we have a special guest in our audience, Rev. S. Allison of the Hosmer Reformed Church in the United States (RCUS) of Eureka, South Dakota. Rev. S. Allison is pastor in the RCUS, formerly known as the “Eureka Classis”. This church which is generally of German origin has the Heidelberg Catechism as its confessional standard. Some of our ministers have visited this Classis or these churches in the past. We now welcome a visitor from among them in return. Rev. Allison is here as a private visitor and he cannot officially address us. There are, as yet, no official contacts between us and the RCUS. We extend a hearty welcome to Rev. S. Allison and welcome him to visit all the open sessions of Synod and the committees which may invite him. We hope that in this way he may receive a proper view of our churches, and perhaps these visits will lead towards the establishment of official contacts and the full expression of the unity of faith.

ARTICLE 46

Committee IV presents:

Agenda Item VIII, D, 8

A. MATERIAL

Letter from Rev. S. DeBruin c.s. re Acts General Synod 1986, Art. 184.

B. ADMISSIBILITY

1. Art. 31 C.O. implies that an appellant is a member of the churches against whose decision he appeals and that he maintains the bond with these churches during the time of appeal despite alleged wrong.
2. It is evident that the appellants have ceased to be members of the Canadian Reformed Churches and have joined the federation of the Orthodox Christian Reformed Churches (July 1988).
3. It is incumbent upon the appellants to follow the accepted way of the Church Order according to Art. 31 to seek justice and so to restore the relations with the Canadian Reformed Churches, but not to place the onus on General Synod to restore this unity.

D. RECOMMENDATION

Synod decide:

therefore to declare this submission inadmissible.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 47

Point of Order

It is asked whether those delegates who have been involved with decisions at Regional Synod which are being appealed to General Synod may be involved with the discussion and voting of these matters.

Synod decide:

that no one may vote when a matter involves a church of which he is a member or when it involves his own person.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 48

Committee IV presents:

Agenda Item VIII,D,12

A. MATERIAL

Letter from the Orthodox Reformed Church of Edmonton (ORC) re Regional Synod West 1987, Art. 10, 15 and 16 (not specified).

B. ADMISSIBILITY

1. Art. 31 C.O. implies that an appellant is a member of the churches against whose decision he appeals and that he maintains the bond with these churches during the time of appeal despite alleged wrongs.
2. The Orthodox Reformed Church has joined the federation of Orthodox Christian Reformed Churches and by this act definitely severed the ties with the Canadian Reformed Churches. Synod, therefore, could declare this appeal inadmissible.
3. Since this is an appeal against a decision of a Regional Synod -which has not been dealt with by a General Synod and as such is a new matter - Synod may deal with it as an exceptional case.
4. Response to the appeal of the Orthodox Reformed Church at Edmonton is desirable in order to make clear whether all things were done in accordance with the Word of God and the accepted Church Order in view of allegations of being judged: "rashly and unheard."

C. RECOMMENDATION

Synod decide:

to declare this submission admissible.

ADOPTED

Rev. P.K.A. de Boer and Elder A. Poppe abstain from voting because this matter involves the Church at Carman.

ARTICLE 49

D. OBSERVATIONS

1. The ORC appeals the fact that Regional Synod West 1987 failed
 - a. to deal "fully and properly" with all considerations presented by the ORC in its first appeal to Regional Synod West 1987, because these considerations/grounds do not appear anywhere in the observations of Regional Synod and there is no evidence in the Acts that they have been properly dealt with.
 - b. to deal with the grounds mentioned in the second appeal to Regional Synod West 1987 and so failed to deal properly with the appeal itself.

2. The ORC contends that its side of the controversy was not heard as required by God's Word in the ninth commandment (L.D. 43, H.C.)
3. The ORC requests General Synod 1989 to carry out what Regional Synod West 1987 allegedly failed to do, namely deal with the complete grounds presented by the ORC at Regional Synod West 1987.
4.
 - a. Regional Synod West 1987 did give the complete text of grounds as summarized by the consistory of the ORC in its first appeal (Acts Regional Synod West 1987, Art. 10.3.a-f) and responded to these grounds in 5 considerations.
 - b. There is no record in the Acts of Regional Synod West 1987 which separately lists all the grounds adduced by the ORC consistory to support its second appeal. There are 15 considerations given by Regional Synod West 1987 (Acts, art. 15 and 16) which were adduced to support the decision by the Regional Synod West 1987 to deny the appeal of the ORC.

E. CONSIDERATIONS

1. Although the Acts of the Regional Synod West 1987 do not show a systematic point by point discussion of and reaction to the grounds adduced by the ORC, this does not prove in itself that these grounds were not properly addressed at Regional Synod.
2. Regional Synod West 1987 did deal with the grounds adduced by the ORC in its first appeal (Considerations 1-5, Acts, art. 10):
 - a. Ground 1 of the ORC is dealt with in Consideration 1 of Regional Synod
 - b. Ground 2 is dealt with in Consideration 2
 - c. Grounds 3, 4, 5 are dealt with in Considerations 1, 3, 5
 - d. Ground 6 of the ORC is dealt with in Consideration 4.

It appears that all the grounds in the first appeal of the ORC were addressed by Regional Synod West 1987.

3. The considerations of Regional Synod West 1987 given in the Acts, Art. 15, 1-5 and Art. 16, 1-10 indicate that Regional Synod dealt with the matters raised in the second appeal of the ORC, namely:
 - a. Carman's decision not to accept Rev. S. DeBruin c.s. as delegates at Classis (Appeal Consideration 1, Acts Regional Synod West 1987 Art.15, Considerations 1 - 5)
 - b. the legality of the "suspension" of the office-bearers of the Immanuel Canadian Reformed Church (ground 1 in the appeal of the ORC). This was done, however, in terms of a "provisional release" (Consideration 5 of Regional Synod)
 - c. the alleged "emergency situation" in the Immanuel congregation (Appeal ORC ground 8) by pointing to the specific facts which brought about this situation (Consideration 1 - 4, Regional Synod)
 - d. the fact that Rev. S. DeBruin c.s. "liberated" themselves from the Immanuel Canadian Reformed Church (appeal ORC grounds 13 - 16). However, Regional Synod West 1987 concluded that a "liberation" without going the way of Art. 31 C.O. is to be interpreted indeed as a "withdrawal" from the federation of the Canadian Reformed Churches (Considerations 8 and 9, Regional Synod).
4. From the documents available to General Synod it does not appear that the ORC was condemned "rashly and unheard" against the requirements of the ninth commandment, but that all matters were duly considered.

5. A major assembly is not required to do what a minor assembly may have failed to do, but can at most state - if so convinced - that a minor assembly failed to do its work properly. From the documents available to General Synod this is not the case.

RECOMMENDATION

Synod decide:

not to accede to the requests of the Orthodox Reformed Church at Edmonton.

A motion to amend is made and duly seconded to make an addition to Considerations 3, a, so that it would read:

3. a. Carman's decision not to accept Rev. DeBruin c.s. as delegates at Classis (a decision which was accepted by Classis immediately after it was constituted) (Appeal, Consideration 1, Acts, Regional Synod West 1987, Art. 15, Considerations 1 - 5).

DEFEATED

The Committee proposal is

ADOPTED

Rev. P.K.A. de Boer and Elder A. Poppe abstain from voting because this matter involves the Church at Carman.

ARTICLE 50

Excused

Rev. W. den Hollander and the chairman, Rev. Cl. Stam, excuse themselves to pick up Prof. Dr. and Mrs. N.H. Gootjes from the airport. The vice-chairman takes over the chair.

ARTICLE 51

Committee IV presents:

Agenda Item VIII, D, 11

A. MATERIAL

letter from br. J. DeVos re Regional Synod West 1987, Art.4 (not specified).

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. Appellant asks General Synod to declare a ruling of Regional Synod West 1987 (Art.4) invalid.
2. Regional Synod ruled to declare an appeal by br. J. DeVos inadmissible on the following grounds:
 - a. the appellant has not been personally wronged by a decision of this classis
 - b. the brother should have addressed his concern to his own consistory.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. Regional Synod West 1987 did not mention Art. 31 C.O. in the Acts, but the wording of the denial of the appeal clearly alludes to this Article.
2. Art. 31 C.O. does not necessarily restrict appeals to those who have been personally wronged. See Acts Toronto 1974. (Acts, Article 123, Consideration 2).
3. An appeal against a decision of a minor assembly may be directed to the major assembly (Art. 31 C.O.).

D. RECOMMENDATION

Synod decide:

1. the appeal of br. J. DeVos to Regional Synod West 1987 was denied on improper grounds.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 52

Adjournment

The chairman requests br. A. Witten to close the day. Br. A. Witten requests the delegates and visitors to sing Psalm 19:1,3 after which he leads in prayer.

MORNING SESSION - TUESDAY APRIL 25, 1989

ARTICLE 53

Reopening

The chairman requests the delegates and guests to sing Psalm 133:1,2. He reads I John 4:1-12 and leads in prayer. He extends a word of welcome to all present noting that the auditorium is filled with students from both Immanuel Christian School of Winnipeg and Dufferin Christian School of Carman. Roll call is held showing that all delegates are present.

ARTICLE 54

Adoption of the Acts

Articles 40-52 of the Acts are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 55

The chairman welcomes Prof. Dr. and Mrs. N.H. Gootjes with the following words:

Esteemed Dr. and Mrs. Gootjes:

On behalf of Synod, let me first of all express our gratefulness that you could arrive safely in Winnipeg after what has surely been a long and tiresome journey from Pusan, Korea. We are happy that the Lord has protected you on your way and granted you to be in our midst here at General Synod. We hope that in the short time allotted us together we may be able to get to know each other somewhat and especially that you may get a good impression of what lives amongst us as members of Synod and in the Canadian Reformed Churches.

We congratulate you sincerely with your appointment as professor of Dogmatology at our Theological College in the forthcoming vacancy due to the retirement of Dr. J. Faber. You knew that we would be discussing your possible appointment, and now it has become a reality. Our discussions of your nomination centered largely on the fact that for most of us you are unknown, and we wanted to avail ourselves of as much information as we could manage to gather. But all the information received before and during Synod increased the confidence that we have in your person and ability. And so it is with great happiness and full confidence that Synod has accepted the nomination of the Board of Governors and directed them officially to appoint you to this position. I understand that today you have received the official letter of appointment from the Board of Governors, and we inform you that we look forward to your definite answer within ten days of the receipt of this letter.

Although the other members of Synod did not know you personally, I do have the honour and privilege of having studied in Kampen also when you arrived there as student. We were together members of the same "Dispuut", whose name I shall not mention here but whose electrifying effect has certainly manifested itself in both our lives. I must say that I recall a somewhat shy and quiet young man, whom

I never would have placed in the bustle of Pusan, South Korea, but that was due perhaps to my own youthful brashness at that time. I do remember that all your peers already then regarded you as a gifted and meticulous student, and this has shown to be true in your subsequent studies and work.

We admire your courage and that of your wife to have gone as a young family to South Korea to take up the difficult and, we presume, sometimes exasperating life in an oriental nation with its different attitudes and customs. You must at times have felt very lonely and isolated there, even though the Batteau family was also working with you in the same city. Also the work at the Theological Seminary there will not have been easy. You are a “continental European” Reformed theologian who had to work in an oriental surrounding geared towards American Presbyterianism. In the Canadian Reformed Churches which have also come out of the Dutch Reformed tradition, we have some serious concerns about aspects of the Presbyterian way of thinking. I refer here to our well-known list of divergencies between the Three Forms of Unity and the Westminster Standards, between the Church Order of Dort and the Presbyterian Form of Government as it is generally applied. While we recognize the Presbyterian confessions to be of Reformed character, still we feel that on some key matters further discussion is required for the well-being and the future of the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ. Since you, Dr. Gootjes, are well-acquainted with both “worlds”, we trust that you as a committed Reformed theologian will be able to give wise and solid direction in these matters.

Should you come to Canada, you will experience it in many ways as a homecoming. Canada is not the Netherlands — and we know that you were looking forward to repatriation — but Canada (and especially — the locals will forgive me now — southern Ontario!) is the next best thing to being there! We are sure, sr. Gootjes, that you and your children will soon feel at home in the midst of our churches and in the congregation where you would be living. By God’s grace we have also in the Hamilton area excellent schools with a dedicated Reformed staff, and you will discover that living among us has many attractive elements. Immigration to Canada though initially difficult perhaps — has led for all of us here to great blessings! Also Dr. and Mrs. Faber and their family will attest to this!

Most of all, our churches need and seek qualified Reformed professors who can work in the training for the ministry of the Word. Our College, established in 1968, has been a great blessing for us. All but two of our ministers at Synod graduated from the Theological College at Hamilton and in our federation there are 26 graduates of Hamilton working as active ministers. Also the Free Reformed Churches of Australia have received three of Hamilton’s graduates as their ministers. The College in Hamilton has since 1968 gained much respect in other circles as well. I think here especially of the Free Reformed Churches in Canada. There lies in Hamilton, Dr. Gootjes, an important and exciting task for a Reformed theologian, and we ask you to come and help to strengthen the ranks of those already working there!

So on behalf of Synod, as I welcome you in our midst, I appeal to you to consider this appointment with serious consideration, and I express the wish that your answer may be positive for us. We pledge that we will assist you in every way we can and that we will provide honorably for your needs as is befitting for a minister of the Word. We expect from you that you will teach the true and full doctrine of the Word of God to our students and in our churches and will vigorously defend and promote the Reformed confession in our midst and beyond, and so we trust that our mutual association will be a blessing for all of us, for the churches, for the college, and for you.

May the Lord give you and your wife wisdom in your deliberations, unity in your conclusions, and peace of mind in your decisions.

Thank you.

He requests the assembly to rise and sing Psalm 134:1,3.
Prof. Dr. N.H. Gootjes addresses Synod with the following words:

Esteemed Chairman, Beloved Brothers in the Lord and Guests:

I am grateful for the appointment that you have made. I am grateful for the trust you have shown in me. I feel it to be an honour. As a student (freshman), I remember when Dr. J. Faber was appointed as professor of Dogmatology in the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches and had never thought that I might be appointed to become his successor.

It was when our second son Albert had just been born that I received the call to be sent as missionary professor to Pusan, Korea. It was a difficult decision because in a way the work of a minister is more rewarding than that of a professor. A minister may serve the LORD more directly among His people. It was, however, decided that we should serve the Lord in Pusan, Korea, to help them in the ministry of the Word. While there I became well-acquainted with the Westminster Standards and viewed them as one who has grown up and been taught in the Reformed Confessions of the Continent. I will not go further into that now because it will mean a lecture. We had a good time in Korea and thought that some day we would return to the Netherlands and serve one of the congregations as a minister of the Word. This appointment interrupts what we thought would happen.

At this time I am not yet sure what I will do. On the one hand I would like to serve as a minister in a local congregation and on the other hand as a professor one receives more opportunities to study which I really enjoy. I trust that the Lord will give guidance to come to a decision. Pray for us, keeping in mind what is good for the churches, for our family that the work of God may progress until Christ returns.

Thank you.

The chairman requests the assembly to sing Psalm 100:2,4.

ARTICLE 56

Committee II presents:

Agenda Items VIII, B,1, a-i

A. MATERIAL:

1. Report 1 from the Standing Committee for the *Book of Praise*
2. Letter from the Church at Hamilton, ON.
3. Letter from the Church at Attercliffe, ON.
4. Letter from the Church at Chilliwack, BC.
5. Letter from the Church at Orangeville, ON.
6. Letter from the Church at Brampton, ON.
7. Letter from the Church at Smithville, ON.
8. Letter from the Church at Burlington West, ON.
9. Letter from the Church at Cloverdale, BC.
10. Letter from the Church at Burlington East, ON.

After some discussion the Committee takes its advisory report back for reconsideration.

(see Article 60)

ARTICLE 57

Adjournment

Synod is adjourned for committee work.

EVENING SESSION - TUESDAY, APRIL 25, 1989

ARTICLE 58

Reopening

The chairman requests the assembly to sing Psalm 87:1,4. He welcomes the guests. Roll call shows that all delegates are present.

ARTICLE 59

Address Rev. J. J. Peterson

The chairman gives Rev. J. J. Peterson, who is delegated to Synod from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, the opportunity to address Synod. Rev. J. J. Peterson addresses Synod with the following words:

Brothers in the Lord Jesus Christ,

It is a great pleasure to be with you again. The welcome of Brother VanderWel to "Texas Jack" last night made me feel even more at home; I certainly experienced the fellowship of the saints from the moment I saw Brother den Hollander at the airport; and again when I renewed acquaintances on arrival here and also met those of you whom I had not met before; but "Texas Jack", that, as we say, was great!

I had the privilege of being at Cloverdale in 1983. I have also met with your Committee on Contact several times, which included being at the installation of Dr. Faber. I also had the privilege of being in Edinburgh in 1985 as an observer of the ICRC and am looking forward to the meeting in Vancouver in June.

It seems I almost see more of you than the OPC! Those have been and continue to be enriching experiences in my life. There is a growing number of us in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, the OPC, who share with you the redemptive-historical understanding of the Word of God. I am preaching right now on Ahab and Elijah and find Van't Veer an invaluable help. We have rejoiced in the publishing of De Graaf's *Promise and Deliverance*. We are enriched in our study of the passion of our Mediator by Schilder's trilogy. That group is seeking through word and example to spread that way of reading the Scriptures. And you and your churches are a tremendous aid and encouragement to us.

We haven't converted everyone yet to that understanding! And the OPC is in many ways a mixed group in their approach. We all confess the Reformed faith in its fullness. And yet there are those who love the approach of the Puritans. Others are theonomic. Some you would classify as scholastic and exemplarish.

In saying that I am trying to be honest with you, to show you how we are; and yet plead with you to help and support us.

We as a church have just passed through a traumatic time lasting since around 1980. I make reference to our experience with the PCA and the so-called J and R method; that is, join and be received just as you are and just like we are. The method kept us from "speaking the truth in love" to each other. It kept us from facing the issues of our separate existence. It is my personal conviction that the PCA is more broadly evangelical than Reformed. They are dominated in their approach to starting new churches by the "church growth" methodology. Some in our church were enamored by that too, and when the J and R was finally defeated recently, they left the OPC and united with the PCA. The question of the Unity of

the church, pursued with a bad method has resulted in division.

In 1986 we celebrated our 50th anniversary of our separated existence as a church; or, if I may borrow a word, of our “liberation” from the unbelief of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. During the General Assembly that year we spent a day reflecting on where we had come from, on where we were and on what’s ahead. We thought of the grace of God in bringing us through a half century. We started as a very small group of churches and men who were united in their opposition to modernism, but not understanding what the gospel of the Reformed faith really meant. We owe a great deal to the faculty of Westminster Theological Seminary for they taught us what it meant to be Reformed; men like J. Gresham Machen and John Murray, Cornelius Van Til and Ned Stonehouse (translated Steenhuis), Oswald T. Allis and later Joe Young, R. B. Kuiper, Paul Woolley. You recognize many of those names: giants of the Reformed faith. Among them were representatives of the Dutch Reformed, continental Reformed understanding of the faith. Even John Murray, Scot though he was, was deeply influenced by Gerhardus Vos. Dr. Machen consciously sought to meld together the Scottish Presbyterian and the continental Reformed.

As a church we were plunged into theological controversy early in our history. In 1937 the struggle was over fundamentalism, dispensationalism and premillennialism. In 1947, it was over the incomprehensibility of God, though the real issue was: shall we take the rough edges off the Reformed faith so that we may grow faster as a church. In the fifties the issue was pietism and the leading of the Holy Spirit. Each time, by the grace of God, the issue was resolved according to the Scriptures; the gospel of the Reformed faith. And now, in 1986, we were faced with the question, and of course this is how I personally understand the history, shall we leave all of that behind and cease our existence and our history, and join the Presbyterian Church in America? Will the unity of the church be served best by joining them or by staying apart? Will the gospel of Christ, the Reformed faith in its fullness be advanced or not? And that the General Assembly answered: we stay apart.

And some have left us to join the PCA; so far five congregations and several ministers, and that hurts. And now, once again we must sit back and ask where are we as a church, where are we going, and where should we go? There are several different agenda: the redemptive-historical, the more scholastic, the puritan, the theonomic, the church growth, to name a few. Perhaps that is not a very pretty picture. It does make us unattractive to many. But that is the OPC: warts and all!

One other factor through the years has been our involvement in the Reformed Ecumenical Synod (the RES) over the degeneration of the Synodical GKN. We began our witness against them 25 years ago. You know the issues: membership in the World Council of Churches, ordination of women to teaching and ruling office, the heresies of Kuitert and Wiersinga and the consequent lack of adequate discipline, the 1979 so-called pastoral advice allowing those whom they judged to be Christians, who were also practicing homosexuals, to remain members of the church in good standing, to partake of the Lord’s Supper and to hold office in the church, and the theological backing of that in *God Met Ons* and the relational concept of truth. And finally the reunion with the Hervormde Kerk. One aside on that, in speaking with one or two from the Gereformeerde Bond, they oppose the reunion because the GKN is too liberal for the state church! How times have changed. And we become the “weeping” brothers in a new way. We have sought to be faithful to our Lord and the Reformed faith in opposing such blatant and growing unbelief. The struggle has been hard and time-consuming. And finally at RES Harare 1988 we severed our ties with the RES, now the REC. In that forum we witnessed to the gospel of the Reformed faith and for our Lord. And our message was rejected.

In the midst of all this we have tried to meet with you too; we just have not had the time or energy to work with you as we should; but we're ready now. We had a delightful and helpful meeting in January with your Committee on Contact which is reflected on in their report to you. And, if you renew their mandate, we have tentatively set February 1990 for another meeting to discuss those 'divergencies'. We have had the same problem with the RPCNA (the Covenanters); we postponed talks with them while the PCA took stage center and now we have started discussions with them too.

I hope it won't disappoint you if I do not interact with those divergencies: the fencing of the table, confessional church membership, the so-called invisible church, the covenant. I feel that that mandate belongs to the two committees and not to me as a delegated observer. The committee understands that mandate and is not only willing but also ready to talk with you.

With respect to the ICRC, we are cautious. We have questions — there are two I especially want to mention because they are of concern to us:

1. Are we, the OPC, acceptable to the ICRC? Can the Presbyterians of Scottish history coexist with the continental Reformed? The same question we face together, and
2. What is the vision of the ICRC? what is its reason for existence? its *raison d'être*? Let me say this, to give you a feel for what I mean.

The Reformed faith in this world is concentrated in central and southern Africa! Good, solid Reformed churches in Nigeria, Kenya, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa.

The oldest continually existent Reformed church is in Sri Lanka, founded in 1642! And they stood solidly with the OPC in Nimes in 1980, in Chicago in 1984 and in Harare in 1988!

We need the fellowship of these churches and they need us, too. That's why we stayed in the RES as we did. We want an international organization of Reformed churches which will have a vision to embrace the truly Reformed on every continent in this world — the nations we are commissioned to disciple.

After all that, I still do not despair. It is the Lord's church. I often turn to Isaiah 62 for encouragement, and I close with this:

"For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, for Jerusalem's sake I will not remain quiet, till her righteousness shines out like the dawn, her salvation like a blazing torch. The nations will see your righteousness, and all kings your glory; you will be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will bestow. You will be a crown of splendor in the LORD's hand, a royal diadem in the hand of your God. No longer will they call you Deserted, or name your land Desolate. But you will be called Hephzibah, and your land Beulah; for the LORD will take delight in you, and your land will be married. As a young man marries a maiden, so will your sons marry you; as a bridegroom rejoices over His bride, so will your God rejoice over you. I have posted watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; they will never be silent day or night. You who call on the LORD, give yourselves no rest, and give Him no rest till He establishes Jerusalem and makes her the praise of the earth. The LORD has sworn by His right hand and by His mighty arm: 'Never again will I give your grain as food for your enemies, and never again will foreigners drink the new wine for which you have toiled; but those who harvest it will eat it and praise the LORD, and those who gather the grapes will drink it in the courts of My sanctuary.' Pass through, pass through the gates! Prepare the way for the people. Build up, build up the highway! Remove the stones. Raise a banner for the nations. The LORD has made proclamation to the ends of the earth: 'Say to the Daughter of Zion, 'See, your Saviour comes! See, His reward is with Him, and His recompense accompanies Him.' They will be called the Holy People, the Redeemed of the LORD;

and you will be called Sought After, the City No Longer Deserted.”

Thank you for your very gracious hospitality and the Lord's blessing continue with you.

Rev. R. Aasman responds to Rev. J. Peterson with the following words:

On behalf of the 1989 General Synod of the Canadian Reformed Churches, I would like to respond to the words of Rev. J.J. Peterson from San Antonio, Texas, our fraternal delegate from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

I first met Rev. Peterson in 1987 at the 54th General Assembly of the OPC in Grand Rapids, and again in a meeting between the Committee for Contact with the OPC and the Committee for Ecumenicity and Inter-church Relations, on January 24, 1989 in Philadelphia. Our meeting at General Synod Winnipeg is now the third time that our paths are allowed to cross. Each meeting has impressed upon me that rich, deep southern character and flavour of our brother which has led many in this assembly to address him affectionately as “Texas Jack”. However the most memorable moment in my meetings with Rev. Peterson is from 1987 when our brother pleaded that the Canadian Reformed Churches pray for the OPC in connection with the RES and the meeting in Harare, Zimbabwe (1988). Indeed in Acts of Synod 1986 it was indicated that in general we should pray for our OPC brothers and sisters. We trust that such prayer for each other was and is mutual.

The Canadian Reformed Churches wish to express their gratitude that already in 1987 the General Assembly of the OPC commissioned the Committee on RES matters to demand the termination of the GKN in the RES, and failing such a termination, to withdraw the OPC from the Reformed Ecumenical Synod. We are thankful that this was not a hollow and therefore worthless threat. From our reading of the “Statement of Resignation of the OPC from RES, June 10, 1988” we also see that the withdrawal from the RES was not executed in a schismatic fashion, filled with pride and bitterness, but with a call and exhortation to the RES to recognize the enormity and seriousness of maintaining the GKN within the RES, demonstrating that the GKN harbors positions which are known to be out of accord with the Scriptures. These unscriptural positions are known to all of us and have just been mentioned by you, Rev. Peterson: women in office, ordaining of practicing homosexuals, a new hermeneutic, etc.

Appreciation for some elements of “Biblical Principles of the Unity of the Church” may also be expressed, especially for the fact that the OPC does not want to take the easy way out with respect to the church's ecumenical task by fleeing into fantasies about an “invisible church.” Instead the OPC shows in this document that she seeks ecclesiastical union between two true churches of Jesus Christ who exist alongside each other on the basis of the *unity of faith!* It is our hope and prayer that the OPC is truly responsible with respect to her ecumenical task and is cautious in whatever contacts she may have or be entertaining. This is said especially with a view to the relations between the OPC and the PCA, for the very reasons which you, my brother, have just stated.

However, we also like to call the attention of Rev. Peterson, and through him the attention of the entire OPC, to the relationship between the OPC and the CRC. We appreciate what CEIR has revealed to us about this matter. Indeed we see a parallel in the relationship of the OPC and the CRC to the discussions which the Canadian Reformed Churches had with the CRC some years ago. We had warned and exhorted the CRC on a number of issues, only to be confronted by indifference. Now we learn that the OPC is also warning and exhorting the CRC on a number of issues, only to be confronted with indifference. On this point we wish to give the OPC brotherly exhortation: be careful! Understand that in some ways the CRC is taking a parallel course to the GKN, and therefore, the good stand taken by the OPC with respect to the GKN must be seriously enter-

tained with respect to the CRC. You know, brother Peterson, the OPC's relationship with the CRC is not some formal or vague ecclesiastical relationship at a higher level, but it has a day-to-day application among the members so that the members of the OPC mingle freely with members of the CRC. The result may be that what you have pushed out the front door in the international scene via the RES, may slip right back in through the rear door in the domestic scene via relations with the CRC. If only for the sake of your children, please stand on guard!

We appreciate hearing also, both from the report of the Committee for Contact with the OPC and from you, Rev. Peterson, that the OPC's relationship with the Canadian Reformed Churches is being taken more seriously and enthusiastically. Let us have more contact in the future, that our discussions, exhortations, admonitions and observations may be mutually edifying.

At the same time we cannot and should not overlook what happened with respect to the Churches at Blue Bell and Laurel. These churches felt compelled because of conscience and obedience to God's Word to leave the OPC. When I addressed the General Assembly of the OPC in 1987, I exhorted the OPC to have a frank and open dialogue on matters such as the fencing of the Lord's Supper. Really, during the last three years we have only touched upon this—to the dissatisfaction and concern of many in our churches who desire a deeper and more essential discussion on the divergencies between our Three Forms of Unity and your Westminster Standards.

Rev. Peterson, if there is to be real growth and blessing in the relationship between the Canadian Reformed Churches and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, then we cannot continue simply with sending observers to each other's assemblies and have general discussions with each other. We will have to get to the essence of some differences between us. This is not said haughtily or with any hint of scepticism and pessimism. On some non-essential things there may be differences between us, especially taking into consideration our diverse backgrounds. But on essential things we must be one if we are to grow and advance in our contact together. May the Lord bless us in this for the glory of His own Name and the unity of His Church.

Thank you.

The chairman requests the assembly to sing Hymn 2:4.

ARTICLE 60

Committee II presents:

Agenda Items VIII, B, 1, a-i

A. MATERIAL: - Agenda B,1,a-i

1. Report 1 of the Standing Committee for Publication of the *Book of Praise* (Creeds)
2. Letter from the Church at Hamilton, ON.
3. Letter from the Church at Attercliffe, ON.
4. Letter from the Church at Chilliwack, BC.
5. Letter from the Church at Orangeville, ON.
6. Letter from the Church at Brampton, ON.
7. Letter from the Church at Smithville, ON.
8. Letter from the Church at Burlington West, ON.
9. Letter from the Church at Cloverdale, BC.
10. Letter from the Church at Burlington East, ON.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. The Standing Committee for the publication of the *Book of Praise* received the following mandate from Synod 1986,
 - to see to the linguistic revision of the Nicene Creed and the Athanasian Creed and to present a draft of this revision to the churches no later than 1 year before the next General Synod and to include this revision in the report to the next General Synod for the final edition of the *Book of Praise*. (Acts, Burlington-West 1986, Art. 118, D,2,g)
2. Synod 1986 also decided (upon the proposal of the reporter of the Standing Committee for the *Book of Praise*, Dr. J. Faber, Art 118, B, 3), to “set a target date for the definite adoption of the creeds and confessions and appoint a committee for the preparation of this final edition.”
3. The Committee took the 1984 edition of the Confessions and Creeds as a *provisional* edition.
4. The Committee decided to interpret its mandate to offer a linguistic revision as a re-translation of the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds.
5. The Committee dealt with a communication of the Deputies Church Book appointed by Synod 1985 of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia sent to the Standing Committee of the *Book of Praise*, and with a decision of Synod 1987 of these sister churches on the word “Christian”.
6. Although the mandate of the Committee does not speak about the linguistic revision of the Apostles’ Creed, the Committee was nevertheless of the opinion that it should not bypass the report of the deputies, sent to the Committee and the decision of Synod 1987 of our Australian sister churches with respect to the word “Christian” in art. IX.

The Committee proposes to rescind the decision of Synod 1983, Art 70, II and of Synod, 1986 Art. 101 and to delete the word “Christian”.

The Committee recommends to consistories of the Canadian Reformed Churches to place this item on the agenda of General Synod 1989.
7. Synod 1986 in its recommendation 2,g, decided “to see to the linguistic revision of the Nicene Creed . . . and to present a draft of this revision to the churches no later than one year before the next General Synod and to include this revision in the report to the next General Synod for the *final* (emphasis Synod) edition of the *Book of Praise*.”
8. The Committee became aware of the work done by the International Consultation of the English Texts (ICET) and anticipated a report of the Committee on Ecumenical Creeds for the International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC). In view of these developments since Synod 1986, the Committee did not expedite the mandate regarding the Nicene Creed but prefers new guidelines for the revision of this Creed.
9. The Committee has included in its report samples of the Ecumenical Creeds (Apostolic and Nicene) as prepared by the ICET for the purpose of facilitating the discussion on this matter. The Churches of Chilliwack, Orangeville and Burlington East treat these samples as actual proposals and submit comments to that effect.
10. The Committee proposes to adopt the new English text of the Athanasian Creed by J.N.D. Kelly, *The Athanasian Creed* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1964), with changes in a few instances.
11. The Church of Cloverdale observes that
 - a. the committee has submitted more than simply a linguistic revision of the

Athanasian Creed as per mandate 1986;

- b. the committee gives no reasons for the more substantial changes in it's (sic) proposed text. (Art. 9,32,38,39)
12. The Churches of Attercliffe, Burlington-East, Cloverdale, Hamilton draw attention to or question the following proposed changes in the articles of the Athanasian Creed:
- “the” glory and “the” majesty to “their” glory and “their” majesty (6)
 - “uncreate” to “increate” (7)
 - “incomprehensible” to “infinite” (9,12)
 - “compelled” to “obliged” (19)
 - the reversal of “unity in trinity” and “trinity in unity” (27)
 - “reasonable” or “rational” soul to “human” soul (32)
 - descended “into” hell to descended “to” hell (38)
 - the absence of “on the third day” (38)
 - ascended “into” heaven to ascended “to” heaven (39)
 - the addition of the word “steadfastly” (42)
13. The Church of Hamilton observes that this creed in distinction from the other creeds does not end with the word “Amen”.
14. Since the Committee assumed the 1984 edition of the *Book of Praise* still to be provisional after Synod 1986, the Committee includes for proposals for changes in “the other prose parts of the *Book of Praise*, e.g. the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism and the Liturgical Forms and Prayers”
15. The Committee proposes to authorize the Standing Committee to add Scripture references to the articles of the Belgic Confession, the Canons of Dort, the Liturgical Forms and the Prayers, and to make it clear in the Preface of the final edition that the added Scripture references do not form an integral part of the confessions.
- The Committee also proposes to have the Prefaces to the Confessions and the Creeds updated since they contain “obsolete material.”
- The Churches of Brampton, Cloverdale, Hamilton and Smithville have expressed support for these recommendations.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. Among the entire mandate of the Committee a linguistic revision of the Nicene Creed and the Athanasian Creed is the only revision called for. (Art. 118,D,2,g)
2. The target date set by Synod 1986 is Synod 1989. (Art. 118,D,5) By making various proposals to Synod 1989 the Committee gives the impression as if this target date does not have to be met, while the unfulfilled mandate concerning the Nicene Creed necessitates the prolongation of the revision process.
3. Synod 1986 observed that “except for the Nicene Creed and the Athanasian Creed, our creeds and confessions are now presented in the more modern version provisionally adopted by the 1983 General Synod” (Art. 118,B,4), upon the basis of which Synod 1986 considers, “that the Committee did fulfill its mandate in this respect.” (Art. 118,C,1) In line with this, General Synod 1986, in Art. 91, dealt with Dr. J. Faber’s request concerning Art. 8 B.C. and Canons of Dort II,3,4 as a request for revision of an adopted version.
4. The Church of Cloverdale considers that
 - a. the Committee has not delivered a linguistic revision of the Nicene Creed as per mandate of Synod 1986

- b. (except for) slight linguistic changes . . . the text as published in the 1984 edition of the *Book of Praise* has in principle been accepted by the churches.
5. A communication of a sister church is not the ecclesiastical way to re-open a discussion on a Creed adopted already.
 6. The Churches of Chilliwack and Cloverdale consider that the Committee exceeded the mandate in its proposal of a linguistic revision of the Apostles' Creed. Synod 1986 did not charge the Committee to see to any kind of revision of the Apostles' Creed.
The Church of Attercliffe considers that, "if we want to appeal this (i.e. the word "Christian") we should as churches and members follow the church-orderly way", a procedure of which the Committee seems to be well aware. (Report p.5)
 7. The Churches of Attercliffe, Cloverdale and Hamilton consider that the Committee did not fulfill its mandate with respect to the Nicene Creed. Synod considers that committees appointed by Synods receive specific mandates in order to implement decisions made by Synods.
 8. The consideration of the ICET's ongoing academic research on ancient texts could prevent the churches from ever adopting a final version of the creeds, while Synod 1986 had decided to have the entire *Book of Praise* in general, and the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds in particular adopted at Synod 1989.
 9. Although it could enhance the expression of ecumenicity among the churches involved with the ICRC in using the exact same wording in the Ecumenical Creeds (an ecumenicity which cannot be assumed among the denominations which accepted the work of the ICET), the matters of concern mentioned by the Committee regarding the Ecumenical Creeds are not weighty enough to deprive the churches of its long-awaited final edition of the entire *Book of Praise*.
 10. The Committee does not offer an explanation for the changes it proposes with respect to the Athanasian Creed.
Synod offers the following explanation:
 - art. 6: the second part of the article expresses the trinity (hence the pronoun 'their'), while the first part of this article expresses the unity ('the').
 - art. 7: increate is closer to the Latin word "incretus" *
 - art. 9: infinite is closer to the Latin word "inmensus", Dutch: "onmetelijk" (Cf.art.12)
 - art. 19: no explanation **
 - art. 27: trinity in unity (art.3ff), unity in trinity (art.11ff)
 - art. 32: "human" soul is a linguistic improvement (See art.18 B.C. for the same terminology) art. 38/39: the exact translation from the Latin
 - art. 42: "steadfastly" is a translation from the word "firmiter"

* Although "increate" is closer to the Latin, Synod considers uncreate as a better known English word.

** The word "compelled" is closer to the Latin word "compellimur" and corresponds better with the word "forbidden" in art. 20, and also denotes greater absoluteness than the word "obliged".
 11. The Church of Hamilton considers that for the sake of consistency with other creeds used during the public worship service the word "Amen" be recommended.

12. Although Synod 1986 did not state *explicitly* that the entire *Book of Praise* was adopted with the exception of the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds (Art.118,D,2,g), it *implicitly shows* that the Nicene and the Athanasian Creeds were the only parts to be linguistically revised. (See also Art.118,C,1)
13. Mandates given to committees should not be subjectively interpreted nor implemented but be carried out in keeping with the mandate given.
14. Since the Committee (incorrectly) assumed that the *Book of Praise* was still provisional, the proposed Scripture references and updated prefaces can still be included. The same can be done with the work submitted by the Committee for the linguistic revision of the Three Forms of Unity. (See Agenda B,2,a-f which will be dealt with in a separate report)

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod judge that:

1. the Committee was incorrect to conclude that the edition adopted at Synod 1986 was still provisional in matters other than the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds.
2. the Committee should have complied with the mandate “to set the General Synod of 1989 as target date for the final edition of the *Book of Praise*.”
3. it is not within the province of a committee to invite churches to appeal matters to which the Committee received an unsatisfactory decision in the past.
4. the considerations of the Committee concerning the ICET and ICRC did not warrant the delay in the fulfillment of its mandate and as a result caused an unnecessary delay in the desired target date.

Synod decide:

1. to express its appreciation for the great amount of work done, yet it is disappointed about the manner in which the Committee carried out its mandate as stipulated in Art.118 of the Acts of General Synod 1986.
2. to include the changes contained in the above considerations 10 & 11 in the final version of the Athanasian Creed and thus adopt this version in its entirety as *final*.
3. to charge the Committee to add the proposed Scripture references to the Belgic Confession, the Canons of Dort and to the Liturgical Forms and to update the Prefaces of the Confessions and Creeds.
4. to charge the Committee to complete its mandate of Synod 1986 regarding the Nicene Creed (i.e. to see to its linguistic revision).

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 61

Committee III presents:

Agenda Item VIII, A, 2, a,

A. MATERIAL

Report of the Board of Governors of the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. The report submitted covers the academic years 1985-1986, 1986-1987, and 1987-1988. Due to the early date of Synod 1989, it was not possible to cover fully the academic year 1988-1989, however some information on this year is provided.

2. The work at the Theological College could continue without interruption although the passing away of brother Garnet Peet B.A., M. Div. made a deep impression on the College community.
3. The Governors who faithfully visited the lectures during the past three years report that the scholarly instruction at our College is given in accordance with the Word of God and is in harmony with the Reformed confessions.
4. The course leading to a "Diploma Theological Studies" approved by Synod 1986 has been finalized and put into place.
5. During the past three years eleven students have graduated from our College, seven of whom have received/accepted a call from our churches. At present there are 5 students enrolled at our College (4 seniors and 1 freshman). Various promising contacts have been made with future students.
6. The Board of Governors is thankful to report: i. the promotion of the professor of Old Testament, C. Van Dam to doctor theologiae at the Theologische Hogeschool in Kampen on June 5, 1986, ii. Prof. J. Geertsema has been appointed Dean of Students.
7. The Board of Governors regrettably but also positively accepted Dr. J. Faber's request for retirement, in deep gratitude for what Dr. J. Faber has meant for our College as professor and principal since it was established. Dr. K. Deddens who has served our College capably and well for a term of six years is expected to retire; the Board of Governors is grateful for the work that he has done.
8. The retirement of Dr. J. Faber also means that the position of principal must be reviewed. By-law No 1 (Sec.8.01) requires that the Board of Governors shall seek the advice of Synod with respect to the appointment of the Principal, his power, function, and duty.

Until now this principalship was a permanent position. This was largely due to the fact that at the time when the College was established, there was only one professor in the possession of a Doctor of Theology degree. Now this situation has changed. In most American institutions the (permanent) principalship is almost exclusively a full-time administrative function, but at our College this is not so, for the Principal also has a full teaching load. The Board of Governors, after consultation with the Senate, therefore proposes to General Synod that there be from now on a rotating principalship.

It is proposed that Dr. C. Van Dam be appointed as Principal for the period of January 1, 1990 - August 31, 1993 and that Prof. J. Geertsema be designated as Principal for the period of September 1, 1993 - August 31, 1996.

9. The Board of Governors gratefully acknowledges the work of Mrs. K. Marren who moved with her husband and family to Smithers, B.C. and has been replaced as librarian by Miss Marian van Til (B.A.). Catherine Mechelse is functioning well as administrative assistant and as assistant librarian.
10. The Board of Governors request the approval of the following amendments to the by-laws of the Theological College Act:
 - i. add By-law number 6 which concerns salary, retirement and pensions, to ensure that the amount of pension received by the spouse of a professor is not deducted from his pension.
 - ii. add By-law number 7 to clarify that the vice-chairman and vice-principal are appointed by the Board of Governors. Changes are also proposed to this by-law to clarify that the academic dean, dean of students and registrar are elected and appointed by a simple majority vote of a Senate meeting at the commencement of the academic year. This new by-law results in

some minor changes to By-law Numbers 1 and 4.

- iii. add By-law number 8 by which professors, whenever possible, must give two years notice of intended retirement.
11. The Board of Governors mentions the blossoming contacts which the College has with our sister churches in Australia who have officially decided to support the Theological College as per Synod decision in 1987. The Board expects the existing contacts to intensify and has gratefully solicited the further support and input of our sister churches in Australia. They are grateful to the LORD for this undeserved blessing.
12. The Board of Governors remembers the passing away of our sr. G. Selles who from the beginning of our College's existence has been active in the Women's Savings Action. They are grateful for her enthusiasm and fruitful work done so faithfully for our Theological College throughout these many years.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. It is beneficial to the faculty to establish a rotating principalship.
2. It is beneficial and proper to approve By-law numbers 6, 7 and 8, along with related amendments as adopted by the Board of Governors and described in Observation 10.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide:

1. to express gratitude that the work at the Theological College continues without interruption and that all instruction is given in harmony with the Word of God and in agreement with the confessions of the Canadian Reformed Churches.
2. to acknowledge gratefully that the professor of Old Testament, C. Van Dam was promoted to doctor theologiae at the Theologische Hogeschool in Kampen.
3. to acknowledge gratefully the faithful labour of Dr. J. Faber as professor of Dogmatology and Ethics and as principal of our College since his appointment in 1968.
4. to acknowledge gratefully the faithful work of Dr. K. Deddens as professor of Diaconiology and Ecclesiology of our College since his appointment in 1983.
5. to appoint Dr. C. Van Dam as principal of the Theological College for the period of January 1, 1990 - August 31, 1993 and to designate Prof. J. Geertsema as principal for the period of September 1, 1993 - August 31, 1996, the LORD willing.
6. to acknowledge gratefully the work for our Theological College by the Women's Saving Action, especially the work of our late sr. G. Selles.
7. to approve the By-laws numbers 6, 7, and 8 and to amend the related by-laws accordingly.
8. to express appreciation for the work done by the faculty to serve the churches in general with their expertise, and to encourage the faculty to publish the results of their endeavours for the benefit of all the churches.
9. to receive and adopt the report and the supplementary report of the Board of Governors and all appendices.
10. to acknowledge gratefully and approve the actions of the Board of Governors and officers of the College as mentioned in these reports.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 62

Committee III presents:

Agenda Items VIII, A, 2, a

A. MATERIAL

Board of Governors Report to General Synod of 1989 Theological College - Finance and Property.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. Property and Finance Committee activities in general:
 - a. With gratitude the Finance and Property Committee report that they did their work in brotherly harmony.
 - b. The Committee met fourteen times to ensure that matters pertaining to the administration of finances and property were duly considered and resolved.
2. Physical Plant:
 - a. The College has made a smooth transition from the old building to the new facilities in Hamilton. The new building excellently serves the College community and meets all its needs.
 - b. The College was able to purchase a computer with the assistance of a \$22,500.00 donation from the Women's Savings Action.
 - c. 4000 volumes of the library of the late Dr. C. VanderWaal of South Africa were received and much time is dedicated to processing these volumes for the College library.
3. Salaries:
 - a. The faculty salaries are being paid on the formula basis per Synod Burlington-West 1986 decision (Art.154 D 4). One professor receives retirement benefits.
4. Financial:
 - a. Although at times it remains difficult to make ends meet, the Committee is very thankful for the support the churches give in a very faithful manner. Support is also received from the churches in Australia. One church remained in arrears and a review of its assessment was necessary to assist this church.
 - b. The loan on the building was reduced to \$50,000.00 as a result of a generous donation of \$10,000.00.
 - c. Audited financial statements for the years ending May 31, 1986, May 31, 1987 and May 31, 1988 were sent to this Synod as appendices to the reports for the years 1986, 1987, and 1988. The Board recommends that Synod consider the audited financial statements and the reports of the auditor for the previous fiscal periods, and to re-appoint Robinson, Lott and Brohman, Chartered Accountants, as auditors until the next Synod.
5. Budget:
 - a. The 1989 budget requires no increase in contributions and can remain at \$45.00 per communicant member. The reason is that the Free Reformed Churches of Australia decided at their Synod 1987 to support the College at \$30.00 per communicant member.
 - b. The tuition fees for the 1988-1989 academic year are \$1200.00 for students and \$3600.00 for students who are not members of one of the churches or sister churches.

C. CONSIDERATION

All things are being done properly and in good order with respect to the financial responsibilities of the College by the Board of Governors.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide:

1. to express gratitude to the churches for their faithful and regular support of the Theological College.
2. to express gratitude to the Free Reformed Churches of Australia for their support.
3. gratefully to acknowledge the annual donations of the Women's Savings Action and the \$10,000.00 anonymous donation to reduce the building loan.
4. to take note of the audited financial statements and the reports of the auditors for the years ending May 31, 1986, May 31, 1987 and May 31, 1988; to add these reports and statements as appendices to the Acts of Synod; and to relieve the treasurer of the Board of Governors of all responsibilities for the years indicated.
5. to appoint Robinson, Lott and Brohman, Chartered Accountants, as auditors until the next General Synod.
6. to express thankfulness to the Lord that the College was able to function under His blessing with the necessary funds from the churches.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 63

Committee III presents:

Agenda Item VIII, A, 2, b

A. MATERIAL

Appointment of professors.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. Synod appointed Prof. Dr. N. H. Gootjes as professor of Dogmatics and Ethics and Rev. Drs. J. De Jong as professor of Ecclesiology and Diaconology.
2. These appointments mean that Prof. Dr. N. H. Gootjes will be teaching Dogmatics and Ethics in a new situation and in the context of a different country.
3. These appointments mean that Rev. Drs. J. De Jong who, D. V., will soon have a degree in Dogmatics will be teaching in different fields than his studies.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. Because the Theological College is comparatively small in the number of faculty members and these newly appointed professors are assigned to teach in many areas, the work load may be too heavy.
2. There may be ministers or other brothers in the Hamilton area who are capable of teaching in certain areas of theological studies.

D. RECOMMENDATION

Synod decide:

to give the freedom to the Senate with the Board of Governors to solicit the help of lecturers if needed.

DEFEATED

ARTICLE 64

Adjournment

The chairman requests Rev. P.K.A. de Boer to close the day. He requests the assembly to sing Psalm 127:1,2, and leads in prayer.

MORNING SESSION - WEDNESDAY APRIL 26, 1989

ARTICLE 65

Reopening

The chairman requests the assembly to sing Psalm 138:1,4. He reads Luke 10:25-37 and leads in prayer. He welcomes all the delegates. Special mention is made that br. Jac. van der Kolk has arrived as a delegate from our sister churches in the Netherlands.

ARTICLE 66

Welcome br. J. van der Kolk

The chairman gives Rev. B. J. Berends the floor to express a word of welcome to br. Jac. van der Kolk of behalf of Synod. He does so by the following words:

Mr. chairman, fellow-delegates, it is my privilege to introduce to you br. Jac. van der Kolk from the Netherlands, and to welcome him in our midst on your behalf. It is a great pleasure for me to do so. I am sure that the moderamen, when it charged me with this task, was not aware that I know br. van der Kolk. I have met him no less than three times in the Netherlands, the first of which was in connection with the establishment of our well-beloved magazine *Reformed Perspective*, the second time after conducting a church service in his home town Ermelo, and the third time "op de Hogeschool Dag" in the city of Kampen. It is then a real pleasure to meet him once again and to welcome him on behalf of Synod Winnipeg, 1989.

Br. van der Kolk, namens deze Synode dan heet ik u van harte welkom. Wij zijn de Heere dankbaar dat Hij u veilig en wel bij ons heeft gebracht. We spreken de wens uit dat u zich onder ons thuis zal voelen in de komende dagen en ook dat u zich zal kunnen oriënteren aangaande het wel en wee van de Canadese Gereformeerde Kerken via haar afgevaardigden van deze Synode. (That as far as my Dutch is concerned. Perhaps you detected some Canadianisms in my Dutch, just as we might detect in your Canadian some Dutchisms, something with which some of us have problems as well.)

Br. van der Kolk, without a doubt there is a very special relationship between the churches you represent and our churches. In fact, I was wondering whether I should express that special relationship by addressing you as "mother", in view of our origin, or as "sister", in view of our ecclesiastical fellowship, but I suppose I can also simply welcome you as a brother . . . from a "sister". Anyway, one thing is certain, we are happy to welcome and meet you as a representative of our beloved sister churches in the Netherlands.

We take note of the fact that those sister churches continue to provide us with capable men, apt to teach, either as ministers or as professors. We express the hope that Dr. N.H. Gootjes will be yet another one of such men. We further take note that our sister churches in the Netherlands have many globetrotters, you yourself not being the least among them. As a result we are being introduced to many churches/denominations around the world, as page 7 and 8 of our Report on Churches Abroad clearly reveals. Although we may have some questions about the future relationships with all those churches, it does make clear that the

Church-gathering work of our Lord and Saviour is indeed worldwide. We take note with gratitude that in all those contacts you show the desire to keep the heritage entrusted to you by remaining faithful to God's infallible Word as we also mutually confess it in the Three Forms of Unity.

Br. van der Kolk, may your presence and participation at this Synod express that unity of faith we share . . . the unity of faith in our only Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Head of that worldwide Holy Catholic Christian Church.

Thank you.

ARTICLE 67

Adjournment

Synod is adjourned for committee work.

AFTERNOON SESSION - WEDNESDAY APRIL 26, 1989

ARTICLE 68

Reopening

The chairman requests the assembly to sing Psalm 115:1,6.

The roll call shows that all the delegates are present.

ARTICLE 69

Adoption of the Acts

Articles 53 - 64 of the Acts are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 70

Committee I presents:

Agenda Item VIII, F, 1

MATERIAL

Report of the Committee for Contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

After some discussion the Advisory Committee takes its report back for reconsideration.

(see Articles 82 and 94)

ARTICLE 71

Adjournment

Due to the time, the chairman decides to adjourn the meeting and requests Rev. J. De Jong to close Synod for the day. Rev. J. De Jong suggests to the assembly to sing Hymn 46:2 and leads in prayer.

MORNING SESSION - THURSDAY, APRIL 27, 1989

ARTICLE 72

Reopening

The chairman requests the assembly to sing Psalm 24:1,5, he reads Psalm 24 and leads in prayer. He welcomes the delegates.

Roll call shows that all the delegates are present.

ARTICLE 73

Adoption of the Acts

Articles 65 - 71 of the Acts are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 74

Adjournment

Synod is adjourned for committee work.

EVENING SESSION - THURSDAY - APRIL 27, 1989

ARTICLE 75

Reopening

The chairman requests the assembly to sing Hymn 34:1,4,6. He speaks a word of welcome to the guests.

Roll call is held, showing that all the delegates are present.

ARTICLE 76

Welcome and address Prof. Dr. and Mrs. J. Faber

The chairman welcomes Prof. Dr. and Mrs. J. Faber with the following words:

Esteemed Dr. and Mrs. Faber:

It is for me a great pleasure and privilege to welcome you together to this important session of General Synod 1989 here in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Your presence here has a very special reason and purpose, for — as you may well know — we generally in our churches do not invite professors to our major assemblies, much less their wives. But today you both are extremely welcome, today and for the duration of your stay in Winnipeg, which we hope will be as joyous and memorable for you as it will be for us. We are grateful that the Lord has protected you during your journey and brought you safely to us. We express the wish that you may fully experience and enjoy the fellowship with the members of Synod and with the brothers and sisters in this area.

This Synod was placed before the task of appointing professors at our Theological College. In itself that is nothing unusual. Synods 1980, 1983 and 1986 (three consecutive Synods no less!) had to deal with appointments of professors in the Old Testament, Diaconological, and New Testament departments. At this Synod, however, it is somewhat different.

Here we had to appoint two professors at one time, and this already made our decisions of greater magnitude and consequence. But this Synod also had to face the fact that our Principal of twenty-one years of service and our long-standing professor of Dogmatology was going to retire. This is something which no Canadian Reformed Synod has ever had to digest! We must face the fact that we are to bid farewell to you, Dr. Faber, as active professor and Principal of our College. Therefore we decided unanimously to invite you and sr. Faber to visit us so that we may properly mark this historic changing of the guard and take our leave of you as Synod, representing the churches, in a proper manner.

Making appointments is always an exciting work, although sometimes not easy. Still we would rather not have made an appointment at all in the department of Dogmatology, for we have been very fortunate in having you as professor in this department for so many years. We thought that you were still doing an excellent job and we would not have objected at all if you had decided to continue on for some more years. But your request for retirement had to be honoured. We can

fully appreciate your reasons for requesting this retirement, and so we acquiesce in the decision of the Board of Governors to grant you this and we agree that it be given in the most honourable fashion.

We are extremely blessed in the fact that we could appoint in Dr. N.H. Gootjes a suitable and able successor, a man who according to the information which we have received will be able to teach in a sound and fitting manner at our College in the department of Dogmatology. I know that you are very pleased with his appointment and with the appointment also of our own Rev. Drs. J. De Jong as professor of Ecclesiology and Diaconiology. It must make your retirement even sweeter to know that capable men come after you to take on positions at the College which has been so much a part of your main work in life.

Your retirement will lead to some more noteworthy changes. Often when a capable person who has become somewhat of an institution leaves, his work is taken over by not one but more persons. So it is here as well. You were for the duration of your tenure as active professor also Principal of our College — a permanent fixture in this respect. Since the principalship will now become a matter of rotation among the professors, Dr. Gootjes will not have to take upon himself immediately or permanently this added burden. This makes it easier for the members of the Senate. But this also means indeed the end of an era.

Dr. Faber, I echo the sentiments of all present when I say that you have been an excellent Principal, an able administrator whose concern was always to seek and find the best for the College — for its status as a recognized Reformed seminary and an acclaimed academic institution. In this way you sought to promote also the honour of Christ and to enhance the reputation of the churches who support this College. You took proper pride in the high standards set and maintained at our College, and this is reflected in the curriculum of our College.

You have also done much work with respect to the Theological College Act passed in the Ontario Legislative Assembly and adopted also at General Synod 1980 which gave our institution legal status to confer various degrees. This has been a major achievement in which you played a key role. Our College has gone from simple and obscure beginnings to being a reputable and recognized institution of learning which has instructed students from far and near, also from outside our churches. I think here especially of the interest from the side of the Free Reformed Churches. Our College has in the first twenty years of its existence delivered far above twenty candidates — more than one per year — in fact all but two of the ministers here are graduates of our College, and so has proven to be a great blessing for our churches and for others.

We recognize in all this first the Lord's providential care and grace, for all that we have comes from Him and anything good which we do is through Him. At the same time we fully acknowledge that the Lord uses committed and qualified men to carry out His work. In you, Dr. Faber, we were given such a man, and we thank the Lord for your dedication and effort.

When you were appointed by General Synod 1968, first for the position of professor of Old Testament, it was apparent that the churches had great confidence in your expertise in the Bibliological field and in the original languages in which the Word of God is given to us. After Rev. J.T. van Popta passed away, Synod decided to appoint you as professor of Dogmatology in his place. This shows that the churches knew from the start your depth as academician. You have fully responded to that trust, in keeping up with all the disciplines of theology at the College and keeping a good eye on the whole of the training there.

If there is any disappointment which may have been uttered about your work, it is the fact that we have seen no extensive publications from your hand, as yet. The material which we did see, in magazine articles, was well-received, and through the years we looked forward to more. There is so little Reformed material available in English in the field of Dogmatics. By all accounts your lectures were always sys-

tematic and thorough, lively and well-presented — you have among your students the reputation of being a skillful and engaging lecturer — and we would like to see this reflected in books which may be used by present and future generations. This, too, will enhance the reputation of our College and advance its curriculum even more. So we ask you to lay aside even the slightest fear of publication and to let us share further in a broader circle in the fruits of your labours! These remarks are not made to be critical but to be sympathetic and encouraging. After all, we want to prevent any boredom which sometimes creeps into retirement.

Also we wish to express our gratitude to you, Mrs. Faber, for the way in which you have supported our professor and Principal in the years here in Canada. We know that you have been to him indeed a help in every way. You have also found a well-respected place in the Church at Hamilton and in our churches. For you it must be a pleasure to be able, the Lord willing, in the new year to have your husband more to yourself and to receive some time together in retirement. Your coming to Canada in 1968 has also in many ways been a blessing for your children, who have found a good place in our Canadian society. I am sure that looking back, you together see the guiding and preserving hand of the Lord. He gave strength also in times of trial and disappointments, which there have been in your lives as there are in every life.

We pray that our heavenly Father will continue to surround you both, Dr. and Mrs. Faber, and your family, with His love and care, that you may go on in His strength in the time that He gives you still under the sun. May you continue to contribute, as long as He gives life, to the propagation of the Gospel and the upbuilding of the churches of Jesus Christ. May it be said of you, when this earthly course is run, what will be said of all faithful servants, "Enter into the glory of your Lord".

Dr. Faber, you will still serve until the end of this year, the Lord willing. The Board of Governors will undoubtedly, in a fitting manner, mark the true end of your tenure as professor. But this is the last General Synod that gathers in the time that you are still in active service. Therefore we extend to you and to your wife on behalf of our Canadian Reformed Churches our sincere gratitude and our best wishes. May I close with expressing the confidence of the apostle Paul who spoke by the Spirit of God in the letter to the Philippians, "[Our] God will supply every need of yours according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. To our God and Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen." (Philippians 4: 19, 20).

After speaking these words, he requested the assembly to stand and sing Hymn 5: 1, 2, 3, 4.

Prof. Dr. J. Faber replies by addressing Synod as follows:

Delegates of the General Synod of Winnipeg 1989, brothers and sisters of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

Let me immediately speak from the heart in answer to the remarks of the chairman, the esteemed Rev. Clarence Stam.

When the General Synod of Orangeville 1968 decided to appoint me professor of Old Testament, and Rev. J. Mulder, on behalf of Synod, phoned me in Rotterdam, I did not even know that a Synod of the Canadian Reformed Churches was being held at that moment. Those of you who remember the situation of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands understand that in the fall of 1968 our thoughts were quite introvert. We were busy with the difficulties within our own Dutch churches.

When I phoned my mother in order to tell her the news, she said to me, "*Jongen, ze hebben je hard nodig, ga maar gauw*". ("Son, they need you, go as soon as possible."). I will not tell you the reaction of my beloved wife. But I tell you this secret that, before I flew to the Synod of Orangeville, I promised her that if it would be an appointment as professor of Old Testament, I would decline. For I

knew that the late Rev. F. Kouwenhoven had obtained a Master of Theology degree in Old Testament at John Knox College in Toronto and I had decided never to take the place of a person who was more qualified for a particular academic position. I am still thankful for this decision that I also made known to the General Synod of Orangeville 1968.

The chairman reminded us of the fact that during this Synod Rev. J.T. van Popta was taken away from this life. By our discussions in that Synod the way was opened for the appointment of the late Rev. Kouwenhoven as professor of Old Testament and I was directed to the department of Dogmatology. This was a remarkable act of the God of life, the God of providence. When my wife heard from a journalist in the Netherlands that the situation had changed, she knew that this would have a great impact upon our life and that of our children but she wholeheartedly supported me in accepting the challenge of establishing a Reformed Theological Seminary in Canada.

Brothers and sisters, when I was very young, the LORD God gave me the desire to be a minister of the Word. Although it seemed impossible, I never wanted to become something else but a servant of the gospel of God. I grew up in a very poor situation. If someone knows the situation in the thirties and the slums of Amsterdam, he knows when and where I grew up. I was a student in an elementary school of which never a boy had gone to a *gymnasium*. In the entire history of that school I was the first one for whom this way was opened. God Himself opened for me the way to study in Amsterdam and Kampen. How I loved the study of the Word of God, the doctrine of the church, the Creeds and the Reformed Confessions!

When after seventeen years of ministry in the Netherlands, the Canadian appointment came, I thought about the way in which the LORD God had led my life. I thought of Rev. S.G. de Graaf who taught me in the *Gereformeerd Gymnasium* in Amsterdam de *Hoofdlijnen in de dogmatiek*. I thought of my beloved teacher Dr. Marinus Burcht van't Veer under whose ministry I went to catechism class and made profession of faith. When I thought of the esteemed Prof. Dr. Klaas Schilder whose publications I began to read as a young lad and when I thought about the way in which I prepared myself by special studies in Dogmatology, then I saw clearly that God directed my way to the Canadian Reformed Churches.

Synod of Orangeville 1968 showed how important the elders are in our Reformed church life. In that Synod it was especially the elders who even over against the anxieties of some ministers said, "Indeed we need our own training for the ministry." I completely agreed with that idea. If there are churches that form a federation and together have the possibility of establishing a seminary, they themselves have to take care of the training of their ministers. It is a blessing of the LORD God to the Canadian Reformed Churches that in 1968 they received *one* institution to prepare young men to become ministers of the Word.

There had been young men — as our chairman knows — who had to go to the Netherlands for theological study. There were young men who went to Philadelphia to Westminster Theological Seminary. There were young men who tried to find a way of becoming preachers of the gospel by seeking the help of ministers. If there had not come about *one* institution, the unity of the Canadian Reformed Churches, I am afraid, would have been broken. In these two decades the Theological College has always maintained an important place within the life of the churches also with respect to the binding together of the churches in the unity of the true faith.

The chairman rightly mentioned that as far as the curriculum of our Theological College is concerned, we wanted to go our own way. You will never find in any Acts of the Canadian Reformed Churches that I have been appointed Principal and Academic Dean of the Theological College. Without official appointment during that Synod, the brothers in Orangeville took it for granted that I would

become Principal and set up a curriculum for the theological training. If you study this curriculum and compare it with the course of studies in other theological schools, you will find a stress upon Biblical languages. Since the LORD God gave us the Scriptures in Hebrew and Greek, our students should study that Hebrew and that Greek. Just last week I heard a report from a young man — not Canadian Reformed who studied only one year in our Theological College. He is now studying in another institution. He visited us in Hamilton, and said “I come here to tell you that I received the highest grade in Hebrew of our whole seminary and I thank you again for your instruction.” We were glad to receive this message, for we think that the continuous study of the Biblical languages and also of Latin, the language of the church for many ages, is an important aspect of our Reformed training.

In our curriculum we combine with this specific emphasis a stress upon the study of the ecumenical creeds and the three Forms of Unity of our Reformed churches. The confessional character of our training for the ministry should be very strongly stressed and should be very strongly maintained.

This curriculum gives our small institution a specific place within the North American context. We should never give up our special academic requirements for the sake of a false American ideal that big is beautiful and that we therefore need many students.

If I may continue this reminiscence of those first years at our College, it comes to my mind how right at the beginning God led us through a very difficult period from 1969 to 1971. Our school was only a few weeks in operation, when the LORD God took away Rev. Kouwenhoven. Since there was no Synod coming up and there was no money to have an extra one, and since the Synod of Orangeville had originally appointed me as professor of Old Testament, I took up teaching exegesis Old Testament. In the same period our lecturer in Ecclesiology, the late Rev. Scholten, became very ill. Because we did not have any other possibilities, I taught also church history besides my own disciplines in dogmatics, symbolics, philosophy, etc., disciplines for which in our understaffed institution in Kampen there are at least three professors. In those years of 1969 to 1971, the first three years of College, my very esteemed colleague L. Selles and I were the only two full timers who with the help of Lecturer G. Van Dooren, had to train men like Cornelius Van Dam, now professor at our College and Rev. Wietze Huizinga, now in Australia. Those first years were very difficult, but nevertheless beautiful years.

At the same time we had to set up our theological library with all its ins and outs of ordering and cataloguing. We did not have any administrative assistance. It took up until 1975 before we received our first official administrative assistant. I may mention here now with great thankfulness that during those first six years of our College my wife did volunteer work and the administration of our library was at that time in her capable hands.

We as first faculty, coming from the Netherlands, needed all our time for research and teaching, for administration and library, for standing committees of all General Synods since 1969, for necessary labours in church and schools at Hamilton and for editorship of Clarion. We were compelled to leave preparation of solid scholarly publications in the English language to a following generation at our Theological College.

Brothers, let us think for a moment about the future of our Theological College. It will be very important that, besides the stress upon the Biblical languages and the confessional character of our training, we in appointing professors maintain those high academic standards which — as the chairman in his well-spoken words rightly noticed — I always strongly defended.

Just yesterday I wrote a letter to the Ministry of Colleges and Universities of the Province of Ontario. Since the Theological College Act 1981 of the Ontario legislature was granted to us, we received, last summer, a visit of a task force of the Ministry of Colleges and Universities. This task force consisted of three profes-

sors who inquired about our way of operating our Theological College. Recently they brought out a report to the minister and I had to respond to this report and to defend the independent character of a private institution as our Theological College. But let me now say only this: the task force proposes that for obtaining the status of granting the degree of Master of Theology at least 75% of the faculty of a theological college must be in possession of an earned degree of Doctor of Theology. I completely agree with this requirement which at the moment is met by our College. If there would be no possibility of maintaining this level, we would have to accept that and would even have to jeopardize our degree granting status. But if we operate an academic institution, we should never forget that after confessional integrity academic qualifications of the faculty are very important. You should not misunderstand me: I would rather have a confessionally Reformed man *without* a degree than a doctor of theology who deviates from the Holy Scriptures and the Reformed Confessions. But if we set up an academic institution, we should have a qualified staff. Therefore I am so thankful that your General Synod appointed Dr. N. H. Gootjes and further Drs. J. De Jong whom we hope to meet in our college as professor and then to call *Doctor* De Jong. Again at least 75% of our teaching staff will have a degree of Doctor of Theology. This will be of importance for our official position as a degree-granting institution within the Province of Ontario.

Brother chairman, I will not take too much of your time. I thank the brothers for this reception and for the generous gift. Let me conclude by saying this: If I think about the Reformed theology and about our Institution for training for the ministry as a Reformed Institution, I see that we have a wonderful task and a beautiful obligation. The Reformed Confession is the expression of the Reformed religion. It is this religion that speaks deeply of man's depravity as a sinner. Also tonight we do not forget that we are nothing but miserable sinners. Our Lord Jesus Christ said that if a servant has done all that is commanded him, he must say, "I am an unworthy servant; I have only done what was my duty." There will not be any place for meritorious works within the kingdom of the God of sovereign grace. In His sovereign grace the triune God has elected us before the foundation of the world and He gathers His Church according to His eternal decree of election. This sovereign grace of God became manifest in the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary. It is this Christ Whom we love without having seen Him; though we do not now see Him we believe in Him and rejoice with unutterable and exalted joy, looking forward to seeing Him. It is my deep desire that this Gospel of God's sovereign grace in our Lord Jesus Christ may be expounded and defended in an academic manner. It is my prayer that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the God of all mercy, will maintain the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches as a good instrument in His Fatherly hands.

Thank you.

After these words, the chairman requests the assembly to sing Hymn 65:1,3

ARTICLE 77

Committee I presents:

Agenda Item VIII, F, 1

A. MATERIAL

Report of the Committee for Contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church

This report is put into discussion.

(see Articles 82 and 94)

ARTICLE 78

Adjournment

The chairman requests br. G. J. Nordeman to close the day. He requests the assembly to sing Psalm 66:1,2, and leads in prayer.

MORNING SESSION - FRIDAY, APRIL 28, 1989

ARTICLE 79

Reopening

The chairman requests the assembly to sing Psalm 27:1,2. He reads 1 Peter 2:11-25 and leads in prayer.

Roll call is held and shows that all the delegates are present.

ARTICLE 80

Adoption of the Acts

Articles 72 - 78 of the Acts are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 81

Committee I presents:

Agenda Item VIII, F, 1

A. MATERIAL

Report of the Committee for Contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

ARTICLE 82

Point of Order

After some discussion a motion concerning the way in which the matter is dealt with and two motions to amend the Advisory Committee Report are made and duly seconded. The Chair rules: seeing a number of rounds of discussion have been made, to give the floor one more time to the movers of these motions and to the Advisory Committee members and then vote on the motion regarding the procedure and, depending on the outcome, vote on the motions to amend and finally on the Advisory Committee's proposal.

The Chair's ruling is challenged, some members being convinced that more opportunity for discussion on the motion to amend is necessary. The Chair's ruling is brought to a vote and his ruling is

MAINTAINED

ARTICLE 83

MOTION

The following motion is made and duly seconded:

Synod decide:

the Advisory Committee take back its report and incorporate all submissions to Synod addressing the same question.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 84

Adjournment

Synod is adjourned for lunch and committee work. Because Rev. J. J. Peterson must leave, the chairman bids him farewell on behalf of Synod with the following words:

Farewell words to Rev. J. J. Peterson.

Esteemed brother Peterson:

You have again been with us for a week, and we have been privileged to have you in our midst. Your sense of humour, infectious laugh, and agreeable nature are always very pleasant to experience. Yet we do not misjudge you: you are no pushover. We have detected in you also deep strength; agreeable, yes, but not to yield to what goes against God's Word. Patient, yes, but insistent and consistent against what is perceived to be wrong.

You have been at our Synods before. You know some of the issues from your last visit in 1983 (Synod Cloverdale). Since then you haven't gotten much farther with us; we haven't gotten much farther with you; perhaps we haven't gotten that much farther with ourselves!

Still, there is progress. We have hope that we may grow together. Sometimes you may wonder: what do you, Canadian Reformed Churches, want? It may seem as if we want too much and understand too little. But we seek only one thing: unity in the Truth, to be together simply Reformed in every respect. This is our striving; this is also our struggle.

Please pass on to the OPC our concerns as you have understood them in a brotherly spirit. Urge the OPC to tackle the issues which we present. Come in the direction of the true covenantal way of thinking!

May the Lord bless you personally, on your way as you leave today. May He be also with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and guide it in its proper direction, which is pleasing to Him.

God bless you.

EVENING SESSION - FRIDAY, APRIL 28, 1989

ARTICLE 85

Reopening

The chairman requests the assembly to sing Psalm 103:1,2. He expresses a word of welcome to the guests and notes the presence of Prof. Dr. and Mrs. J. Faber.

ARTICLE 86

Address br. Jac. van der Kolk

The chairman gives br. Jac. van der Kolk who is at Synod as a delegate of the Gereformeerde Kerken (Vrijgemaakt) the floor to address Synod. Br. van der Kolk addresses Synod with the following words:

Brother chairman, esteemed brothers,

Thank you very much indeed for the opportunity given to me, to address this Synod of our Canadian sister churches.

A few months ago, our Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, appointed its member, brother D.J. van Wijnen as the first delegate to your Synod in Winnipeg. I myself was appointed as second delegate. Unfortunately brother van Wijnen is unable to travel because of illness. So his knowledge, particularly his know-how with respect to the I.C.R.C., will not be available.

It was also impossible to delegate one of the ministers belonging to our Committee. Consequently, Mr. Chairman, your meeting will have to make do with me, the second delegate.

At your Synod of Burlington-West 1986, no representative of our churches in Holland was present. Our Committee wrote to your Committee for Relations with Churches Abroad, that it had been decided to send a deputation to every second Synod. We will deviate from that rule whenever our presence is expressly required. I may mention in this connection that our Committee was represented during the last three Synods of our sister churches, the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa, as this was considered to be strictly necessary.

Our Committee instructed me to convey its Christian regards to your meeting, on behalf of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands. We pray that the LORD our God may bestow upon your meeting the wisdom and the guidance of the Holy Spirit in your discussions and in making your decisions.

Kampen Theological University

Brothers, your Synod takes place in between our Spakenburg-North 1987 Synod and the Leeuwarden 1990 Synod. In Spakenburg-North important decisions were made in connection with the training of our future ministers. The name of our Theological Seminary was changed into Theological University. This is a consequence of changes in the legislation in the Netherlands with respect to higher education.

Further, and that was even more important, a number of vacancies were filled, and on top of that, several new university teachers were appointed. These appointments were necessary for two reasons:

1. a gratifying growth in the number of students, both from at home and from abroad. No fewer than 147 students were enrolled this year;
2. our ministers have to face an increasing number of urgent questions from our society, for example:
the total ignoring of God in public life
attacks on the reliability of God's Word
the permeation of ungodly individualism
questions concerning life and death, sexuality, marriage and divorce, and so on
attacks on our youth (and adults too!) by the modern mass media.

The greater part of the problems which I just mentioned are dealt with in the Netherlands in a secular and horizontalistic way. To us is the task to give answers based on Holy Scripture and on our Reformed confession.

We are thankful that the Lord gives us possibilities to prepare our future ministers in such a way that they will be well-armed and that they shall not be ashamed when they have to speak with the enemies in the gate in the last decade of this twentieth century and also in their ministry in the twenty-first century.

Brothers, the time in which we live is called 'post-Christian'. But you in Canada, and we in the Netherlands, believe that the Christian era has not come to an end. For it is and will remain the time of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of His church, the Lord of the world. Anno Domini! The time is His!

Our churches in Holland are therefore glad and grateful for the reinforcement of our Theological University in Kampen.

Hamilton Theological College

Your agenda also features items concerning your Theological College in Hamilton, including appointments. You appointed Prof. Gootjes and Drs. De Jong.

Prof. Gootjes is well-known to us. I may say that he did a lot of good confessionally Reformed work at the Theological Seminary at Pusan (Korea). I congratulate your College with his appointment. And we pray that Prof. Gootjes will give a positive answer. May he, together with the other professors of the Hamilton College, contribute to the reinforcement of the training for the ministry, to the edification of the church of our Lord in Canada and so to the glory of God.

And may the training at the Hamilton College result in a strong confessional preparation of your future ministers and also be for the benefit of the already active ministers in the Canadian Reformed Churches.

Churches abroad

Besides matters dealing with the Theological University, our Spakenburg-North Synod occupied itself extensively with contacts with churches abroad.

It was a pleasure that the decision could be taken to continue the ecclesiastical fellowship with the Canadian Reformed Churches because your churches continued to be faithful to the Reformed confession in doctrine, worship, church government, and discipline. (Article 121 of the Acts)

With respect to our Committee for Relations with Churches Abroad, the Acts of Spakenburg-North mention in Art. 151:

- 14 general instructions to deputies
- 31 special instructions and
- 18 authorizations.

Of these contacts, mentioned in the Acts of our Spakenburg-North Synod and summarized in your Report of Churches Abroad, some are of recent date, other ones are of longer standing, some are superficial, other contacts are more profound.

Of course, we too sometimes have our questions about the development of these contacts. But in our opinion you have to make contacts first, before you can investigate the possibilities seriously. After that, you have to come to a decision: investigate or break off.

As Dutch churches we have to watch out that we do not give the impression of the schoolmaster with the raised finger, as if only we from Holland are able to tell the other churches in the world how they have to live according to the will of God, and how they should organize their church life. Holland has the name of being pedantic, and not in the ecclesiastical field only.

Furthermore, it will be clear to you that with such an extensive field of action, the rules governing ecclesiastical contacts are extremely important. Therefore our Synod instructed our Committee to go more deeply into the various problems connected with these rules. Because of the great number of contacts (often very different from each other) we do not, at this moment, have a clear picture yet of the rules that have to be applied.

The number of churches that we meet is increasing, not in the last place as a consequence of the increasing 'mobility' of our church members, more extensive traveling, and better communications.

Although these contacts do not often lead to sister-church relations, yet we discover churches which want to live in accordance with the Word of our Lord. And then we find ourselves confronted with many questions like:

- which relationship should be entered into with these churches?
- how can we help these churches ? and
- how can we do that in a responsible manner?

I will give you a few examples by mentioning the various countries where these churches are located: Zaire (Central Africa), the Philippine Islands, Sri Lanka and Singapore (all three in Asia), and Spain (Europe). These examples can easily be multiplied.

From all over the world

Christ our Lord gathers His church all over the world. He uses to that end people of different tongues, cultures, customs, and, last but not least, different histories. And yet, people who are all inspired by His Word.

That applies to you here in Canada and also to us across the Atlantic Ocean, in the Netherlands. In that way we have to let ourselves be engaged in the worldwide work of gathering the church of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We have

to do so with all the means that we have received from Him. And we have to do this being aware of the unique cultural, historical, and ecclesiastical development of all these churches.

Conclusion

For the rest I can be short. You were able to take note of the words which were exchanged between Dr. Hendriks, chairman of our latest Synod, and your delegate Prof. K. Deddens, who visited the Synod Spakenburg-North 1987, together with your brother Berends. (Pro-Acta, Art. 36)

That was plain language! Not a word of French. Not a word of English. And not even a word of 'double Dutch'!

Brother Chairman, Rev. Stam,

I humbly request you to excuse me for any deficiencies in the English of my address. I take comfort in the thought that many members of this Synod as 'Mannen van Neerlands stam' were able to understand what I wanted to say.

Dear brothers,

I thank you from the bottom of my heart for the kind and brotherly words spoken by Rev. Berends on behalf of your General Synod.

From my side I wish you the indispensable blessing of the Lord upon your work as Synod of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

"Hold fast what you have,
that no one may seize your crown!"

(Revelation 3:11)

Thank you!

Rev. M. VanderWel responds to br. Jac. van der Kolk with the following words:

Esteemed brother van der Kolk

After the chairman gave me the assignment to welcome Rev. Jack Peterson of the OPC, I have now been asked to address you, br. Jac. van der Kolk. That makes *me*, I guess, a "Jack of all trades". Yet this is not the case. I am not even a member of the Standing Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad. So if my words betray a certain ignorance with respect to the latest developments in the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, please forgive me. Nevertheless it is a special pleasure for me, as a minister who has received his theological education in Kampen and could start his ministry in one of the Dutch provinces, to respond to the well-chosen words you have spoken on behalf of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands. The old ties with the mother country may in the course of the years perhaps lose some of their colour, but they will never go lost. As an example of such a strong attachment, I could mention the fact that quite some years after the establishment of the Reformed Churches in Canada, one could hear people still speak about "our" General Synod in Hoogeveen!

But br. van der Kolk, let me first of all thank you for the Christian greetings which you have conveyed to us on behalf of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands and also for your prayer that our assembly in its discussions and decisions may be led by the wisdom and guidance of the Holy Spirit. As you may have noticed from our agenda, General Synod 1989 has to deal with several important issues regarding our internal church life, as well as with respect to our relationships with churches abroad and with respect to our ecclesiastical contact with the OPC. In addition to this we also have to give attention to a number of appeals. To go about these matters in a responsible way requires indeed wisdom from above.

We have taken note with gladness of the flourishing condition in which your Theological Institution in Kampen finds itself at the moment. The fact that four new professors could be appointed, six docents could be added to its faculty, and that

no less than 147 students were enrolled this year makes us almost jealous. Yet we should not complain. The “change of the guard” which is to take place at our College in Hamilton reminds us anew of the share which we were allowed and still are allowed to have in the treasures of Kampen. In the solid Reformed teaching of Dr. J. Faber, for whose retirement this Synod has now made the necessary preparations and in the new appointments which Synod could make, we may thankfully acknowledge the fruits which we as Canadian Reformed Churches are allowed to reap from Kampen’s Theological education. That “The School of the Churches” has now become a Theological University is something to which we still have to get used. The beloved “Schoolday” which is held annually has now become a “University day”, I suppose. It is our sincere wish, that in spite of this name change, your Theological University in Kampen may continue to keep that warm spot which it always has had in the hearts of the churches, and that the Lord may continue to make it a blessing for the Reformed faith at home and abroad.

The latest report of our Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad has given us indeed an impressive list of the International Relations in which you as Churches in the Netherlands are involved. In this aspect you are far ahead of us. Meanwhile we can understand it, when you state that because of the variety of contacts, at this moment you do not have a common and clear picture of the rules that have to be applied in each and every case. It could very well be that it is in this *area*, that we as Canadian Reformed Churches are having difficulties in keeping step with you. Over against the progressiveness of the Flying Dutchmen, we may look rather conservative. From the correspondence with our Deputies, as well as from our current discussions at this Synod you may have noticed, that in the midst of our churches there are indeed concerns when it comes, for example, to a further formulation of the basis of the ICRC, and when it comes to a further realization of the ecclesiastical contact which we have with the OPC. As far as your contact with the OPC is concerned, the willingness of your Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad, to work in close deliberation with our churches, is then also greatly appreciated. May there also grow a better understanding of each other’s point of view as far as our participation in the ICRC is concerned, and may the upcoming Conference in Cloverdale, B.C., contribute to that. As a characterization of our approach, one can say, that as Canadian churches we are aware of our ecumenical task towards other faithful churches in this world in making them share in our Reformed heritage. But we like at the same time to be mindful of the fitting exhortation with which you have concluded your brotherly address to us; “hold fast what you have that no one may seize your crown”. We realize that this crown is a crown of grace. and that we therefore have to follow our Master in steadfastness and humility.

Br. van der Kolk, it was a pleasure to have you in our midst. May your visit to us be instrumental in the further strengthening of the bond which we may have with our sister churches in Holland. Please convey in return our Christian greetings to them. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all!

Thank you.

ARTICLE 87

Committee I presents:

Agenda item VIII, G, 1, 2, 3

A. MATERIAL

1. Letter from the Church of Burlington-East, with accompanying report re the Archives of the Canadian Reformed Churches, archivist: br. T. VandenBrink.
2. Letter of endorsement of this report from the Ebenezer Canadian Reformed Church, Burlington-East, Ontario.

3. Letter from the Church at Burlington-West, Ontario , re inspection of the archives.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. The Church of Burlington-East reports an inventory of documents on file, and a list of nine missing documents.
2. It is reported that the declaration of General Synod 1958 that “it is desirable to build up a General Archive” — a declaration which was further supported by General Synods 1962, 1965, and 1974, — has met with poor response among the churches in that little material was contributed.
3. The archive-keeping church makes a number of recommendations regarding the discontinuation and disposal of “General Archives”.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. Synod notes that since the last report, much work has been done to make the Archives more accessible for use.
2. Synod notes that copies of the missing documents appear to be readily obtainable from the originating sources.
3. Synod notes that both the archive-keeping and archive-inspecting churches recommend Synod to discontinue the General Archives.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide:

1. to express its gratitude for the work done by the archive-keeping Church of Burlington East and its archivist, and gratefully discharge the church for the period 1986-1989.
2. to express its gratitude to the Church of Burlington-West for inspecting the synodical archives, and gratefully discharge the church for the period 1986-1989.
3. to discontinue the efforts to establish a “General Archive”, and instruct the Church of Burlington East to dispose of the collected material of this Archive as they see fit.
4. to instruct the archive-keeping church to include the documents of Synodical Committees with the Archives of General Synods.
5. to instruct the Church of Burlington East to locate and file the documents reported to be missing in the Archives of General Synods.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 88

Committee I presents:

Agenda Items VIII, H, 1, 2

A. MATERIAL:

1. Report of the Committee on Bible Translations.
2. Letter from the Church at Smithville, ON.
3. Letter from the Church at Carman, MB.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. The Committee met once on September 10, 1987, to discuss the mandate.
2. The Committee reports that it decided that the time schedule was too tight to make submissions to the RSV Bible Committee, since this Committee was to give their work to the publisher by mid-1988.

3. The Church of Smithville notes with concern that the RSV Bible Committee is proposing to eliminate “masculine-oriented language so far as this can be done without altering passages that reflect the historical situation of ancient patriarchal culture, and of masculine-oriented society.”
4. The Church at Carman expresses concern about the direction the RSV Committee is taking in translating Scripture, specifically with its intention to “eliminate masculine-biased language pertaining to people, where such changes do not violate the sense of the original text.” Further, the Church at Carman proposes that Synod instruct the Committee on Bible Translations to scrutinize the new edition of the RSV, as well as the latest edition of the New King James version as a possible alternative translation for future use in the churches.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. Synod note that the Committee met very infrequently, given its mandate.
2. Because of changes in regard to the elimination of masculine-biased language, further scrutiny of the New RSV Bible appears to be desirable.
3. Based on information received from the RSV Bible Committee, there will not be substantial changes in the forthcoming edition of the RSV.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide:

1. to thank the Committee for the work it has done and the Report it submitted.
2. to continue the Committee with the following mandate to the Committee:
 - a. to scrutinize the NRSV Bible as soon as it becomes available with respect to faithfulness in translation, particularly in regard to the use of so-called inclusive language.
 - b. to provide information about its findings to the churches and report to the next General Synod.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 89

Committee I presents:

Agenda Item VIII, K

A. MATERIAL

Report of the Address Church, the Church at Burlington-East.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. Synod Burlington 1986 appointed the Church at Burlington East as address church.
2. The Church at Burlington-East received and acted upon two letters from the Ecumenism Research Agency in Sun City, Arizona, requesting copies of the Yearbooks of the Canadian Reformed Churches. These requests were granted, and a copy of the 1986 and 1988 Yearbooks were sent.

C. CONSIDERATION

Synod notes that the Church of Burlington-East has fulfilled properly its mandate.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide:

1. to thank the Church of Burlington-East for the work done, and discharge the church for the period 1986-1989.
2. to reappoint the Church at Burlington-East as Address Church of the Canadian Reformed Churches, and to request it to ensure that it be known as the church to which communications to the Canadian Reformed Churches should be addressed.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 90

Committee III presents:

Agenda VIII, D, 13

A. MATERIAL

Letter from the Church at Brampton, ON, re Acts Regional Synod East of October 15, 16, and 22, 1987, Acts Art. 6, e, VI, 3.

After some discussion, the Advisory Committee takes this report back for revision.

(see Article 163)

ARTICLE 91

Adjournment

The chairman requests br. L. Stam to close the evening. Br. L. Stam requests the delegates and guests to sing Psalm 75:1,6 and leads in closing prayer.

MORNING SESSION - SATURDAY, APRIL 29, 1989

ARTICLE 92

Reopening

The chairman requests the assembly to sing Psalm 106:1, he reads Matthew 7:1-12 and leads in prayer. He expresses a word of welcome to the delegates and guests. The roll call shows that all delegates are present.

ARTICLE 93

Adoption of the Acts

Articles 80 - 91 of the Acts are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 94

Committee I presents:

Agenda Items VIII, F, 1, a - c, 2

A. MATERIAL:

1. Report of the Committee for Contact with the OPC
2. Letter from the Church at Attercliffe re OPC
3. Letter from the Church at Chilliwack re OPC
4. Letter from the Church at Smithville re OPC.
5. Overture from the Church at Hamilton re OPC.

MOTION TO AMEND

The following motion to amend the Advisory Committee proposal was made and duly seconded:

To add to Consideration IV, 3: Ecclesiastical contact, since it is not permanent, does not include pulpit exchange, intercommunion, joint action, etc. (Synod Smithville 1980, Acts, p. 70, Consideration 3).

ADOPTED

The Advisory Committee report as amended reads as follows:

B. INTRODUCTION

Synod 1986 gave to the Committee for Contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC) the following mandate:

1. To continue contact with the OPC, taking into account the rules for "ecclesiastical contact" which include "continued discussion" on "issues of mutual concern", (p. 57, Recommendation 2).

The rules for ecclesiastical contact (Synod 1977 Acts, Art. 91, p. 42), are as follows:

- a. To invite delegates to each other's General Assemblies (G.A.) and to accord such delegates privileges of the floor in the Assembly or Synod, but no vote;
 - b. To exchange Minutes and Acts of each other's General Assemblies and General Synods as well as communications on major issues of mutual concern, and to solicit comments on these documents;
 - c. To be diligent by means of the discussions to use the contact for the purpose of reaching full correspondence.
2. To charge the Committee to continue the discussion on divergencies, which are an issue of mutual concern and to report on this to the next Synod, (p. 57, recommendation 3).
 3. That the Committee for Contact OPC continue the contacts about the relationships which the OPC entertains with others, expressing the following concerns:
 - a. That the relationship of the OPC with the CRC and their membership in the RES remain stumbling blocks in reaching full correspondence;
 - b. To inform the OPC that in the event the OPC joins and is received into the PCA, the official contact with the OPC is not transferable to the PCA.

The Committee should continue to solicit clear commitments from the OPC concerning these matters, (p. 58, Recommendation 1).
 4. To pass on the Report about the fencing of the Lord's Table, (including the sections A, B, C) to the OPC through its Committee on Ecumenicity and Inter-Church Relations (CEIR), along with the above considerations of General Synod 1986 and invite the CEIR to have meetings about these matters, (p. 60, Recommendation 3).
 5. To ask the OPC to study this report and to respond to it. This response should pay attention to the related doctrinal subjects which are listed in the section dealing with the controversy at Blue Bell, (p. 60, Recommendation 4).
 6. To invite their CEIR to have joint meeting(s) about this matter of mutual concern, (p. 59, bottom; p. 60, Recommendation 5).

C. OBSERVATIONS

- I. Committee Report

1. The Committee reports that it sent a delegate to the 53rd and 54th General Assemblies of the OPC, (pp. 2-3). Reports of these delegates are included in the Committee report.
 2. The Committee reports that it has received from the OPC an official statement that the OPC has withdrawn from the Reformed Ecumenical Synod (RES) on June 10, 1988. A copy of the "News Release" of the OPC and the Statement of Resignation of the OPC from the RES are attached to the Committee report.
 3. The Committee reports that it received a copy of the OPC's statement "Biblical Principles of the Unity of the Church" sent at the instruction of the 54th General Assembly. A copy is attached to the Committee report.
 4. The Committee evaluated and responded to this statement at a combined meeting with the CEIR on January 24, 1989. The published response, "Some Remarks on the OPC statement", is attached to the Committee report as Addendum 3.
 5. The Committee discussed the matters of fencing the Lord's Table, the Blue-Bell situation, relations with the RES and CRC, at a meeting with CEIR on January 24, 1989.
 6. The Committee reports that a number of exchanges by mail and telephone took place.
 7. The Committee reports that in regard to the relationship with the PCA the CEIR understands that our official contact with the OPC is not transferable to another body.
- II. Letter from the Church at Attercliffe
1. The Church at Attercliffe, having considered the response of General Synod of Burlington 1986 re contact with the OPC decides not to appeal the answer of Synod 1986 at this time, but informs Synod that it reserves the right, if deemed necessary, to appeal this matter to the next General Synod.
 2. The Church of Attercliffe comes to this decision by considering that the mandate given to the Committee for Contact with the OPC now includes the doctrinal issues already mentioned in the appeal of 1980, and that waiting with an appeal is in accordance with the advice of Synod Burlington 1986.
 3. The Church of Attercliffe expresses a number of concerns regarding the relationship with the OPC. Attercliffe also suggests to address the General Assembly directly, besides continuing the contact through the CEIR.
- III. Letter from the Church at Chilliwack
1. The Church at Chilliwack proposes to discontinue the ecclesiastical contact with the OPC. The grounds are:
 - a. its assessment of all received information to date;
 - b. the name 'ecclesiastical contact' has created a lot of confusion and is misunderstood by the membership, and could be construed as a sister-church relationship. This is inconsistent with our Church Order, where no such contact is mentioned.
 2. The Church at Chilliwack proposes that Committee contact be retained in order to come to a full sister-church relationship.
- IV. Letter from the Church at Smithville
1. The Church at Smithville suggests that General Synod Burlington-West

1986 did not serve the churches well by “receiving” the report on the Evaluation of Divergencies rather than evaluating it. Smithville suggests that this evaluation should have weighed the evidence, and should have led to a conclusion whether or not the divergencies in doctrine and practice form an impediment.

2. The Church of Smithville maintains that the churches should be diligent in the matter of the divergencies, and in the fundamental questions regarding the Westminster Confessions, the Catechisms, the Standards of Government, Discipline and Worship in the OPC.
3. The Church of Smithville is of the opinion that a detailed evaluation of the practical consequences of maintaining the relationship in its present form with the OPC is required.
4. The Church of Smithville feels that to date little progress has been made in resolving the issue of the fencing of the Lord's table, and this is a cause for concern.
5. The Church of Smithville expresses disappointment that the churches have received almost no information for more than two years concerning the work done by the Committee for Contact with the OPC.
6. The Church at Smithville requests Synod to formally evaluate the divergencies in doctrine and practice between the OPC and ourselves.
7. Smithville also requests Synod to mandate the Committee for Contact with the OPC to evaluate the doctrinal and church political statements which are binding in the OPC with a view to establishing whether these are an impediment to our stated desire to reach full correspondence with the OPC.

V. Letter from the Church at Hamilton

1. The Church of Hamilton restates the decisions of Synod 1977 to Synod 1986, re contact with the OPC.
2. The Church at Hamilton requests Synod to note with regret the lack of substantial progress toward unity.
3. The Church of Hamilton states that full correspondence with the OPC appears presently to be out of reach.
4. The Church of Hamilton overtures Synod to discontinue the ecclesiastical contact with the OPC. In its consideration 1, the Church of Hamilton quotes Art. 27, B.C. to support this overture.
5. The Church of Hamilton proposes to continue contact with the OPC with the mandate to keep the churches informed by means of Press Releases and to report to the churches six months before the convening of the next Synod, as well as to report to the next Synod.

D. CONSIDERATIONS

I. Committee Report

1. Synod notes several encouraging developments:
 - a. the withdrawal of the OPC from the RES means the removal of a great impediment to unity.
 - b. the recent OPC statement on “Biblical Principles on the Unity of the Church” gives hope for new and concrete discussions on church unity.
 - c. the OPC brothers especially at this time (after the OPC has rejected “to join and be received” with the PCA, and has withdrawn from the REC) plead for continuation of contact with our churches because they feel enriched by our Reformed background.

2. Synod also notes several disappointing aspects:
 - a. the discussions of the divergencies have not received sufficient attention by the Committee and the CEIR.
 - b. the serious concerns expressed by Synod 1986 regarding lack of progress towards “uniformity of opinion” (Acts, Art. 128, C, Considerations) were not sufficiently addressed since 1986. This has resulted in growing unease about the lack of progress (see e.g. the submissions of the Churches at Attercliffe, Chilliwack, Hamilton, Smithville). The Committee for Contact with the OPC has not carried out its mandate in this respect.
 - c. the matter of fencing the Lord’s table, considered by Synod 1986 as “a serious confessional divergency which is a major issue of mutual concern” (Acts Synod 1986, Art. 132, Considerations B), should be treated and presented in this light. Although a beginning has been made, further discussion is mandatory.
 - d. the Committee for Contact with the OPC and the CEIR have only met once during the last three years. While our Committee may perhaps not be faulted for this, it remains imperative that the discussions of the issues with the OPC be prioritized and intensified. The OPC, from its side, must also demonstrate a greater sense of eagerness which corresponds with their plea to our churches.
 3. It would be unwise to terminate the “ecclesiastical contact” relationship with the OPC unless it is clear that this relationship no longer functions, is unfruitful, or dangerous. From the Report of the Committee it appears that this is certainly not the case at present. It is important that patience be exercised in recognition of the fact that the Canadian Reformed Churches and the OPC share the common bond of faith.
 4. Synod notes that the matter of the relationship of the OPC with the Christian Reformed Church is still of great concern for the Committee and Synod. It is inconsistent for the OPC to withdraw from the RES on the one hand, and maintain close relations with member churches of the RES on the other hand. In view of possible participation of the OPC in the ICRC, this matter should receive priority at the General Assembly of the OPC.
 5. Synod expresses its gratitude that the Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad of our Dutch sister churches voiced its willingness to work in “close deliberations” with the Canadian Reformed Churches in its contact with the OPC.
 6. Synod notes that the OPC, after having terminated the relationship with the RES, has decided to send observers to the ICRC to be held in Vancouver, BC, D.V., June, 1989.
- II. Letter from the Church at Attercliffe
 1. Synod cannot deal with a statement concerning a possible future appeal.
 2. Although it is within the province of General Synod to place matters directly on the floor of the General Assembly this should be done only when the matter is urgent and requires by-passing of the appointed channels of communication. Attercliffe does not demonstrate the necessity of this action.
 - III. Letter from the Church at Chilliwack
 1. Chilliwack’s assessment of both official and non-official information (or lack of it) does not warrant a discontinuation of ecclesiastical contact, cf. Report of the Committee for OPC.

2. The Church at Chilliwack does not prove that the name 'ecclesiastical contact' has created a lot of confusion, or that it is misunderstood by the membership.
3. The Church of Chilliwack does not prove that the relationship of 'ecclesiastical contact' is inconsistent with the Church Order. Synod Smithville's 1980 statement on this contact implies that the rules for ecclesiastical contact are not necessarily in conflict with the Church Order, cf. Art. 97, III, B, 5, p. 69.

IV. Letter from the Church at Smithville

1. Although the Committee for Contact with the OPC concluded in its Evaluation of Divergencies that the divergencies are not an impediment to recognizing the OPC as a true church, Synod 1986 in receiving this report did not make a judgment concerning this opinion of the Committee. Furthermore, although Synod 1986 received the Evaluation without making a judgment on it, it is clear that the Evaluation of Divergencies was received as a substantiation for the decision of General Synod 1977, cf. Acts Art. 126, B, Considerations (2) 1-4, p. 55.
2. The Church of Smithville fails to distinguish adequately between impediments to the recognition of the OPC as a true church, and impediments to full correspondence with the OPC. The divergencies were not considered to be impediments to the former, (as per Synod 1977, and Evaluation of Divergencies, Acts 1986, pp. 142-147), but may be impediments to the latter.
3. It is not in the province of General Synod 1989 to provide a detailed evaluation of the practical consequences of maintaining "Ecclesiastical Contact" with the OPC. The recognition of the OPC as a true church does not imply that our membership should act as if a sister-church relationship exists with the OPC. Ecclesiastical contact, since it is not permanent, does not include pulpit exchange, intercommunion, joint action etc. (Synod Smithville, 1980, Acts p. 70 Considerations 3).
4. The matter of the divergencies, including the fundamental questions regarding the doctrinal and church-political statements binding in the OPC form an integral part of the ongoing mandate of the Committee for Contact with the OPC.
5. According to the Report of the Committee for Contact with the OPC, the Committee was assured that the matter of fencing the Lord's table has the continued attention of the OPC and the CEIR.

V. Letter from the Church at Hamilton

1. In quoting Art. 27 Belgic Confession the Church at Hamilton neglects to quote the crucial words "with heart and will". The willingness to unite is of primary importance in any relationship of ecclesiastical fellowship.
2. Although Synod recognizes that progress has been slow, Hamilton has not proven that the OPC lacks the willingness to work towards full church unity, (Cf. the Committee Report, and the statement : Biblical Principles of the Unity of the Church" along with the statement: "Some remarks . . .").

E. RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Committee Report

Synod decide:

1. to thank the Committee for Contact with the OPC for its work, and to continue the temporary relationship of "Ecclesiastical Contact" in the understanding that encouraging indications for progress are present.

2. to acknowledge gratefully the Scriptural witness that the OPC delegates have given within the RES — especially with respect to the apostasy in the synodical Reformed Churches in the Netherlands — the exemplary way in which they have spoken the truth in love (Ephs. 4), and the clear manner in which they finally terminated the membership of the OPC in the Reformed Ecumenical Council.
3. to convey this acknowledgment to the ICRC and to recommend to the ICRC that before admitting the OPC for membership, if so requested, it evaluate the relationship of the OPC to the Christian Reformed Church, in the light of the latter's membership in the REC, and the OPC's stated acknowledgment of concern regarding the REC.
4. to remind the Dutch sister churches to work in such a way that we may continue to present a unified testimony as sister churches in our contact with the OPC.
5. to continue the Committee for Contact with the OPC, with the specific mandate:
 - a. to maintain the contact with the OPC, taking into account the rules for Ecclesiastical Contact, with the understanding that the temporary relationship of "ecclesiastical contact" is designed to come to a full sister-church relationship in the unity of the true faith and is not intended to continue indefinitely, or become a relationship of permanent status.
 - b. to include in the "continued discussions" on "issues of mutual concern" (Acts, Synod 1977, p. 42) the statement on Biblical Principles of Church Unity.
 - c. to be diligent to continue the discussion on and the evaluation of the divergencies such as the doctrine of the covenant, visible and invisible church, the assurance of faith, the observance of the law, the fencing of the Lord's Table, confessional membership, church-political differences, and the contact with the CRC.
 - d. to coordinate the discussion of the divergencies with the discussion concerning the Biblical principles on the unity of the church.
 - e. to serve the following General Synod with a report to be sent to the churches at least 6 months before the beginning of this Synod.
 - f. to keep the churches informed concerning its activities by means of interim reports and Press releases.

II. Letter from the Church at Attercliffe

Synod decide:

to take note of the communication of the Church at Attercliffe in the formulation of Synod's mandate to the Committee for Contact with the OPC, and to inform Attercliffe accordingly.

III. Letter from the Church at Chilliwack

Synod decide:

not to accede to the proposal of the Church at Chilliwack to return from "ecclesiastical contact" to "committee contact".

IV. Letter from the Church at Smithville

Synod decide:

1. not to accede to the request of Smithville re a formal evaluation by Synod of the divergencies.

2. that the request of Smithville for evaluation of the doctrinal and church-political documents and statements of the OPC by Synod be denied.

V. Letter from the Church at Hamilton

Synod decide:

to deny the overture of Hamilton.

MOTION TO AMEND

The following motion to amend the Advisory Committee proposal was made and duly seconded:

1. To delete the last sentence of IV, 1 from the Advisory Committee Report.
2. To delete all of IV, 2 from the Advisory Committee Report.
3. To replace IV, 3 of the Advisory Committee Report with the following: Although it is within the province of Synod to evaluate its Committee Reports, in view of the developments at Blue Bell and Laurel, it is wise to reserve judgment at this time because this situation involves the same doctrinal questions.
4. To replace the Advisory Committee Report Recommendation IV, 1 as follows: Not to accede to the request of the Church at Smithville re a formal decision on the "Evaluation of Divergencies" at this time.
5. To replace the Advisory Committee Report Recommendation IV, 2 as follows: To advise the Church at Smithville that the Committee on Contact with the OPC is mandated to continue discussing and evaluating the doctrinal matters which led to the situation at Blue Bell and Laurel.

DEFEATED

The Committee Report, as amended is

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 95

Committee II presents:

Agenda Item VIII, D, 18

A. MATERIAL

Letter from br. J. VanderMeulen.

B. ADMISSIBILITY

Since Liturgical Forms are a matter of the churches in common and br. VanderMeulen requests the alteration of one of these forms, the matter should be declared admissible.

C. OBSERVATIONS

1. Br. VanderMeulen requests to change the accepted answer to the questions in the Form for the Ordination of Elders and Deacons, "I do with all my heart" to "I do".
2. It is against his conscience "to say more than what God teaches us in His Word."
3. General Synod 1983 did not publish any Scriptural reasons for the addition "with all my heart".

D. CONSIDERATIONS

1. The Scriptural references adduced by br. J. VanderMeulen deal with swearing an oath, and are not directly applicable to the solemn vow made by the office-bearers when assuming office in Christ's Church.

2. The formulation of a vow as is done in the Liturgical Forms expresses the solemnity and sincerity of the vow. The addition, "with all my heart", articulates the total commitment required for the execution of the office into which one is installed.
3. Since the addition "with all my heart" does not alter the meaning of the expression "I do", General Synod 1983 did not need to give any special Scriptural reasons for this addition.

E. RECOMMENDATION

Synod decide:

not to accede to the request of br. VanderMeulen.

ADOPTED

(note: this decision was revised, see Article 108)

Rev. P.K.A. de Boer and Elder A. Poppe abstain from voting because this appeal concerns a matter in the Church at Carman.

ARTICLE 96

Adjournment

Because it is the last day of Synod at which Prof. Dr. and Mrs. J. Faber can be present, on behalf of Synod the chairman bids them farewell, extending Synod's gratitude for all the work that they have done among the churches. In reply Prof. Dr. J. Faber expresses gratitude to the churches for the trust they have shown in him by past appointments to standing committees. He wishes Synod the Lord's blessing when it continues its work next week.

After wishing all the delegates a good Sunday, the chairman requests br. A. Van Egmond to close Synod for the day. Br. A. Van Egmond does so by requesting the assembly to sing Hymn 46:1,2 and leads in prayer.

MORNING SESSION - MONDAY, MAY 1, 1989

ARTICLE 97

Reopening

The chairman requests the delegates to sing Hymn 4:1,4. He reads Revelation 4 and leads in prayer.

Roll call shows that brs. G.J. Nordeman, L. Stam and A. Van Egmond are absent. These brothers have given due notice of their absence.

The chairman welcomes the delegates and wishes them the Lord's strength to continue the work at Synod. He notes that Rev. P. Aasman has accepted his call to the Church at Grand Valley, and that the Church at Smithville has extended a call to Rev. R. Aasman. The chairman wishes Rev. R. Aasman wisdom to make a decision pleasing to the Lord. On behalf of Synod, the chairman extends congratulations to Rev. and Mrs. C. Bosch who are celebrating their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary. The second clerk will pass the congratulations on to them on behalf of Synod.

ARTICLE 98

Adoption of the Acts

Acts, Articles 92 - 96 are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 99

Adjournment

Synod is adjourned for committee work.

EVENING SESSION - MONDAY, MAY 1, 1989

ARTICLE 100

Reopening

The chairman requests the assembly to sing the proposed melody of D. Zwart to the revised adopted Apostles' Creed. He speaks a word of welcome to the guests.

Roll call shows that br. L. Stam is absent with notification.

ARTICLE 101

Rev. Drs. J. De Jong requests the floor of Synod to make an announcement. He speaks the following words.

Mr. Chairman:

It was eleven days ago that I received from you the official communication from the Board of Governors concerning my appointment as professor of Diaconiology and Ecclesiology. I was asked to make known to you my decision regarding this appointment in ten days. Yesterday being Sunday, this is the first opportunity I have of informing you concerning my decision.

In regard to this decision I can say that, in view of the way in which my life has been led by the LORD, I consider it my duty to accept the appointment that has been given me, in the hope that the LORD will also bless this decision and use it for the building of His Church. With respect to the ministry I can also say that I have always enjoyed serving as a minister in the churches, and I am immensely grateful that the Lord has counted me worthy to be one of the many ambassadors labouring in His vineyard. I think I will always miss the work of a minister.

At the same time, I realize that the inclination to further studies has always been with me, and that from the beginning of my work as a minister, my consistories have always encouraged further study and also made allowances for it. In my first congregation I was somewhat hesitant about completing the graduate program I began in Holland, and even when I first arrived in my second congregation I did not see this as a high priority. However, when through a number of events the way was opened for a more concentrated plan of further study, I gratefully took the opportunity, and I must say that both academically and personally this was a very meaningful experience; indeed, it affected us deeply as a family, and we are extremely grateful for the opportunity afforded us to live in Holland so that the program of study could be resumed again.

By now most if not all the brothers of Synod know that I have been appointed to teach subjects outside my immediate area of specialization. Once again I must become the beginner. But I think that in any field of academic study, and especially in the rich and variegated world of theology, one is always a 'beginner'! I hardly know what awaits me, but I rely on the help of the God who promises that He will equip those whom He calls. I am also confident that I may count on the help and support of fellow workers in the College and the continuing prayers of the churches. With this knowledge I hope that I may be of service in training our future ministers concerning the rudiments of preaching and teaching, and the history and polity of the church of God.

Once again I wish to thank the churches for the confidence they have placed in me and I hope and pray that this decision may serve the building of the church, the coming of God's kingdom, and the glory of His holy Name.

Thank you.

The chairman replies to Rev. Drs. J. De Jong with the following words:

I do not need to say much. On behalf of Synod I express gratitude, also to the Lord, that you have come to this decision. Although we did not expect otherwise, we understand that the congregation of Burlington South has also weighed heavily. We appreciate how you have expressed concern for this congregation.

You said that in the subjects you will teach you are a beginner. We pray that the Lord will bless this beginning so that you may be a blessing for the churches.

Thank you.

ARTICLE 102

Committee I presents:

Agenda Item VIII, I

A. MATERIAL

Report of the Committee for Relations with Churches Abroad

B. INTRODUCTION

1. The Committee for Relations with Churches Abroad had received the following mandate from Synod 1986

A. General

1. to continue the Ecclesiastical Fellowship with the Free Reformed Churches of Australia, De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, and Die Vrije Gereformeerde Kerken in Suid-Afrika in accordance with the adopted rules.
2. to charge the Committee to send an invitation to sister churches abroad at least one year prior to the date the next General Synod is to convene and to have our churches represented by a delegate to General Synods of such churches abroad if invited and when feasible. (Acts Art. 145, D, 1, 2)

B. Name change

3. to change the name of this Committee to "The Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad". (Acts 1986, Art. 177, D, 1)

C. Church Relations

4. to continue to address the sister churches on the matter of church relations, setting forth the decisions and concerns of the Canadian Reformed Churches, as outlined by the General Synods of Smithville (Acts, Art. 154, D, 1, 2) and Cloverdale (Acts, Art. 110, D, 1).
5. to evaluate the reactions of the sister churches in these matters with respect to a possible common approach.
6. to report to the next General Synod with suitable recommendations (Acts 1986, Art. 177, D, 2).

D. Korea

7. to explain to the PCK this decision of the General Synod of Burlington West of 1986.
8. to respond to any reaction, inquiries, and information the PCK may direct to our churches.
9. to be diligent in the endeavour to improve communications with the PCK so that the "entering into and maintaining of a correspondence relationship" becomes possible.
10. to report to the next General Synod. (Acts, Art. 150, D, 3)

E. Scotland

11. to charge the Committee on Correspondence with Churches Abroad to open contacts with the FCS to investigate and evaluate their history, background, doctrinal standards and their maintenance, church government, and their practices in order to ascertain whether we should recognize them as a true church of our Lord Jesus Christ and should enter into a sister-church relation with them.
12. to instruct the Committee on Correspondence with Churches Abroad to continue to inform the churches about the history, background, doctrinal standards and their maintenance, church government, and practices of the other churches which participate in the ICRC and with whom we have no sister church relationship.
13. to keep the current sister churches informed of all progress made in this regard and to work in cooperation with them.
14. to submit its findings and recommendations to the next General Synod;
15. to keep the churches informed of progress made. (Acts 1986, Art. 178, E, 2, 3, 4, 5)

F. The International Conference of Reformed Churches

16. to instruct the Committee on Correspondence with Churches Abroad to prepare the next meeting of the ICRC as they have outlined in their report by:
 - a. requesting the Canadian Reformed Church at Cloverdale to organize a prayer service before the commencement of the 1989 meeting of the ICRC;
 - b. consulting the sister churches on suitable topics for the 1989 meeting of the ICRC;
 - c. assuming all reasonable cost related to their role as host on behalf of the Canadian Reformed Churches;
 - d. depending on the nature of the matters to be discussed to invite either one or both of the professors of the Theological College recommended by the Committee as advisors to the Conference;
 - e. designating two members of the Committee as delegates.
17. To advise the executive of the ICRC that the amendments as proposed by the General Synod of Burlington West 1986 be placed on the agenda instead of those proposed by Synod Cloverdale 1983, to wit:
 - a. that a stipulation be included in the "Basis" of the ICRC that the delegates subscribe only to the standards of the churches of which they are a member;
 - b. that membership of the RES is an impediment to membership of the ICRC;
 - c. that "CONSTITUTION Art. V - Authority" be amended to read: "The conclusions of the conference shall be advisory in character. Member churches are to be informed of these conclusions and are recommended to work towards their implementation." (Acts 1986, Art, 175, D, 1, 2)

C. OBSERVATIONS

I. The Free Reformed Churches of Australia (FRC)

The Committee notes that

1. Acts of Synods were exchanged with the FRC of Australia. An invitation to attend the General Synod of Albany, September 1987 was received. Greetings and best wishes were sent by telegram.
2. the FRC have reaffirmed their previous statement that the Free Church of Scotland is a faithful church of the Lord.
3. the FRC have also recognized the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ireland as a faithful church of the Lord, and a relationship of temporary contact has been formed.
4. through its deputies the FRC are presently entertaining contacts with several Reformed and Presbyterian churches. The FRC are ending their attempts to make contact with the Dutch Reformed Church of Sri Lanka.
5. the FRC have instructed their deputies to propose a number of amendments to the Constitution of the ICRC. They also wish to place the matter of Bible translations on the agenda of the ICRC.
6. the relationship between the FRC and the Canadian Reformed Churches has seen intensification in recent years.
7. from the correspondence received it can be noted with thankfulness that the FRC of Australia continue to be faithful to the Word of the Lord, the confessions, and the Church Order.

II. Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (Vrijgemaakt) (GKN(V))

The Committee notes that

1. the Acts of Synods were exchanged with the GKN(V). Upon the invitation of the Dutch churches to attend the General Synod of Spakenburg - Noord 1987, two delegates represented our churches at this assembly.
2. the GKN(V) have initiated and still maintain contact with several Reformed and Presbyterian Churches around the world.
3. the GKN(V) are making a number of proposals to amend the constitution of the ICRC. The GKN(V) apparently do not accept the proposal of the Canadian Reformed Churches regarding the basis and Constitution of the ICRC. They also do not accept the position of the Canadian Reformed Churches respecting the incompatibility of membership in the RES and ICRC.
4. it may express gratitude for the fact that the GKN(V) desire to be faithful to God's Word and to abide by the Reformed creeds and Church Order.

III. Die Vrije Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika (VGK)

The Committee notes that

1. Acts of Synod were exchanged with the VGK of South Africa. The Committee also received an invitation to attend their General Synod in Johannesburg, 1987. Greetings were communicated by mail.
2. the VGK of South Africa have recognized the Westminster Standards as a Reformed confession, and they propose that when contacts are made with foreign churches that subscribe to this confession, issues re "the divergencies are raised in all modesty, so that in the light of God's Word they together may proceed in the confession of the truth."
3. the VGK of South Africa will continue the contact with the Presbyterian Church of Korea.
4. the VGK of South Africa have applied for membership in the ICRC, and this will be considered at the ICRC meeting of June, 1989.
5. from the correspondence received, it can with gratitude conclude that the VGK

of South Africa desire to be faithful to the Word of God, the Reformed Confessions and the Church Order.

D. CONSIDERATIONS

1. from the correspondence with and the Acts of the FRC of Australia, the GKN(V), and the VGK of South Africa, we may gratefully conclude that these churches are faithful to the Word of God, the confessions, and the Church Order.
2. with regard to our correspondence with these churches, the Committee has fulfilled its mandate.
3. the Committee for Churches Abroad notes that at this moment it is not ready to report anything concrete concerning a unified approach and common set of rules for ecclesiastical relations. (see the Committee Report, Appendix)

E. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide :

1. to thank the Committee for the work done since 1986.
2. to continue the Ecclesiastical Fellowship with the Free Reformed Churches of Australia, the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland and Die Vrije Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika in accordance with the adopted rules.
3. to charge the Committee to send an invitation to our sister churches abroad to attend the next General Synod as soon as its date has been established and published by the convening church, and to have our churches represented by a delegate to General Synods of such churches abroad if invited and when feasible.
4. to renew the mandate of the Committee as given by Synod 1986 concerning the following points:
 - a. to request the churches abroad that in the matter of relationship or contacts with third parties “there be consultation and coordination between sister churches.”
 - b. to request the churches abroad that contacts in countries where sister churches are already established be made not independently but in consultation with these sister churches.
 - c. to continue to address the sister churches on the matter of church relations, setting forth the decisions and concerns of the Canadian Reformed Churches, as outlined by the General Synods of Smithville (Acts, Art. 154, D, 1, 2) and Cloverdale (Acts, Art. 110, D, 1).
 - d. to evaluate the reactions of the sister churches in these matters with respect to a possible common approach.
 - e. to report to the next General Synod with suitable recommendations (Acts 1986, Art. 177, D, 2).

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 103

Committee I presents:

Agenda Item VIII, I (continued from Article 102)

A. MATERIAL

Report of the Committee for Relations with Churches Abroad

IV - Presbyterian Church in Korea (Koryu-Pa or Kosin) (PCK)

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. The Committee has fulfilled its mandate with regard to the Presbyterian Church of Korea, by informing them of decisions made by Synod 1986 regarding their churches.
2. The Committee notes that communications with the PCK have not met with any reaction.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. The lines of communication with the PCK still appear to be very poor. According to Synod 1986 (Acts, Art. 150, Considerations 2 and 5), there should be a proper line of communication with the PCK in order to work towards a sister-church relationship.
2. With regard to the PCK, the Committee has tried to fulfill its mandate.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide:

1. to thank the Committee for its work done with regard to the Presbyterian Church in Korea (Koryu-Pa)
2. to charge the Committee to continue to be diligent regarding the matter of communication with the PCK, and report to the next General Synod.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 104

Adjournment

The chairman requests Rev. B.J. Berends to close the day. He requests the delegates and guests to sing 96:1,2 and leads in prayer.

MORNING SESSION - TUESDAY, MAY 2, 1989

ARTICLE 105

Reopening

The chairman requests the assembly to sing Psalm 141:1,2. He reads James 3 and leads in prayer. He expresses a word of welcome.
The Roll call shows that br. L. Stam is absent with notification.

ARTICLE 106

Adjournment

After a few announcements regarding what matters will be dealt with in plenary session, Synod is adjourned for committee work.

AFTERNOON SESSION - TUESDAY MAY 2, 1989

ARTICLE 107

Reopening

Roll call is held. It shows that all delegates are present.

ARTICLE 108

Committee II requests revision of Acts, Article 95.

Agenda Item VIII, D, 18

The request for revision is granted so that the Advisory Committee report now reads as follows:

A. MATERIAL

Letter from br. J. VanderMeulen

B. ADMISSIBILITY

Since Liturgical Forms are a matter of the churches in common and br. VanderMeulen requests the alteration of one of these forms the matter should be declared admissible.

C. OBSERVATIONS

1. Br. J. VanderMeulen requests to change the accepted answer to the questions in the Form for the Ordination of Elders and Deacons, "I do with all my heart" to "I do."
2. It is against his conscience "to say more than what God teaches us in His Word."
3. General Synod 1983 did not publish any Scriptural reasons for the addition "with all my heart."

D. CONSIDERATIONS

1. The Scriptural references (Matt.5:37;James 5:12) adduced by br. J. VanderMeulen deal with the unnecessary swearing of an oath, and are not directly applicable to the solemn vow made by the office-bearers when assuming office in Christ's church.
2. The formulation of a vow as is done in the Liturgical Forms express the solemnity and sincerity of the vow. The addition, "with all my heart", articulates the total commitment required for the execution of the office into which one is installed.
3. Since the addition "with all my heart" does not alter the meaning of the expression "I do", General Synod 1983 does not need to give any special Scriptural reasons for this addition.

D. RECOMMENDATION

Synod decide:

not to accede to the request of br. J. VanderMeulen.

The decision as amended is

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 109

In closed session

COMMITTEE III presents:

Agenda Items VIII, A, 1, a, b, c

A. MATERIAL

1. Letter from Regional Synod East of Oct. 19, 1988 re Nominations for the Board of Governors of the Theological College
2. Letter from Regional Synod West of Nov. 8, 1988 re Nominations for the Board of Governors of the Theological College
3. Letter from the Church at Abbotsford re same

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. a. The Board of Governors recommends that Synod "appoint, select, re-appoint, or re-elect six active ministers as Governors (in accordance with

Section 3.04 [a] of By-law Number 1 [as amended]) to hold office until the next General Synod and to appoint at least three substitutes from each Regional Synod area.”

- b. Regional Synod East of Oct. 19, 1988 nominated to the Board of Governors of the Theological College Revs. D. De Jong, P. Kingma, Cl. Stam. As substitutes Revs. J. VanRietschoten, R. Aasman, and J. De Jong (in that order).
 - c. Regional Synod West of Nov. 8, 1988 nominated to the Board of Governors of the Theological College Revs. B.J. Berends, M. VanderWel, C. VanSpronsen. As substitutes Revs. J.D. Wielenga, P.K.A. de Boer and J. Moesker (in that order).
 - d. The Church at Abbotsford notes that usually all classis resorts were represented as equally as possible and wishes to draw attention especially to Rev. J.D. Wielenga for nomination to the Board of Governors.
 - e. Rev. J. De Jong has been appointed by Synod as professor of Ecclesiology and Diaconology. Retirement of Rev. D. De Jong is to take place D.V. summer 1989.
 - f. The Act, By-laws and regulations of the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches states in Bill Pr. 42 5a(6) “No person may be a Governor unless, a. he is a Canadian citizen”.
2. The Board of Governors presents the following proposals regarding the Governors (Finance and Property Committee):
- a. to accept the resignation of C. Loopstra and H. Kampen as Governors and pursuant to Section 5 (2) of the Act and Section 3.04 of By-law Number 1 (as amended):
 - b. to appoint K. Veldkamp (Toronto) and Dr. J. Boersema (Ancaster) as Governors for a term from the date of their appointment until the third General Synod held after the date of their appointment (with as alternates H. Faber [Burlington] and H. Jager [Ancaster]).
 - c. to appoint H. Buist (Burlington-South) and C.G. Heeringa (Ancaster) as Governors for a term from the date of their re-appointment until the second General Synod held after the date of their re-appointment.
 - d. to appoint A.L. VanderHout (Hamilton) as Governor for a term from the date of his re-appointment until the first General Synod held after the date of his re-appointment.
3. a. to appoint, elect or re-appoint or re-elect six active ministers (in accordance with section 3.04 [a] of By-law Number 1 [as amended]) to hold office until the next General Synod and to appoint at least three substitutes from each Regional Synod area.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. In accordance with By-law 1 (Section 3.04) of the Theological College, the General Synod shall appoint or re-appoint six active ministers to the Board of Governors.
2. In accordance with By-law 1 (Section 3.04) of the Theological College, the General Synod shall appoint or re-appoint five brothers, who are not ministers.
3. Rev. J. De Jong, although nominated by Regional Synod East of Oct.19, 1988 as an alternate for the Board of Governors, cannot be appointed as an alternate to the Board of Governors due to his appointment as professor of Ecclesiology and Diaconology at the College.

4. Rev. J.D. Wielenga, although nominated by Regional Synod West of Nov. 8, 1988 as an alternate for the Board of Governors, cannot be appointed as an alternate to the Board of Governors due to the fact that he is not a Canadian citizen (By-law, Regulations of the College, Bill Pr.42, 5(6).
5. The Church at Abbotsford does make a valid point that all classical resorts should be represented as equally as possible in the Board of Governors. This may be taken into consideration in the future when Regional Synods draw up their nominations for the Board of Governors.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide:

1. to appoint as Governors of the Theological College the following active ministers and their substitutes:
 From eastern Canada: Revs. P Kingma, Cl. Stam, J. VanRietschoten.
 Substitutes: Revs. R. Aasman, G. Nederveen, P.G. Feenstra. (in that order).
 From western Canada: Revs. B.J. Berends, M. VanderWel, C. VanSpronsen.
 Substitutes: Revs. P.K.A. de Boer, J. Moesker, E.J. Tiggelaar (in that order).
2. to appoint as Governors of the Theological College the following brothers who are not ministers, according to the retirement schedule adopted by the Board of Governors:
 A. VanEgmond (Smithville) (9 years); K. Veldkamp (Toronto) (9 years) [substitutes J. Boersema (Ancaster), R. Lodder (Fergus)]; H. Buist (Burlington South) (6 years); C. G. Heeringa (Ancaster) (6 years); A. L. VanderHout (Hamilton) (3 years).
3. to express its sincere gratitude for the work done by the retiring Governors, Revs. J. Mulder, M. van Beveren and J. Visscher.
4. to express our sincere gratitude to brothers C. Loopstra and H. Kampen for their many years of faithful service as Trustees/Governors of the Theological College.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 110

In closed session

Committee III presents:

Agenda VIII, D, 14

A. MATERIAL

Letter from the Church at Orangeville, ON. re Acts Regional Synod East Oct. 1988, art. 5.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. Regional Synod East, Oct. 1988, judged that the Church at Orangeville should have used Article 71 and 72 C.O. in the release of its minister. (Acts of Regional Synod East, Oct. 19, 1988; point 5, Appeals, part 2)
2. The consistory and the deacons of the Church at Orangeville “does not feel that its decision concerning the release of Rev. M. Werkman was wrong. It knows that its decision was not made according to the church order since it felt the situation was not covered in the church order”.
3. The consistory and the deacons of the Church at Orangeville request General Synod “to make a decision on what to do: Make a change in the church order to cover occurrences like this or deal with these kinds of matters under the articles as they are presently in the church order”.

C. CONSIDERATION

The consistory and the deacons of the Church at Orangeville do not request General Synod to judge that Regional Synod East Oct. 1988 was wrong and do not give arguments or proof to indicate why Art. 71 and 72 of the Church Order did not apply in the circumstances.

D. RECOMMENDATION

Synod decide:

a change in the Church Order is not necessary because the Church at Orangeville does not prove that the Church Order (i.e., Art. 71,72) could not have been used to deal adequately with the circumstances concerning the release of its minister.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 111

In closed session

Committee II presents:

Agenda Item VIII, D, 15

A. MATERIAL

1. Letter from br. C.J. Burger
2. Letter/documents (confidential) from the Church at Grand Rapids

MOTION

A motion made and duly seconded reads as follows:

Synod decide:

that the letters/documents (confidential) from the Church at Grand Rapids be declared inadmissible.

DEFEATED

ARTICLE 112

B. ADMISSIBILITY

1. From the material submitted it appears that br. C. J. Burger was excommunicated from the Church at Grand Rapids. Br. Burger, appealing the decision of Regional Synod, October 15,16 and 22, 1989, requests General Synod to declare, "that the Consistory of Grand Rapids should not have censured br. C. J. Burger, since his letter of September 13, 1986 does not contain, 'unproven accusations', (and) . . . [T]hat the Consistory of Grand Rapids had no valid reason to put me under censure. Therefore, the censure should be lifted . . ." According to the rule and spirit of Art. 31 C.O. this appeal is admissible.

C. OBSERVATIONS

1. Br. Burger refutes Regional Synod's consideration which upheld Classis' judgment (confirmed by means of further examples) of making "unproven accusations". He adduces as *factual* criticism statements which express his *personal* assessment of the work done by the consistory with,
 - a. his quote, "if she (the consistory C.B.) would have only acted promptly and according to her duty and responsibility."
 - b. his P.S. to his letter of September 13, 1986 referring to unofficial information.
 - c. his reference to "background information . . . as evidence of the attitude of the consistory . . ."
 - d. his judgment on the way the consistory handled the matter within its juris-

diction regarding a request for admission of a person without an attestation.

2. a. Br. Burger requests General Synod to declare “that it is not true that the consistory of Grand Rapids in her phone call to me on Saturday, September 13, 1986 at 8 pm stated, “herein you were asked to receive the elders to discuss the consistory’s letter with you.”
- b. Regional Synod considers that br. Burger did not refute as untrue the information given by the church visitors upon the testimony of br. Burger, saying that he would not avail himself to meet with the consistory.
- c. Br. Burger adds in his appeal, as reason for this refusal, that another brother had been approached in the same way as he was, and who seemed to be willing to comply with the consistory, but who still was put under censure without first being admonished.
3. a. Br. Burger requests General Synod to declare “that the Regional Synod of October 1987 erred in its judgment, ‘you make judgments concerning matters with which the Consistory is dealing in closed session.’” He explains this request by saying that “it was Rev. Kingma himself who stated, ‘this will put your membership of the church in a different light.’” He concluded from this that the matters regarding the church membership of the family Spaanderman was dealt with in the open and not as the Regional Synod states, “in closed session.”
- b. He adds a quotation from his letter dated September 13, 1986, saying,
“I also hope that this matter will become important to the Consistory and that it will show as a result the permittance of br. and sr. Spaanderman to the Lord’s table on Sunday, September 14 (fourteen) 1986.” He explains that this should be understood as, “it was not our intention to interfere with the normal procedures concerning acceptance of membership by the Consistory. However, the normal procedure for membership for the family Spaanderman was departed from.”

D. CONSIDERATIONS

1. Br. Burger does not prove that Regional Synod’s consideration wronged him, but he shows that he does not understand it and therefore fails to prove Regional Synod’s decision wrong. Br. Burger’s own assessment of the work done by the Consistory and the motives behind its approach, which assessment is judged to be wrong by Classis and Regional Synod, is used by him as proof of fact. Br. Burger does not understand that Regional Synod is saying, as it were, “Br. Burger, you add accusations instead of justifying them; instead of justification there is continued accusation.”
2. a. From the documents submitted to General Synod it can be deduced that br. Burger, on the envelope of his letter dated September 13, 1986, “demanded” a meeting with the Consistory. The Consistory invited br. Burger to its meeting on Saturday evening, September 13, but br. Burger declined this invitation. Then (as the Consistory explained in its letter of December 1, 1986) the Consistory read a statement on the phone to persuade him to receive two elders for the purpose of admonition and explanation with a view to the seriousness of the allegations contained in his letter of September 13.
- b. The church visitors judged upon br. Burger’s own testimony that “the complaint that the Consistory did not make admonition possible is unfounded and insincere.”
- c. Br. Burger’s attitude, instigated by someone else’s response to the Con-

sistory, is another example of acting and accusing in a way that is forbidden in the ninth commandment and confessed in Lord's Day 43.

3. a. Both Classis and Regional Synod have proven very clearly that the original matter of the Spaanderman attestation as challenged by br. Burger was a matter which belongs to the consistory in closed session and thus is completely outside the province of the individual church member.
 - b. A statement by Mr. Spaanderman quoting Rev. Kingma does not make it a public matter. Br. Burger does not prove that the matter at hand, which is a matter for the Consistory in closed session, can be appealed by a third party while the Consistory is still actively pursuing it.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod judge:

1. that Classis and Regional Synod have clearly proven that br. Burger's accusations and allegations are unproven and unsubstantiated;
2. that in the process of discipline the Consistory of Grand Rapids has shown patience, integrity and diligence in order to convince br. Burger of his sinful ways;
3. that the censure applied to br. Burger was well-founded and necessary in order to bring about repentance from his sinning against the ninth commandment.

DEFEATED

ARTICLE 113

MOTION

The following motion is made and duly seconded.

A. MATERIAL:

Letter from C. J. Burger

B. INTRODUCTION:

Since C.B. is appealing a decision of Regional Synod October 1987, this appeal is admissible.

C. OBSERVATIONS:

C.B. appeals a decision of Regional Synod East of October 1987 by requesting the following:

1. That my letter of Sept. 13, 1986 does not contain "*unproven accusations*," but "*factual criticism*" which is not "in conflict with the ninth commandment as confessed in Lord's Day 43."
2. That it is not true that the Consistory of Grand Rapids in her phone call to me on Saturday, Sept. 13, 1986 at 8:00 P.M. stated "Herein you were asked to receive the elders to discuss the Consistory's letter with you."
3. That the Consistory of Grand Rapids should not have censured br. C.J. Burger since his letter of Sept. 13, 1986, does not contain "unproven accusations."
4. That the Regional Synod of Oct. 1987 erred in its judgment "you make judgments concerning matters with which the Consistory is dealing in closed session," as it was Rev. Kingma himself who stated "this will put your membership of the church in a different light." This statement shows that the matters regarding the church membership of the family Spaanderman was dealt with in the open and not as the Regional Synod states "in closed session".
5. That the Consistory of Grand Rapids had no valid reason to put me under cen-

sure. Therefore the censure should be lifted. Furthermore the Consistory of Grand Rapids has to publicly make this known to the congregation.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

C.B. does not prove:

1. that he was wronged by Regional Synod which showed that C.B. was bringing forward "unproven accusations".
2. that he was wronged by Regional Synod which upheld C.B.'s suspension from the Lord's Supper.
3. that he was wronged by Regional Synod which upheld the Classis judgment that C.B. was involving himself in consistory matters that belonged in closed session.

D. RECOMMENDATION

Synod decide:

1. C.B. does not prove that he has been wronged by the Regional Synod.
2. Regional Synod has shown that C.B.'s accusations are unproven.
3. General Synod cannot declare concerning the censure applied to C.B. that it was unsound.

DEFEATED
(see Article 122)

ARTICLE 114

Adjournment

Synod is adjourned for supper.

EVENING SESSION - TUESDAY MAY 2, 1989

ARTICLE 115

Reopening

The chairman requests the assembly to sing Psalm 72:1,10. He welcomes the guests. Roll call shows that all delegates are present.

ARTICLE 116

Committee I presents:

Agenda Item VIII, I (continued from Article 103)

A. MATERIAL

Report of the Committee for Relations with Churches abroad.

MOTION TO AMEND

The following motion to amend the Advisory Committee proposal is made and duly seconded:

To add Recommendation 3 which reads:

To inform the FCS that it is our desire to do full justice to the Scriptural call for church unity by putting this unity to practice and be united in the same federation of churches with all the faithful congregations in Canada and the U.S.A.

ADOPTED

V. The Free Church of Scotland (FCS)

B. OBSERVATIONS

The Committee notes that

1. Acts of Synods/Assemblies and historical documents were exchanged with the FCS. The FCS has expressed willingness to establish relations with the Canadian Reformed Churches.
2. The FCS has a relationship of "temporary ecclesiastical contact" with the Free Reformed Churches of Australia and with the GKN(V).
3. It is not ready to make a recommendation regarding a full sister-church relationship as per mandate Synod 1986. The Committee is pleased with progress made, but there are areas of concern that need further discussion and consideration.
4. In order to obtain more insight into FCS and so come with a proper recommendation, it is the Committee's intention to have extensive discussions with the FCS delegates at the forthcoming meeting of the ICRC in Vancouver, in June 1989.
5. Prof. Dr. K. Deddens visited the FCS in April, 1987, and he has reported extensively on this visit, cf. Appendix 1.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. The Committee has served the churches well by providing extensive information regarding the Free Church of Scotland.
2. Intensifying contact with the FCS appears desirable, since this accords with Synod's mandate in 1986. This is supported by Dr. K. Deddens' report that this church "is the key to the whole Presbyterian world," cf. p. 15, Report.
3. Synod notes that the Committee recommends that in the light of past mandates, our churches' efforts to work for a sister-church relationship with the FCS must be done in coordination with our sister churches in Australia and the Netherlands. As outlined by past Synods, the aim should be to strive for a united approach and a common set of rules.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide:

1. to thank the Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad for the work done.
2. to renew the mandate given to the Committee by Synod 1986 Art. 178, E, Recommendations, 2, a,b, (p. 92), and charge the Committee to come to Synod 1992 with a report of its findings and recommendations.
3. to inform the FCS that it is our desire to do full justice to the Scriptural call for church unity by putting this unity to practice and be united in the same federation of churches with all the faithful congregations in Canada and the U.S.A.
4. to keep the current sister churches informed of all progress made in this regard, and to work in cooperation with them.
5. to inform the churches concerning the affiliated churches of the FCS in Canada and the USA.
6. to keep the churches informed of progress made.

The Committee Report as amended is

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 117

Committee I presents:

Agenda Item VII, I, 2

A. MATERIAL

Letter from the Church at Carman re contact with the Free Church of Scotland

MOTION TO AMEND

A motion to amend the Advisory Committee's proposal by replacing the Considerations 3 and 4 and the Recommendation to the following is duly seconded:

B. CONSIDERATIONS

3. Consequences of a full sister-church relationship should be resolved before such a relationship has been realized.
4. Present ecclesiastical contact with the FCS must include initiating discussion about the consequences of recognition for local Canadian Reformed Churches and congregations of the FCS in Canada.

C. RECOMMENDATION:

Synod decide:

that the Committee for Contact with Churches Abroad take into account in its discussions with the FCS the relationship of local Canadian Reformed Churches and local congregations of the FCS in Canada with respect to expressing full unity of the faith.

ADOPTED

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. The Church at Carman introduces its correspondence as an appeal against Synod 1986, Art. 178, Recommendation E 2 a, (p. 92).
2. The Church at Carman requests that Synod, in renewing the mandate of the Committee for Relations with Churches Abroad, adjusts the mandate in such a way that it becomes clear that we desire to do full justice to the Scriptural call for church unity.
3. According to Carman, this can only be done by putting this unity in practice by being united in a federation of churches with all faithful congregations in Canada and the U.S.A.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. Efforts are currently under way to intensify contacts with the FCS.
2. It is our stated desire to work towards a full sister-church relationship with the FCS.
3. Consequences of a full sister-church relationship should be resolved before such a relationship has been realized.
4. Present ecclesiastical contact with the FCS must include initiating discussion about the consequences of recognition for local Canadian Reformed Churches and congregations of the FCS in Canada.

D. RECOMMENDATION:

Synod decide:

that the Committee for Contact with Churches Abroad take into account in its discussions with the FCS the relationship of local Canadian Reformed Churches and local congregations of the FCS in Canada with respect to expressing full unity of

the faith.
The Committee Report as amended is

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 118

Committee I presents:

Agenda Item VIII, I

A. MATERIAL

Report of the Committee for Relations with Churches abroad.

VI International Conference of Reformed Churches

This matter is brought into discussion.

(see Article 128)

ARTICLE 119

Adjournment

The chairman requests br. J.F. De Leeuw to close the day. Br. J.F. De Leeuw asks the delegates and guests to sing Psalm 138:1,3 and leads in closing prayer.

MORNING SESSION - WEDNESDAY MAY 3, 1989

ARTICLE 120

Reopening

The chairman requests the delegates to sing Psalm 147:1,4. He reads Jeremiah 30:18-22 and leads in prayer.

The roll call shows that all the delegates are present.

ARTICLE 121

Adoption of the Acts

Articles 104 - 117 of the Acts are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 122

In closed session

Committee II presents:

Agenda VIII,D,15

A. MATERIAL -

1. Letter from br. C. J. Burger
2. Letter/documents (confidential) from the Church at Grand Rapids

The following motion to amend the Advisory Committee's proposal is made and duly seconded:

To change the Recommendations of the Advisory Committee to the following:

1. That br. C. Burger has not proven that Classis and Regional Synod have erred in this matter of his appeal.
2. That br. C. Burger has not proven that the censure applied to him was unfounded and unnecessary.

ADOPTED

B. ADMISSIBILITY

1. From the material submitted it appears that br. C. J. Burger was excommunicated from the Church at Grand Rapids. Br. Burger, appealing the decision of Regional Synod, Oct. 1987, requests General Synod to declare, "that the Consistory of Grand Rapids should not have censured br. C. J. Burger, since his letter of September 13, 1986 does not contain, 'unproven accusations', (and) . . . [T]hat the Consistory of Grand Rapids had no valid reason to put me under censure. Therefore, the censure should be lifted . . ." According to the rule and spirit of Art. 31 C.O. this appeal is admissible.

C. OBSERVATIONS

1. Br. Burger refutes Regional Synod's consideration which upheld Classis' judgment that br. Burger made "unproven accusations". Regional Synod confirmed this by further examples. He adduces as *factual* criticism statements which express his *personal* assessment of the work done by the consistory, such as,
 - a. his quote, "if she (the Consistory C.B.) would have only acted promptly and according to her duty and responsibility."
 - b. his P.S. to his letter of September 13, 1986 in which he uses unofficial information to represent the position of the Consistory.
 - c. his reference to ". . . the troubles in the school. The Consistory knew also that three more families took the children out of the school . . ."
 - d. his judgment that, "the Consistory knew that when membership is requested without an attestation from the former church, she has to *contact* the former church. It is 'wrong' of the Consistory not to 'act promptly and according to her duties and responsibilities.'"
2. a. Br. Burger requests General Synod to declare "that it is not true that the Consistory of Grand Rapids in her phone call to me on Saturday, September 13, 1986 at 8 pm stated, "herein you were asked to receive the elders to discuss the Consistory's letter with you."
 - b. Regional Synod considers that br. Burger did not refute the information given by the church visitors upon the testimony of br. Burger, saying, that he would not avail himself to meet with the Consistory.
 - c. Br. Burger adds in his appeal as reason for his refusal that another brother had been approached in the same way as he, but had allegedly been put under censure without first being admonished in spite of the fact that he seemed to be willing to comply with the consistory.
3. a. Br. Burger requests General Synod to declare "that the Regional Synod of October 1987 erred in its judgment, 'you make judgments concerning matters with which the Consistory is dealing in closed session'." He explains this request by saying that "it was Rev. Kingma himself who stated, 'this will put your membership of the church in a different light. He concluded from this that the matters regarding the church membership of the family Spaanderman was dealt with in the open and not as the Regional Synod states, "in closed session'."
 - b. He adds a quotation from his letter dated September 13, 1986, saying, "I also hope that this matter will become important to the Consistory and that it will show as a result the permissance of br. and sr. Spaanderman to the Lord's table on Sunday, September 14 (fourteen) 1986." He explains that this should be understood as, "it was not our intention to interfere with the normal procedures concerning acceptance of membership by the Consistory. However, the normal procedure for membership for the family Spaanderman was departed from."

D. CONSIDERATIONS

1. Br. Burger does not prove that Regional Synod's consideration wronged him, but he shows that he does not understand it and therefore fails to prove Regional Synod's decision wrong. Br. Burger's own assessment of the work done by the consistory and the motives behind its approach, which assessment is judged to be wrong by Classis and Regional Synod, is used by him as proof of fact. Br. Burger does not understand that Regional Synod is saying, as it were, "Br. Burger, you add accusations instead of justifying them; instead of justification there is continued accusation."
2. a. From the documents submitted to General Synod it can be deduced that br. Burger, on the envelope of his letter dated September 13, 1986, "demanded" a meeting with the Consistory. The Consistory invited br. Burger to its meeting on Saturday evening, September 13, but br. Burger declined this invitation. Then (as the Consistory explained in its letter of December 1, 1986) the Consistory read a statement on the phone to persuade him to receive two elders for the purpose of admonition and explanation with a view to the seriousness of the allegations contained in his letter of September 13.
b. The church visitors judged upon br. Burger's own testimony that "the complaint that the Consistory did not make admonition possible is unfounded and insincere."
c. Br. Burger's attitude, as instigated by someone else's response to the consistory, is another example of acting and accusing in what is forbidden in the ninth commandment (Lord's Day 43).
3. a. Both Classis and Regional Synod have proven very clearly that the original matter of the Spaanderman-attestation as challenged by br. Burger was a matter which belongs to the Consistory in closed session and thus is completely outside the province of the individual church member.
b. A statement by Mr. Spaanderman, quoting Rev. Kingma, does not make it a public matter. Br. Burger does not prove that the matter at hand, which is a matter for the consistory in closed session, can be appealed by a third party while the consistory is still actively pursuing it.

E. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod judge:

1. that br. C. Burger has not proven that Classis and Regional Synod have erred in this matter of his appeal.
2. that br. C. Burger has not proven that the censure applied to him was unfounded and unnecessary.

The Advisory Committee proposal, as amended, is

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 123

In closed session

Committee II presents:

Agenda VIII,D,16

A. MATERIAL

1. Letter from br. G. Kruyswijk
2. Letter/documents (confidential) from the Church at Grand Rapids

After some discussion the Advisory Committee takes this proposal back for reconsideration.

(see Article 152)

ARTICLE 124

Committee I presents:

Agenda Item VIII, I, I, 1

A. MATERIAL

1. Report of Committee for Churches Abroad
2. Letter from the Church at Hamilton re ICRC

VI International Conference of Reformed Churches

This matter is brought into discussion.

(see Article 128)

ARTICLE 125

Adjournment

Synod is adjourned for dinner.

AFTERNOON SESSION - WEDNESDAY MAY 3, 1989

ARTICLE 126

Reopening

The chairman requests the delegates to sing Psalm 68:8 and leads in prayer.

The roll call shows that all the delegates are present.

ARTICLE 127

Point of order

Br. J. Schutten informs Synod that he must return home on Saturday May 6 and br. A. VanEgmond informs Synod that he must return home on Friday May 5. They ask advice concerning sending alternates. They are advised to notify the appropriate alternates in the event Synod is not finished before the date they have to leave.

ARTICLE 128

Committee I presents:

Agenda Item VIII, I, I, 1

A. MATERIAL

1. Report of Committee for Churches Abroad
2. Letter from the Church at Hamilton re ICRC

VI— International Conference of Reformed Churches

B. OBSERVATIONS

The Committee notes that

1. Preparations are under way for the Canadian Reformed Churches to host the meeting of the ICRC in Vancouver on June 19-29, 1989. An agenda is presented.
2. The following delegates have been appointed to represent the Canadian Reformed Churches at the ICRC meeting:

Rev. Cl. Stam —voting delegate
Rev. J. Visscher — voting delegate
Dr. J. Faber — advisor
Dr. C. Van Dam — advisor

3. The Committee also proposed that the topic of inter-church relations be added to the agenda of the ICRC, and be dealt with in a workshop format.
4. Unless otherwise directed, they will carry out the mandate as received from Synod Burlington 1986.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. With regard to the ICRC, the Committee has properly fulfilled its mandate to this point.
2. Regarding the REC, some member churches have not come to a firm position re the incompatibility of membership in the ICRC with membership in the REC.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide:

1. to thank the Committee for the work done in regard to the ICRC.
2. that the Committee overtures the ICRC to make discussion of the Constitution a matter of priority.
3. that the mandate as expressed by Synod 1986, Art. 175, D, 2, a, b, c be maintained.
4. that the delegates keep the churches informed regarding the activities of the Conference by means of Press Releases.

MOTION TO AMEND

The following motion to amend the Advisory Committee proposal is made and duly seconded:

Synod decide:

- to add Recommendation 5
- to have our delegates recommend to the next possible meeting of the ICRC to delete from the Constitution and Regulations of the ICRC: Regulation, Article VI 1

DEFEATED

The Committee Report is

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 129

Committee I presents:

Agenda Item VIII, I, 1

A. MATERIAL

Letter from the Church at Hamilton re ICRC

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. The Church at Hamilton states that to make the Conference more meaningful it would be preferable that definite conclusions be reached by the Conference regarding specific items on the agenda, e.g. ecumenical creeds, coordinating mission activities, and various papers re doctrine of the church, inter-church relations.
2. Hamilton recommends that Synod instruct the deputies to submit the following proposals to the ICRC for amendment of the constitution:

- a. to add to Art IV after (d) (e):
“show willingness to strive for unity with member churches of the Conference in their own country and on their own continent;”
- b. to add to Art. IV after the proposed (e) (f):
“show willingness to assist the member churches to realize the purpose of the Conference, (Art. III), by examining the doctrinal divergencies of their confessions and church polity, and examine each other's applications of the confessions and church order so that the churches may determine whether it is possible to express the unity of faith by full ecclesiastical correspondence.”
3. Hamilton requests that the delegates to the ICRC be instructed to ask :
 - a. that matters related to the Constitution be given priority.
 - b. that the issue of inter-church relations be made a standing agenda item, and to come with recommendations to the member churches until the full sister-church relationship has been reached with all the member churches.
 - c. that a clear statement be made about the position of the observers and advisors, and furthermore which churches can be invited as observers by the convening body.
 - d. that the matter of Bible translations be placed on the agenda of the next conference.
 - e. that conclusions be drawn on divergencies discussed.
4. To instruct the delegates who attend the ICRC to issue Press Releases for the benefit of the churches in order to inform them of conclusions reached at the 1989 ICRC.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. The purpose of the ICRC is:
 - a. to express and promote the unity of faith that member churches have in Christ.
 - b. to encourage the fullest ecclesiastical fellowship among member churches.
 - c. to encourage cooperation among the member churches in the fulfillment of the missionary and other mandates.
 - d. to study the common problems and issues that confront the member churches and to aim for recommendations with respect to these matters.
 - e. to present a Reformed testimony to the world.
2. The stated purpose of the conference adequately describes the call for unity among the member churches and the need to assist one another in the examination of common problems.
3. The proposed addition of item (f) to Art IV of the constitution of the ICRC by the Church at Hamilton falls outside the stated purpose of the ICRC, and is primarily the responsibility of the individual member churches among themselves.
4. The matter of inter-church relations falls more properly under the mandate of the Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad.
5. Matters related to the constitution are important items for the agenda.
6. The multinational and multilingual character of the Conference discounts the value of placing the matter of Bible translations on the agenda.
7. The discussions on divergencies are already a matter of the conference as

stated in Art. III of its constitution. Discussions and decisions of these matters are of an advisory nature only.

8. The status of the observers and advisors and the churches from which they can be drawn is sufficiently governed by the Constitution and Regulations, cf. *Acts*, Synod 1983, p. 329ff.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide:

1. not to accede to the request of the Church at Hamilton regarding the proposed amendments to the constitution.
2. to recommend to the ICRC that matters regarding the constitution receive priority on the agenda.
3. not to accede to the request of Hamilton regarding the matter of inter-church relations as a standing agenda point.
4. not to accede to the requests of Hamilton regarding Bible translations and the discussions re divergencies.
5. to instruct the Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad to issue Press Releases regarding the ICRC Conference of June 1989, so that the churches may be kept informed.

MOTION TO AMEND

The following motion to amend the Advisory Committee's proposal is made and duly seconded:

1. To replace Consideration 3 of the Advisory Committee proposal with:
The proposed addition of item (f) to Article IV of the Constitution of the ICRC by the Church at Hamilton is consistent with the stated purpose of the ICRC.
2. To replace Recommendation 1 of the Advisory Committee proposal with:
to accede to the main thrust of the Church at Hamilton by proposing to replace Article III (2) of the Constitution of the ICRC with: "to study the possible divergencies between the Confessional Standards which are taken up in the Basis and thus to promote the fullest ecclesiastical fellowship among the member churches" and to bring this amendment to the ICRC in keeping with Article VI of the constitution.

DEFEATED

MOTION TO AMEND

The following motion to amend the Advisory Committee's proposal is made and duly seconded:

1. To replace Consideration 6 to read:
The matter of Bible translations is indeed a matter for cooperation mentioned in the purpose of the ICRC (see Consideration 1 c above).
2. To replace Recommendation 4 of the Advisory Committee proposal to read:
To accede to the request of the Church at Hamilton that the matter of Bible translations be placed on the agenda of the next Conference.

DEFEATED

The Committee proposal is

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 130

Committee IV presents:

Agenda Item VIII, D, 2 - 6

A. MATERIAL

1. Letter from brs. J. and M. Kamphuis re Acts Synod 1986, Art. 184, 185 and Acts Synod 1983, Art. 165 and 166.
2. Letter from Rev. R. Boersema re the same.
3. Letter from br. R. Bosman re Acts Synod 1986, Art. 184.
4. Letter from br. J. Hendriks re Acts Synod 1986, Art.184 and 185.
5. Letter from br. E. C. Baartman re the same.

B. ADMISSIBILITY:

1. Since these appeals are lawfully brought forward according to Art. 31 C.O. mainly against decisions of General Synod 1986 (Art.184 and 185) by members of the churches, Synod declare these appeals admissible.

C. OBSERVATIONS:

1. Brs. J. and M. Kamphuis request Synod to rescind the considerations and recommendations of Art. 184 and 185 of Acts Synod 1986, and of Art. 165 and 166 of Acts Synod 1983. Their concern is the "extreme that the one holy catholic church as God sees it and the true churches are classified as one and the same."
2. Rev. Boersema states that he found "exegetical onesidedness and apparent inconsistencies in the formulations of the last General Synod." He therefore appeals "part of the argumentation of Art.185 of the Acts of Synod 1986" and "suggests an improved formulation for some parts while maintaining all the positive concerns of Synod 1986."
3. Rev. R. Boersema also states that it "is not clear that the Bible rejects the view that the church is the assembly of all true believers in Christ" because "the Bible does not speak of three categories of people: the world, the church and believers who are not of the world and also not of the church."
4. Br. R. Bosman objects that Synod 1986 presented its view "as the only possible view, thereby labelling anybody else's view as unbiblical." He urges Synod 1989 "to reexamine the Biblical evidence to see if this is the only possible doctrine of the church."
5. Br. J. Hendriks complains of the fact that Synod 1986 in "its defence of Art. 28 BC became too systematic and scholastic." He requests Synod 1989 "to take away from art. 184 and 185 of Synod 1986 the following:
 1. that the Lord Jesus Christ can be bound in His church gathering work.
 2. that He only gathers this holy catholic church in visible local true churches.
 3. that believers who are not member of a visible, local true church are not member of the holy catholic church and are not incorporated in the body of Christ."
6. According to br. E. C. Baartman Synod Burlington 1986 summarized the matter of the doctrine of the church as follows:
 - "A. True believers outside the true church are not members of the universal church (Article 27).
 - B. Believers who are not members of a visible local church are not incorporated in the body of Christ!
 - C. Christ gathers the 'holy catholic, universal church only in visible true churches!'"

He therefore requests Synod “to set matters straight by rescinding the contradictory statements in Art. 184 and 185 of the Acts of Synod Burlington, 1986 made in answer to the above mentioned appeals”.

D. CONSIDERATIONS:

1. The decisions of major assemblies shall be considered settled and binding (Art. 31 C.O.), also when these pertain to doctrinal considerations in response to appeals from the churches.
2. The decisions of General Synod 1986 in the articles 184 and 185 are responses to *appeals* submitted to that assembly (See Acts Art.184 IV: Considerations re appeal etc). The specific context of the decisions of General Synod 1986 should not be overlooked as if this Synod formulated an independent doctrinal statement concerning the church which functions beside the confessions.
3. It is incumbent upon the appellants to prove that the considerations and decisions of General Synod 1986 with respect to these appeals are against Scripture and the Confessions. Specific conclusions taken by the appellants on the basis of the decisions are not necessarily the proper interpretation of the decisions of Synod 1986.
4. The objections of the appellants stem mainly from an unbalanced and one-sided reading of the decisions of Synod 1986 which puts the entire decision in an improper perspective.
 - a. General Synod 1986 stated that Art. 27 and 28 B.C. speak about the same church. “To join the assembly of true believers is to join the one, holy, catholic and Christian church.” (Art. 184, IV, A, 2) This statement should not be turned around to posit that “Christ gathers the ‘holy catholic, universal church only in visible true churches!’” (See observation 6c)
 - b. Synod 1986 stressed that Christ binds us in His church-gathering work to His revealed will (Art. 184, V, C, 1 “The norm is and remains what God’s Word teaches, namely, that Christ gathers it in the unity of the true faith, according to the marks of the true church.”) but this may not be construed as saying that the Lord Jesus Christ is bound in His church gathering work (See Observation 5.1).
 - c. The statement that “all believers already belong to the church” was rejected by General Synod 1986 because this statement was considered to posit a nebulous concept of the church and to neglect the norms given by Christ. This statement of Synod 1986 should not be used to conclude that there are three categories of people: “the world, the church and the believers who are not of the world and also not of the church.” (Observation 3). Synod 1986 stressed the obedience to the norms of Christ but did not deny that the church-gathering work of Christ “is broader than the local, true churches” (Art. 184, V, C, 1).
5. Synod 1986 considered that Scripture and Confessions speak about the church “in a general and a more specific way”. This has been interpreted as being “too systematic and scholastic,” but this manner of expressing seeks to explain that there are two aspects to the church: as it is visible to the eyes of God and as it can be seen by men (Art. 184, V, C, 1). These two aspects are not confusing or contradictory but stand side by side. Synod, in fact, rejected a one-sided use of this distinction and warned against an attempt “to systematize a broken and sinful situation” (Art. 184, IV, A, 3, b; Art. 185, E, 4, b).

E. RECOMMENDATION

Synod decide:

1. to deny the requests of the appellants J. Kamphuis, M. Kamphuis, Rev. R. Boersema, R. Bosman, J. Hendriks and E.C. Baartman.

MOTION TO AMEND

A motion to amend Consideration 5 of the Advisory Committee's proposal so that it would read as follows is made and duly seconded.

5. Synod 1986 considered that Scripture and Confessions speak about the church "in a general and a more specific way". Although this may be regarded as a less fortunate way of speaking, these expressions were meant to stress that there are two ways of speaking about the church: as it is visible to the eyes of God and as it can be seen by men (Art.184 V C 1). These two aspects are not confusing or contradictory but stand side by side. Synod, in fact, rejected a one-sided use of this distinction and warned against an attempt "to systematize a broken and sinful situation" (Art. 184, IV, A, 3, b; Art. 185, E, 4, b).

DEFEATED

The Advisory Committee proposal is

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 131

Committee III presents:

Agenda Item VIII, E, 6

A. MATERIAL

Letter from the Church at Calgary, AB, re guidelines for General Synod (Cloverdale, 1983, Art. 45): quotes in foreign languages in appeals and the like.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. The Church at Calgary notes that many office-bearers no longer have a working knowledge of the Dutch language and are unable to competently evaluate arguments which cite Dutch works without translation.
2. The Church at Calgary requests Synod to amend the Guidelines for Synod (as adopted by Synod Cloverdale, 1983, Article 45) to include under Section I the following guideline:

All material submitted to Synod, including Reports, Appeals, Overtures which quote any foreign language source must provide in the text of the submission a full English translation and in a footnote the citation in the original language.

C. CONSIDERATION

The Church at Calgary is correct in noting that not all delegates to major assemblies have a working knowledge of the Dutch language.

D. RECOMMENDATION

Synod decide to accede to the request of the Church at Calgary and amend, with the above addition, the Guidelines for Synod, Section 1 C accordingly.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 132

Committee IV presents:

Agenda VIII E 7

A. MATERIAL:

Letter of the Church at Hamilton re appointment of professors.

B. OBSERVATIONS:

1. The Church at Hamilton refers to the fact that nominations for appointments of

professors are made known only to General Synod and are not passed on beforehand to delegates to Synod.

2. The Church at Hamilton requests that Synod “instruct the Board of Governors to make available as part of the ‘Report of the Board of Governors to General Synod’ a confidential report including a curriculum vitae of proposed new professors for an available faculty vacancy”.

C. CONSIDERATION:

It is necessary that the delegates to Synod are provided with the proper information so that they can prepare themselves adequately for their work at General Synod.

D. RECOMMENDATION:

Synod decide:

to instruct the Board of Governors that in the event of future appointments to the Faculty at the Theological College, the Board of Governors will make available to the delegates to General Synod the confidential report including curriculum vitae of proposed new professors for an available faculty vacancy one month before the convening of General Synod.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 133

Adjournment

Synod adjourns for supper.

ARTICLE 134

Reopening

The chairman requests the delegates and guests to sing Psalm 90:1,8. He welcomes the guests.

Roll call shows that all the delegates are present.

ARTICLE 135

Committee IV presents:

Agenda Item VIII, D, 10

A. MATERIAL

Letter from the Church at Coaldale, AB. re Acts Regional Synod West (Chilliwack, March 31 -April 3, 1987) art. 13, 14.

B. ADMISSIBILITY

1. The Church at Coaldale realizes that reconciliation in the breach within the Immanuel Church at Edmonton has become impossible because one party has joined the OCRC and the other has called a new minister.
2. The reason the Church at Coaldale still appeals the decisions of Regional Synod West 1987 are the following:
 - a. Coaldale is still “appalled at the way Classis AB/MB and Regional Synod dealt with the matters concerned.”
 - b. recognition of wrongdoings may prevent repetition in the future.
 - c. unconfessed sins lead to the Lord’s judgment.
 - d. concern for the name and reputation of the Canadian Reformed Churches who must publicly take distance from wrongdoings committed in their

midst.

3. Coaldale stresses that this appeal does not mean that it condones the actions of Rev. DeBruin c.s.

C. CONSIDERATION

The Church at Coaldale is properly appealing a decision of a minor assembly according to art. 31 C.O.

D. RECOMMENDATION

Synod decide:

to declare this appeal admissible.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 136

Committee IV presents:

Agenda Item VIII, D, 10

A. MATERIAL:

Letter from the Church at Coaldale, AB, re Acts Regional Synod West (Chilliwack, March 31 -April 3, 1987) art. 13, 14.

APPEAL I

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. The Church at Coaldale requests General Synod to judge that Regional Synod Chilliwack 1987 erred when it judged:

“1. The convening church was correct in constituting classis as it did and placing as first item on the agenda a request to approve the decision it made re the credentials. As such, the chairman of the convening church and his consistory did not lord it over the churches in conflict with art 74 C.O.

2. Classis was correct in approving the action of the Church at Carman in constituting classis as it did.”

2. Coaldale gives the following grounds:

a. Regional Synod 1987 misinterpreted the Classis Regulations against their obvious meaning as Regulations functioning under a Reformed Church Order.

b. Regional Synod 1987 based its judgment further on the untenable ground that an action is legitimate on the condition that the action after the fact will be submitted to the judges for approval.

3. The Regulations of Classis AB/MB Art.4 — Convening Church — state it is the duty of the convening church among other things:

“F. To examine the credentials before the constitution of Classis and to assure that the delegates are seated in the alphabetical order of their churches.

G. To open the meeting of Classis delegates as per Art. 34 C.O. and when all the credentials have been found to be in good order to declare classis constituted.”

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. The convening church does not itself constitute Classis, but only declares Classis constituted (Classical Regulations, Art. 4G).
2. To declare a Classis constituted means that all who have been lawfully delegated partake with full rights in this Classis.

3. The validity of credentials has to be established not by the Consistory of the convening church but by the meeting of delegates to Classis or by Classis itself. (Classical Regulations, Art.4G)
4. The Church Order and the Classical Regulations AB/MB do not specify which procedure is to be followed when credentials are not found to be in good order. It is understandable that the Church at Carman took the initiative to come to a procedure, but the procedure itself should have been established by the meeting of delegates.
5. It was therefore not in the province of the Church at Carman to decide which delegation from Immanuel Church should be accepted.
6. An action is not necessarily illegitimate only because it has been approved "after the fact", for the circumstances which led to such an action and the situation in which this action took place must also be duly considered.
7. It goes too far to conclude from the Acts of Classis AB/MB, Jan 1987 that the Church at Carman lorded it over the other churches. The Acts indicate that right after the constitution of Classis the decision of Carman was accepted by Classis (Acts Classis AB/MB, January 1987, Art.V).
8. The legal notice of suspension sent to the churches should not have functioned to determine the proper delegation to Classis because this very suspension was being appealed at this Classis.
9. Regional Synod West 1987 states but does not prove that the convening church placed as first item on the agenda the approval of its action. Rather, it is evident that the Classis itself asked clarification.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide:

1. the judgment of Regional Synod West 1987, regarding the appeal of Coaldale against the decisions of Classis AB/MB, Jan. 1987, was based on a misunderstanding of the Classical Regulations AB/MB regarding as to how Classis is properly constituted. However, given the lack of a specified procedure in the Regulations, Coaldale's speaking of the "obvious meaning as Regulations functioning under a Reformed church order" is an overstatement.
2. Regional Synod West 1987 should not have judged that the decision made by the Church at Carman and Classis' approval of this decision was correct. While this procedure may rightly be questioned it is not evident, however, that there was any "lording it" of one church over the others. Classis did discuss and approve the decision of the Church at Carman.

ADOPTED

Rev. P.K.A. de Boer and br. A. Poppe abstain from voting because this matter pertains to the Church at Carman.

ARTICLE 137

Committee IV presents:

Agenda Item VIII, D, 10

A. MATERIAL

Letter from the Church at Coaldale, AB. re Acts Regional Synod West (Chilliwack, March 31 -April 3, 1987) art. 13, 14.

APPEAL II

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. The Church at Coaldale appeals the following judgments of Regional Synod

Chilliwack 1987:

- “3. Coaldale is wrong in concluding that the Church at Carman made itself guilty of prejudging. A convening church must examine the credentials on the basis of the credentials themselves, and not on the basis of various submissions placed on the agenda of classis.
 4. In the light of the foregoing, the consistory of Coaldale is wrong in concluding that Classis, by its decision to accept the decision of the Church at Carman made itself guilty of prejudging.”
2. The Church at Coaldale requests General Synod to judge:
 - “1. That Regional Synod Chilliwack 1987 did injustice to the Church at Coaldale, by suggesting in R.S.’s Judgment 3 that Coaldale wanted the credentials judged by the convening church on the basis of various submissions placed on the agenda of classis, while Coaldale’s request to R.S. in fact was based on the consideration that no judgment on the validity of the credentials of the Immanuel Church at Edmonton ought to have been made (by the meeting of the delegates, and even less by the consistory of the convening church) except by classis, after classis had dealt with the issue as it was placed on its agenda;
 2. that Regional Synod Chilliwack 1987 itself in its Considerations 4 and 5 confirms Coaldale’s complaint that the acceptance of the one credential as valid and the rejection of the other one as invalid, constitutes a judgment on the legitimacy of the suspension of the office-bearers and on the legitimacy of the delegating bodies, before classis had dealt with these very matters which were placed on the agenda of classis for judgment. Therefore Regional Synod should have judged that the Church at Carman made themselves guilty of prejudging, in conflict with the ninth commandment.”

C. CONSIDERATIONS:

1. It is understandable that the Church at Carman as convening church took the notice of the Immanuel Consistory very seriously as a “church orderly legal notice of suspension”, because the requirements of the C.O. had been formally met (Art. 71 C.O.). It is equally understandable that Classis AB/MB Jan 1987 took over this position on the same grounds immediately after its constitution (Acts Art.V).
2. Regional Synod did not misunderstand Coaldale’s reasoning but did not agree with the Church at Coaldale because Synod also judged the acceptance of the validity of credentials on the strict church-orderly notice of suspension. In its appeal to Regional Synod West 1987, the Church at Coaldale itself combines the judgment on the validity of credentials with items placed on a provisional agenda (Appeal Coaldale to Regional Synod West 1987, Considerations 6 and 7).
3. The validity of credentials is not only determined by the formal legality of the delegating body, but also is subject to the investigation and approval of the meeting which constitutes the major assembly, or by the major assembly itself. Regional Synod West 1987 did not properly take this fact into account (Acts, Art. 13, Considerations 4 and 5).
4. To conclude that Carman prejudged the matter of suspension is going too far. Carman only decided with respect to which delegation should be accepted on strictly church-orderly grounds. The legitimacy of the suspension was thereby not determined. Regional Synod West 1987 rightly rejected the accusation of prejudging the suspension.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Regional Synod West 1987 did not do injustice to Coaldale when it understood Coaldale's reasoning as connecting the judgment on the validity of the credentials with a decision on items placed on a provisional agenda.
2. In the complexity of the situation in which Classis AB/MB, Jan. 1987 found itself, a decision with respect to the validity of credentials on strictly church-orderly grounds did not mean a prejudging of the suspension. The legality of this suspension and its consequences would be determined later by Classis (Acts, Art. 21 and 25).

ADOPTED

Rev. P.K.A. de Boer and br. A. Poppe abstain from voting because this matter pertains to the Church at Carman.

ARTICLE 138

Committee IV presents:

Agenda Item VIII, D, 10

A. MATERIAL

Letter from the Church at Coaldale, AB. re Acts Regional Synod West (Chilliwack, March 31 -April 3, 1987) art. 13, 14.

APPEAL III

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. The Church at Coaldale requests to judge that:
 - a. "Regional Synod Chilliwack 1987 erred in judging that Classis AB/MB Jan. 1987 was correct in stating that a 'provisional release' was proper in the emergency situation that existed."
Grounds:
 1. Regional Synod failed to acknowledge that the temporary release was not imposed by Immanuel Council on the ground of an emergency situation;
 2. Regional Synod failed to prove an emergency situation;
 3. Regional Synod failed to prove the legitimacy of suspending the adopted C.O. without proven necessity;
 4. Regional Synod failed to acknowledge that suspending the law of the C.O. created an emergency rather than resolve it.
 - b. Regional Synod Chilliwack 1987 erred in judging that Classis AB/MB, Jan. 1987 did not use a double standard with regard to Rev. DeBruin on the one hand and the council of the Immanuel Church on the other.
Grounds:
 1. Regional Synod itself correctly admits, by implication, that it was the duty and calling of Classis to direct both parties to the church-orderly way;
 2. At the same time, and in conflict with the above, Regional Synod judges (Consideration 7) that one party did not have to go the church-orderly way;
 3. The principle of "one law for all" demands that Classis AB/MB should have bound both parties to the law of the C.O. instead of binding the one party to the church-orderly way while allowing the other party to

operate according to the standard of “necessity in emergency situations.”

- c. Regional Synod Chilliwack 1987 erred in judging that “by directing both parties to the church-orderly way, Classis AB/MB, Jan 1987 did not fail in its Scriptural duty.”

Grounds:

1. Regional Synod failed to acknowledge that Classis did not direct both parties in the same way to the church-orderly way;
 2. Regional Synod denies in Consideration 7 that one of the parties had to go the church-orderly way, thus denying that Classis had the duty and calling to direct both parties to the church-orderly way;
 3. Regional Synod failed to address the motivation of the Appeal of the Church at Coaldale and the nature of the duty and calling of Classis, as stated in the Appeal, namely to work for the restoration of peace and unity in the now broken Immanuel Canadian Reformed Church at Edmonton.
2. From the material available it appears that the chronology of events within the Immanuel congregation in 1986 is as follows:
 - April 21: An attempt to use Art. 11 C.O. is unsuccessful.
 - July 25: Council accepts judgment of General Synod 1986 and considers the issue settled and binding.
 - Oct. 7-9: Classis AB/MB had difficulty with the status of the delegates from Immanuel.
 - Nov. 5: Consistory Immanuel met with consistory Providence to discuss worthiness of suspension.
 - Nov. 13: Providence could not concur with the procedure.
 - Nov. 24: Report Church Visitation speaks of a complex situation existing in the Immanuel council. Possibility of using Art. 11 C.O. is raised and discussed.
 - Nov. 27: Council rescinds motion of Art. 71-72 C.O. and a motion regarding Art. 11 C.O. is tabled.
 - Dec. 11: Motion on Art. 11 is carried. A decision is made to provisionally release Rev. S. DeBruin of all duties and responsibilities as minister of the congregation pending approbation of Classis.
 - Dec. 11: Confidential letter to congregation regarding the provisional release of Rev. S. DeBruin.
 - Dec. 12: Letter to Classis to ask for approval.
 - Dec. 14: So-called “act of liberation” declared by Rev. S. DeBruin c.s., who calls the members of the congregation also to “liberate” themselves from the ecclesiastical authority of the majority of council.
 - Dec. 17: A decision is made to consider Rev. S. DeBruin and three other office-bearers worthy of suspension for schismatic actions.
 - Dec. 20: Combined meeting with Providence Consistory, which concurs with worthiness of suspension.

C. CONSIDERATIONS:

1. According to the Consistory of the Immanuel Church a complex situation, which had dragged on for years had become severely aggravated because of reactions to the Consistory’s decision (July 25, 1986) to consider the decisions

of General Synod 1986 settled and binding. The Consistory concluded on Dec. 11, 1986 that it was "impossible for him (Rev. DeBruin) to bring back together, this flock, our congregation, into a unity", and that Rev. DeBruin "no longer can be considered to work fruitfully in his congregation *as a whole*". (Confidential letter to congregation December 11, 1986)

2. This complex situation could not be resolved by Classis AB/MB Oct.7-9 1986, nor by consultation with the neighbouring church (Nov.13, 1986), nor through the advice of the Church Visitors (Report Church Visitation Nov.24, 1986). It was in this situation that the Consistory began considering dismissal according to Art. 11 C.O. as the only way out of a situation of "intolerable tensions and disunity." (Confidential letter, point 6) The possibility of using Art.11 C.O., which had been discussed already in April 1986, again came to the fore.
3. Art. 11 C.O. deals with a situation when "a minister of the Word is judged unfit and incapable of serving the congregation fruitfully and to its edification, without there being any reason for church discipline." The Consistory of the Immanuel Church concluded that the confusion, tension and stress in council and congregation had been "caused to a large extent by the explanations and applications concerning the doctrine of the church . . . as well as his (Rev. DeBruin's) *manner and publications*." (Confidential letter, Dec.11, 1986; emphasis Synod). Urgings of more care and restraint had not the desired effect.
4. The letter of the Consistory indicates that indeed a situation existed in which Art. 11 C.O. could be applied.
5. The above demonstrates that Classis AM/MB, Jan. 1987, did not fabricate an emergency situation as Coaldale contends, neither did Regional Synod West 1987 do this. This situation indeed existed.
6. The fact that the Immanuel Consistory in its request to approve the decision did not provide grounds for this request does not mean that there are no grounds. This letter was a notification to the next Classis that the Consistory would seek classical approbation. (Appeal III, Consid. 6)
7. Provisional release according to Art. 11 C.O. is not a suspension according to Art. 71-72 C.O.
8. The Church at Coaldale by separating the decision regarding provisional release from the dismissal according to Art. 11 C.O. attempts to show that the provisional release was against the C.O. ("a lawless act", Appeal III B7) However, the provisional release cannot be understood except as an application of Art. 11 C.O. in the given circumstances. Regional Synod West 1987 did not maintain this connection consistently. (Acts, Art. 14, consid.4 and 5)
9. Only a Consistory can dismiss a minister, and may not do this without the approbation of Classis and the concurring advice of deputies Regional Synod. However, Art. 11 does not state that the dismissal goes into effect only after the approbation of Classis, although this may be assumed as being normally the case. A dismissal can due to circumstances go into effect immediately, but is then provisional, pending the approbation by the next Classis.
10. A dismissed minister ought not to withdraw himself from the church, but must go the way of appeal according to Art. 31 C.O. Rev. DeBruin should have gone to the same Classis which had to approbate his dismissal.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide:

1. Regional Synod West 1987 did not err when it concluded that there was an "emergency situation" which may have required a dismissal according to Art.

11 C.O. The evidence shows that such a situation existed not after but already before the “provisional release”.

2. Regional Synod West 1987 was correct in directing Rev. DeBruin to go the way of the Church Order (Art.31) instead of withdrawing himself from the Church at Edmonton. The Immanuel Church at Edmonton had properly placed the matter on the provisional agenda of Classis AB/MB, Jan. 1987 (Art. 11 C.O.) and therefore no double standard was applied by this Classis.
3. Regional Synod 1987 did err when it judged that Classis AB/MB Jan 1987 had directed both parties in the way of the Church Order. The Immanuel Church did not need to be directed in this way, because it did go the way according to the Church Order (Art.11)

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 139

Adjournment

The chairman requests br. A. Poppe to close the day. Br. A. Poppe asks the delegates and guests to sing Psalm 9:1,4, and leads in prayer.

MORNING SESSION - THURSDAY MAY 4, 1989

ARTICLE 140

Reopening

The chairman requests the delegates to sing Hymn 31:1,4 and leads in prayer. Remembering that it is Ascension Day he reads Acts 1:4-11 and leads in prayer. The roll call shows that all the delegates are present.

ARTICLE 141

Adoption of the Acts

Articles 120-139 of the Acts are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 142

Committee IV presents:

Agenda Item VIII, D, 9

A. MATERIAL

Letter from br. H. De Jong re art. 184 and 187 of Acts Synod 1986.

REQUEST I

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. Br. H. De Jong requests Synod to make a revision to Art. 184 of Acts 1986, concerning section VI, Recommendation 3 as follows:
 - a. that the consistory of the Immanuel Church of Edmonton, in an official decision of July 3, 1983, bound this rejectionable doctrine upon the congregation;
 - b. that as a result of promoting and teaching this rejectionable doctrine, the office-bearers violated the Subscription Form, and are therefore to be suspended;
 - c. that elder J. Werkman correctly called the congregation away from unfaithful office-bearers;
 - d. that the churches in Classis Alberta/Manitoba have unjustly supported the rejectionable doctrine mentioned in 1, 2.a. and 2.b.
2. Recommendation 3 in section VI of Art.184 of the Acts Synod 1986 reads as

follows:

“that the appeal of the Canadian Reformed Church (Immanuel) at Edmonton is hereby answered. General Synod beseeches all the office-bearers of the Immanuel Church at Edmonton to bring their views, their preaching, teaching and ruling in harmony with the Scriptures and the Three Forms of Unity, and thus in line with their ordination vows and their signature under the Subscription Form.”

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. General Synod 1986 made specific considerations and decisions with regard to an appeal of br. H. De Jong (See Acts Synod 1986, Art.187).
2. The revision requested by br. H. De Jong in 1989 concerns the same matter raised by him in 1986.
3. There are no new grounds advanced by br. H. De Jong to support his request for revision (Art.33 C.O.).

D. RECOMMENDATION

Synod decide:

to declare REQUEST I of this submission inadmissible.

REQUEST II

B. OBSERVATIONS:

1. Br. H. De Jong requests Synod to rewrite article 187 of the Acts of Synod Burlington 1986, section E, Recommendation 2, in its entirety in this manner:

Considering that the consistory of the Immanuel Church bound an unscriptural doctrine upon the congregation (see revised article 184), brother H. De Jong and others with him have correctly followed the call of a faithful office-bearer and have justly rejected the unscriptural doctrine, in accordance with article 32 BC and Recommendation 1 of article 184, section VI.

To condemn this as a schismatic act is against Scripture (Rom.16:17,18; 2 Thess. 3:6; Tit. 3:10; 2 John 10), against article 32 BC, and against the Church Order.

2. In Recommendation 2 of Art.187, section E, Synod 1986 decided:
to underline the admonition Regional Synod West of February 5-7, 1985, made in one of its considerations to br. H. De Jong, namely, that he undo this schismatic act by reconciling himself with the consistory of the Immanuel Church at Edmonton.

C. CONSIDERATIONS:

1. Br. H. DeJong complains that he has been wrongly accused of not going the way of the Church Order and of acting in a schismatic manner. He contends that the decision of Synod 1986 regarding the teaching of Rev. S. DeBruin on the doctrine of the church justify his action in 1983.
2. The decision of Synod 1986 does not justify the action of br. H. De Jong in 1983. For the point is that br. H. De Jong withdrew before the process of appeal had been exhausted and therefore committed a schismatic act according to Regional Synod West 1985.

D. Recommendation:

Synod decide:

1. not to accede to Request II of br. H. DeJong.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 143

Committee 1 presents:

Agenda Item VIII, D, 17

A. MATERIAL

Letter of appeal from br. H. Boersma

B. ADMISSIBILITY

Br. H. Boersma appeals a decision of Regional Synod Oct. 15, 1986, which denied his appeal to a decision of Classis Ontario South of September 11, 12, 1985. This appeal is declared admissible.

C. OBSERVATIONS

1. Br. H. Boersma feels that Regional Synod was incorrect in denying his appeal because Regional Synod did not deal properly with his contentions that :
 - a) Blue Bell acted in a schismatic manner;
 - b) Blue Bell did not struggle for years to have justice done;
 - c) the Form of Government only allows for withdrawal after the church has been diligent to the utmost in seeking to keep the unity of the church;
 - d) Blue Bell was withdrawing itself even before a special meeting of Presbytery on August 10, 1984 took place;
 - e) Blue Bell did not take the complaint to General Assembly.
2. Br. H. Boersma feels that the issue of restricted communion was not a sufficient reason to consider the OPC not to be a true church.
3. Br. H. Boersma draws a similarity between the action of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, and Art. 41 C.O. He also compares the OPC practice re the Lord's Supper with circumstances possibly applicable under our Church Order.
4. Br. H. Boersma requests Synod to decide
 - a) Classis Ontario South, Sept 11,12, 1985, did not follow the correct procedure in admitting the congregation in Blue Bell into the federation of Canadian Reformed Churches;
 - b) Blue Bell should as yet maintain a brotherly relationship with the OPC in general, and the Philadelphia Presbytery in particular.
 - c) Although it is to be appreciated that Blue Bell joined the Canadian Reformed Churches rather than remain independent, it must be stressed that by joining the federation of Canadian Reformed Churches Blue Bell has agreed to treat the OPC as true church of our Lord Jesus Christ.

D. CONSIDERATIONS

1. Br. H. Boersma did not prove that Blue Bell did not follow the required procedures for withdrawal in Form of Government XVI, 6. Form of Government XVI, 6 allows for a withdrawal of a congregation from the OPC upon two consecutive meetings of the congregation duly called by the session. According to Appendix I (p. 3, p. 6.) of the appeal of br. H. Boersma, these meetings were held on July 25, 1984, and October 7, 1984 respectively.
2. Br. H. Boersma overlooks the fact that in the years preceding the immediate struggle, Blue Bell increasingly desired to submit to a Reformed church polity.
3. Br. H. Boersma has not proven that Blue Bell was not diligent in seeking to maintain the unity of the church.
4. The fact that Blue Bell began the withdrawal process without waiting for the final decisions of the Presbytery is not inconsistent with the Form of Government of the OPC.

5. Regional Synod was correct in stating that although it might be regretted that the congregation at Blue Bell did not first address the General Assembly, there was no compelling need (according to the Form of Government) to address the General Assembly since a. the Form of Government does not require it; b. the basic issues had been dealt with in 1966, 1967 and 1983.
6. Br. H. Boersma appears to confuse the recognition of the OPC as a true church with affirming a full sister church relationship with the OPC. Although the divergencies have not formed an impediment for "ecclesiastical contact", they may still form an impediment to a full sister church relationship with the OPC.
7. Br. H. Boersma appears to be attempting to superimpose Reformed church polity onto the Form of Government of the OPC. The parallel with Art. 41 C.O. is fallacious, since Art. 41 C.O. does not deal with a situation where a consistory is imposed upon a congregation. The reference to the Lord's Supper practice is also incorrect since in the places br. Boersma refers to, the authors are dealing with very special circumstances, (Art. 61 C.O.). These arguments do not add new grounds to br. Boersma's appeal to the Regional Synod.
8. Br. H. Boersma has not proven that Classis Ontario South did not follow the correct procedure in admitting the Blue Bell congregation into the federation of the Canadian Reformed Churches in the light of the Church Order of our churches.
9. It is not in the province of a General Synod to admonish the churches to maintain a specific brotherly relationship with the OPC, or with any particular Presbytery.
10. In joining the Canadian Reformed Churches Blue Bell did not demand that the Canadian Reformed Churches for their sake break the "temporary form of ecclesiastical relationship" which the Canadian Reformed Churches have with the OPC, Cf. Press Release, Classis Ont. South, Sept. 11,12, 1985, (Appendix II, Appeal).

E. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide:

to deny the appeal of br. H. Boersma.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 144

Committee II presents:

Agenda Items VIII, B,1 j, k

A. MATERIAL:

1. Letter from the Church at Chatham
2. Letter from Rev. J. Van Rietschoten

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. The consistory of the Church of Chatham is proposing to Synod 1989 to insert the article "the" into article I of the Apostles' Creed. This would make Art. I read, "I believe in God the Father the Almighty . . ."
2. Rev. J. Van Rietschoten requests Synod to change the title "Apostles' Creed to "The Apostolic Creed".

C. CONSIDERATIONS

I re "Almighty"

1. "Omnipotentem" can be treated as an adjective to "Patrem." If treated as an

adjective the translation would indeed be “Almighty.” “Omnipotentem” can also be treated as an apposition which has the function of a noun and translates “the Almighty.”

2. The Church of Chatham considers the appositional translation to be preferred. The reason for this is
 - a. the Latin has neither definite nor indefinite articles, but with its Greek background in earlier Creeds (G.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, 3rd ed. New York, 1972 [1983] p. 181-193) it should be translated as a noun with an article, i.e. “the Almighty”
 - b. wherever in the English translation of the Holy Scripture the word “almighty” appears it is the translation of a noun and not of an adjective. Invariably “almighty” in the English versions is a translation of the name of God, “El Shaddai” or “Shaddai” and of “Pantokrator.”
3. Although the word “Almighty” for “El Shaddai” is capitalized in the RSV translation, it does not include the article “the.” Thus, the RSV is not consistent in translating the noun for “Almighty” with the article.
4. The present expression in Article I sufficiently denotes that the Father is Almighty, i.e., the Almighty One.

II re “Title for the Apostles’ Creed”

1. Although the Apostles’ Creed did not originate with the Apostles but contains a summary of the teaching of the Apostles, the name “Apostles’ Creed” is commonly accepted and understood.
2. The name “Apostles’ Creed” is adequately explained in the text of the *Book of Praise* (p. 436).

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide:

1. not to grant the request to include the article “the”.
2. not to change the title of the “Apostles’ Creed”.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 145

Committee III presents:

Agenda Items VIII, B, 4, a, b, c

A. MATERIAL

1. Report of the Standing Committee for the publication of the *Book of Praise* (Report 3: Publication and Distribution; Corporate Status and Financial Matters; Hymn 1A; Further Recommendations.)
2. Letter from the Church at Coaldale, AB, re Hymn 1A
3. Letter from the Church at Cloverdale, BC, re same.
4. Letter from sr. D. Jansen, re alternative Hymn 1A.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. Premier Printing Ltd. asked to be allowed to reprint the *Book of Praise* together with the RSV Bible in a one volume edition. Permission was granted provided that the availability of the regular edition of the *Book of Praise* would not be adversely affected.
2. The Standing Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise* reports to Synod on the activities of the “Publication and Distribution” and “Corporate Status and Financial Matters” (see Appendix of Acts).

3. Synod 1986 decided “to instruct the Standing Committee for the BOOK OF PRAISE to insert the word ‘Christian’ in the hymn version of the Apostles’ Creed, if this is possible” (Synod 1986, Art. 101. D.2.a). The Standing Committee observes that the word “Christian” cannot be inserted without an alteration of the melody as composed by J. Schouten.
 4. General Synod 1986 decided “to pass on this melody (composed by D. Zwart jr.) to the Standing Committee for the *Book of Praise* so that they may consider if it can be adapted to the “new text” or whether a new melody can be found for this “new text”. Synod 1986 had considered that the “new text should be used” (Acts Art. 189).
 5. The Standing Committee suggests that changing the existing melody of Hymn 1A would only confuse many congregations during their worship services. It notes that Synod 1983 made a number of other changes in the Apostles’ Creed which also do not fit the melody. The Standing Committee proposes that Hymn 1A be left as it is, so that it remains within the freedom of the churches to use this text and melody.
 6. The Free Reformed Churches of Australia informed the Standing Committee that they favour the text of Hymn 1A as it is found in the present edition of the *Book of Praise*.
 7. The Committee recommends that “the size of the Committee be reduced to three or four members, while keeping in mind that continuity would be desirable.”
 8. The music sub-committee for the Standing Committee examined the proposed melody of D. Zwart and found it unsuitable and stated that they have been unable to find a melody for the “new text.”
 9. The Church at Coaldale regrets that the Committee not only failed to address its mandate, but also that it failed to give grounds for its judgment that the proposed melody is unsuitable. The Church at Coaldale further states that the present melody of Hymn 1A is not suitable for it contains Gregorian elements. It notes that the composer of the new proposed alternate for Hymn 1A, D. Zwart has adapted a melody to the ‘new text’.
 10. Synod 1986 (Art. 189 Consideration 1) reaffirmed the Consideration of Synod 1980 that “an alternate melody for Hymn 1 is desirable, since there still are complaints about the existing one as being too Gregorian”.
 11. The Church at Cloverdale wonders whether sufficient attempts have been made (by the Standing Committee) to fulfill the mandate with respect to Hymn 1A, and states that they have no great difficulty with the proposal of the committee to leave Hymn 1A in its present form. However, the Church at Cloverdale wonders whether the new melody for the ‘new text’ could not have been published and tried in the churches?
 12. Br. D. Jansen makes available “Br. D. Zwart’s alternate melody for Hymn 1A adapted to the “new text” so that this melody can be made available to the churches forthwith, and be taken up in the next edition of the *Book of Praise*.”
- C. CONSIDERATIONS
1. The Standing Committee gives no reason why it considers the melody for Hymn 1A submitted by br. D. Zwart unsuitable.
 2. Synod 1986 had already decided to have the same text of the Apostles’ Creed for singing and speaking (Acts, Article 189, Consideration 2).
 3. There is still time to consider the alternate melody for Hymn 1a before the *Book of Praise* is finalized in D.V. 1992.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide:

1. to thank the Standing Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise* for its report and for the work done, and to reduce the number of members of the Standing Committee to four, while keeping in mind that continuity would be desirable.
2. that the Standing Committee be given the mandate:
 - a. to see to it that the *Book of Praise* remains available to the churches at a reasonable price,
 - b. to make the necessary arrangements with printers and others for the production and distribution of the *Book of Praise*,
 - c. to maintain its corporate status in order to be able to protect the interests of the Canadian Reformed Churches in all matters concerning the *Book of Praise*,
 - d. to implement all Synod decisions regarding the contents of the *Book of Praise*
 - e. to foster an increased awareness of the existence of the *Book of Praise* among others,
 - f. to stimulate the publication of a book of harmonizations of the melodies in the *Book of Praise* for use in the English-speaking world,
 - g. to serve as the address to which any correspondence regarding the *Book of Praise* can be directed;
 - h. to complete the Committee mandate of Synod 1986 concerning the Nicene Creed, (i.e., to see to its linguistic revision) see Article 60.
 - i. To insert the final version of the Creeds, Confessions and Church Order, as adopted by this Synod and to add the proposed Scripture references to the Belgic Confession, the Canons of Dort and the Liturgical Forms.
 - j. to make the new melody with the 'new text' by br. D. Zwart available to the churches and evaluate any response from the churches. (see Synod 1986, Acts, Article 189, Consideration 2)
 - k. to serve the following General Synod with a report to be sent to the churches at least six months before the beginning of this Synod.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 146

Committee III presents:

Agenda VIII, B, 4

A. MATERIAL

Letter from br. R. Dykstra, re notations for the *Book of Praise*

B. OBSERVATIONS

Br. R. Dykstra notes:

1. that the Standing Committee "has used the *Liedboek voor de Kerken* as an example for lay-out and music notation". (Acts, General Synod 1980, Art. 122 Rec. 5, p.89)
2. that it is stated on pages VII and VIII of the *Book of Praise*: "As for the musical notation of the Psalms in this Edition of the *Book of Praise*, permission was received from the Interkerkelijk Stichting voor het Kerklied to follow the example of the *Liedboek voor de Kerken*."

3. that the Standing Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise* has adopted a “new” musical notation, “in order to achieve uniform notation and a suitable format” (Acts General Synod 1980) and, “as an example for layout and music notation”. (Acts General Synod 1983)
4. Br. Dykstra requests:
 - i. that General Synod 1989 “affirm its concurrence with the previous General Synod’s statement that the *Liedboek der Kerken* notation was utilized for the purpose of achieving uniform notation and a suitable format in the *Book of Praise*.”
 - ii. General Synod 1989 “to judge that the Synod 1980 decision to use the musical notation from the *Liedboek der Kerken* may not be interpreted as a decision to compel consistories, organists, and congregations of the Canadian Reformed Churches to change the traditional practice of singing certain psalms with the use of chromatically altered notes (toevallige verhogingen of verlagingen) since it is not in the province of Synod to make such a decision.”

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. According to Art. 55 C.O., in the worship services the Psalms will be sung in the rhyming adopted by General Synod and the Hymns approved by General Synod.
2. It is not within the province of General Synod to decide on technical matters concerning music notations but for the sake of order in the churches some direction toward uniformity may be appropriate.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. to grant br. Dykstra’s request to confirm that the Standing Committee for the *Book of Praise* is instructed to use the *Liedboek der Kerken* notation to be utilized for the purpose of achieving uniform notation and a suitable format in the *Book of Praise*.
2. to affirm that the above decision does not compel consistories, organists, and congregations of the Canadian Reformed Churches to change the traditional practice of singing certain Psalms with the use of chromatically altered notes (toevallige verhogingen of verlagingen) since it is not in the province of Synod to make such a decision.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 147

Committee I presents:

Agenda Items VIII, J, 1, 2

A. MATERIAL

1. Report of the Financial Committee of Synod Burlington 1986
2. Audit report by the Church at Burlington-East of the books of the Finance Committee of Synod 1986.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. General Synod Burlington 1986 appointed the Church at Burlington-East to audit the financial books of General Synod 1986, and to send a report to General Synod 1989.
2. From the report regarding the finances of General Synod 1986, it appears that

| |
|-----------------------------------|
| the total income was: \$17,017.96 |
| total expenses: <u>17,009.90</u> |
| balance: \$ 8.06 |

3. The Church at Burlington-East has audited the books of the Financial Committee of Synod 1986, and reports that they were found in good order, and all receipts and expenses are in agreement with bank statements.
4. A cheque for the balance of funds of General Synod 1986 was forwarded to the convening church of General Synod 1989.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide:

1. to express appreciation for the work done by the Financial Committee of Synod 1986, and the auditing church.
2. to discharge the Financial Committee 1986 on the basis of the auditor's report of the Church at Burlington-East.
3. to appoint a Financial Committee General Synod 1989 which will pay the expenses made by General Synod 1989, using funds submitted by the Regional Synods as well as the balance of the funds of Synod 1986. This Committee will forward any balance of funds of General Synod 1989 to the convening church of the next General Synod.
4. to appoint upon recommendation of the convening Church of Winnipeg the following brothers in the Financial Committee of Synod 1989: Rev. W. den Hollander, W. Gortemaker, A. Van Abbema.
5. to appoint the Church at Carman to audit the books of the finances of General Synod 1989, and to send a report to General Synod 1992.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 148

Adjournment

Seeing that this is the last session of Synod at which br. Jac. van der Kolk is present, the chairman bids him farewell with the following words:

Br. van der Kolk, we were honoured to have you with us as a delegate from our sister churches in the Netherlands. We thank you for the words you spoke addressing Synod and when you advised Synod about the position of our "Dutch sister" regarding churches abroad and in particular the ICRC. You must have noticed some difference of opinion on this matter. However, rest assured that we are united in the same faith and under the same Head, Christ Jesus. We wish you a safe journey home and the Lord's blessing for the the churches in the Netherlands and for you personally.

Br. Jac. van der Kolk replies by saying:

I am thankful that I could be here among you. I enjoyed and am grateful for the hospitality which has been shown. I think I have learned more about the Canadian Reformed Churches during my ten day stay than in the entire three years I have been a deputy for Churches Abroad of our churches. Ten days ago when I came here, I met sixteen brothers, now I am leaving sixteen friends. Brothers, I hope that the Lord will strengthen you to complete your work. You may rest assured that you and your churches will be remembered in our prayers. Also remember us in your prayers.

Synod is adjourned for lunch and committee work.

AFTERNOON SESSION - THURSDAY, MAY 4, 1989

ARTICLE 149

Reopening and adjournment

Synod is reopened to close the day.

Roll call shows that all the delegates are present.

The chairman requests Rev. D.G.J. Agema to close the day. He requests the delegates to sing Psalm 47:2,3 and leads in prayer.

MORNING SESSION - FRIDAY, MAY 5, 1989

ARTICLE 150

Reopening

The chairman requests the delegates to sing Psalm 33:4,6. He reads Proverbs 30:18-33 and leads in prayer.

The roll call shows that all the delegates are present.

ARTICLE 151

Adoption of the Acts

Acts, Articles 140-149 are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 152

In closed session

Committee II presents:

Agenda VIII, D, 16

A. MATERIAL

1. Letter from br. G. Kruyswijk
2. Letter (confidential) dated April 3, 1989, from the Church at Grand Rapids

B. ADMISSIBILITY

1. From the material submitted it appears that br. G. Kruyswijk was excommunicated from the Church at Grand Rapids. (Appeal March 10, 1989, p.2,F)
Since br. Kruyswijk is appealing a decision of Reg. Synod (Oct. 1987) Synod decides to declare this appeal admissible. (Art. 31 C.O.)

C. OBSERVATIONS

1. On Sunday, September 14, 1986, the Consistory read a statement at the Lord's Supper table pertaining to the silent censure applied to br. G. Kruyswijk. He made an oral request for this statement after the service and the next day, and repeated this request in the Consistory meeting on September 16, 1986, to which the chairman of the consistory, Rev. P. Kingma, responded "the Consistory will have to give its consent for that."
2. Regional Synod East (October 15, 16, and 22, 1987) considers "from the correspondence received, it appears that the request to receive 'the statement' read by Rev. Kingma has not been followed up by the Consistory, but at the same time it is not clear whether the request was properly addressed to the Consistory and was therefore finalized in the minor assembly. There is no record available to Regional Synod that this request was indeed refused. In fact, the possibility is still open for br. Kruyswijk to request and receive 'the statement' from the Consistory. (letter from consistory May 12, 1987) Regional

Synod judges: 1. not to accede to the request of br. Kruyswijk that Classis Ontario South of March 25, 26, and April 1, 1987 was wrong when it decided to answer that the matter of the statement was not finished in the minor assembly.”

3. Br. Kruyswijk requests General Synod to declare:
 - a. That the Reg. Synod erred in its consideration 1. “it is not clear whether the request was properly addressed to the consistory” and assumes therewith that therefore it was not finalized in the minor assembly.
 - b. That the Reg. Synod has failed to deal with what I requested from her under point 1,2,3, and 4 on page one (1) of my letter to her of Sept. 17, 1987. No answer was received on these points.
 - c. That the statement read by Rev. Kingma on Sept 14, 1986, which was read in public should be granted and sent to br. Kruyswijk for the purpose of processing an overture to Classis, Regional, or General Synod.
4. Br. Kruyswijk also requests General Synod to declare:
 - a. That the Consistory of Grand Rapids has wrongfully decided that “We will not consider any issue brought up by you . . .”. Scripture teaches that the elders are to feed the flock, not as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. 1 Peter 5:2,3.
 - b. That Reg. Synod of Oct. 1987 incorrectly observed in its observations, point 2, the content of my letter of Sept. 17, 1987. (see page 3, point 3 of this letter) Therefore her judgments under 2 can not be considered as valid.
 - c. That, in order that communications be restored between the Consistory of Grand Rapids and br. Kruyswijk and vice versa, the Consistory of Grand Rapids is requested to rescind the statement “we will not consider any issue brought up by you . . .” in its letter of Dec. 18, 1986.

D. CONSIDERATIONS

1. The Consistory in its letter, dated April 3, 1989, states, “the truth is that (the) Consistory has requested him to ask for it [i.e. the statement] in its letter of May 12, 1987, p.2 and 3.” In this same letter, the Consistory also reports that br. Kruyswijk has refused to ask officially for the Consistory’s statement.
2. Br. Kruyswijk does not give any evidence in his appeal of having complied with the policy of the Consistory to release its statement upon official request by him. Neither does he give evidence that he has inquired with the Consistory what is entailed in an “official request.”
3. It is the prerogative of the Consistory, as authority on behalf of Christ, to rule on the procedures of the request involved. (Ex.20:12; Lord’s Day 39, H.C.; to use this authority is not in conflict with 1 Peter 5:2,3 and may not be construed as lording it over the flock.)
4. Classis judged that br. Kruyswijk’s request should be “re-addressed” to the Consistory, which implies that Classis acknowledged br. Kruyswijk’s previous request(s), but at the same time advised him to comply with the Consistory’s ruling. Also the Regional Synod in its consideration 1 upheld this judgment.
5. Br. Kruyswijk’s request for the statement of September 14, 1986, is needed according to him “to bring this illegal censure to the attention of the the major assemblies.”
6. Br. Kruyswijk’s second request to General Synod hinges on the Consistory’s ruling (with concurring advice of the Church Visitors), to *confine its communications strictly to the matter of censure*, which can be removed by an apology or be pursued in the ecclesiastical way if so required.

7. The Consistory, in its letter of April 3, 1989 informs General Synod, that, " The ruling of the consistory in its letters of Dec. 9, 1986, p.2 and of Dec. 18, 1986, against which br. Kruyswijk appealed to Classis Ontario South and to Regional Synod East, *he has used as the reason for refusing to ask officially for the consistory's statement . . .*"
8. Br. Kruyswijk would err if he interprets the Consistory's judgment in its letters of December 9, 18, 1986 to him as a refusal to release the statement required for the pursuit of the way of appeal.

E. RECOMMENDATION

Synod judge:

1. that br. Kruyswijk does not prove that Regional Synod has erred in its judgment that this matter had not been finished in the minor assembly;
2. that the Consistory has expressed its willingness that it will release the statement of September 14, 1986 upon official request of br. Kruyswijk for the purpose of appealing his censure.
3. not to accede to br. Kruyswijk's requests.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 153

In closed session

Committee II presents:

Agenda Item VIII, D, 19

A. MATERIAL:

Appeal br. L. VanZandwijk re Acts Synod 1986 Art. 101.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. Synod Burlington-West 1986 decided "to declare the document which br. L. VanZandwijk added to his letter about the word 'Christian' and to which he gave the title 'I believe . . . a "Christian" Church' is inadmissible on the basis of its harsh, unbrotherly, and therefore unchristian, language."
2. Br. VanZandwijk requests Synod to decide "that alleged sins of a church member, even less when such an alleged sin is not of a public nature, should not have been dealt with in an open, public session of synod, nor have been published in the (public) Acts of synod."

C. CONSIDERATION

1. Synod Cloverdale 1983, Acts art.45, proposed guidelines for Synod IV,A,2, stipulates: "A closed-restricted session shall, as a rule, mean a session where members of Synod only may be present. This shall only take place when Synod judges that such a course is dictated by due regard for personal honour or the welfare of churches in extremely delicate situations."
2. Although a matter may be dealt with in a closed-restricted session, it is customary to record the procedures and decisions in the Acts of General Synod.

D. RECOMMENDATION

Synod judge:

since the matter pertaining to br. VanZandwijk's submission involved his personal honour, Synod should have judged on the nature of his submission in closed-restricted session. Synod should have expressed the reason for this with greater discretion in its Acts.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 154

In closed session

Committee II presents:

Agenda VIII, D, 19

A. MATERIAL

Appeal br. L. VanZandwijk against Regional Synod East 1988 in the matter mentioned in Article 71 of Acts Synod 1986.

MOTION TO AMEND

A proposal to amend the Advisory Committee proposal is made and duly seconded. It reads as follows

To amend A. Material of the Advisory Committee's proposal to read:

Appeal br. L. VanZandwijk against Regional Synod East 1988 in the matter mentioned in Article 71 of Acts Synod 1986.

ADOPTED

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. Br. VanZandwijk requests Synod "to unequivocally reject the subordinationist elements contained in the statement of Dr. J. Faber that 'not the Christ is in the center but God' and in the formula of Classis Ontario South (March 1988) that 'Christ is subject to God' as false doctrine on the ground of the clear teaching of Scripture that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is 'equal to the God in all things'

(Art. 10 B.C.) and on other grounds provided from Scripture, Creeds and Confessions in the above appeal."

2. Classis Ontario South (March 9, 1988) considers under 4, "That from the articles of Dr. F. it is clear that by 'theocentric' he means 'trinitarian'; the Church of God is the Church of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (See *Clarion* vol.34, no.5, p.105 3rd column top; p.106 middle column before point 3). Christ, true God and true man, is the Mediator between God and men. In His mediatorial work Christ is subject to the will of God (Ps.40:8; John 4:34; 1Cor.3:21-23; 1Cor.15:28). In Dr. F.'s articles 'theocentric' does not exclude 'christocentric', but 'christocentric' is subject to 'theocentric' compare *Clarion*, vol.34, no.5, p.106, middle column:

Returning to the New Testament, we should see that the Lord Jesus Christ is certainly mentioned. In the list of the above quoted Scripture passages, we read the expression in 1 Thess. 2:14, 'the churches of God in *Christ Jesus*.' The Lord Jesus Christ is the Mediator between God and men. God acts in Christ, and therefore the churches of God in Judea are called churches *in Christ*.

3. Regional Synod observes that, "Br. L.V.Z. retains his charges against Dr. Faber, but does not bring in any new evidence which proves that Dr. Faber indirectly denied the divinity of Jesus Christ, (Cf. Appeal to Classis Ont. South, p.3),"and considers that, "Br. L.V.Z. is still attempting to sustain the charge that Dr. J. Faber is 'indirectly denying the divinity of Jesus Christ.'" (Appeal, Classis Ont. South, p.3) and judges that, "Br. L.V.Z. has not proven that Classis Ontario South of March 9, 1988 was incorrect in its judgment that his charges against Dr. Faber are based on a misinterpretation of Dr. Faber's article."
4. Br. VanZandwijk considers that
 - a. Classis did not address the issue at stake. Classis raised a side issue stating that Christ 'is' (please note the present tense) 'subject to God'.

However, the issue at stake was whether the Christ is 'in the center', yes or no;

- b. the error of Dr. Faber is to be called an example of 'subordinationism;'
- c. 'subordinationism' was a teaching about the Godhead which regards the Son as subordinate to the Father.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

- 1. a. Neither Dr. Faber nor Classis Ontario South have ever said that the Son in His Person is subordinate to the Father.
- b. Classis already considered that "in Dr. F's articles 'theocentric' does not exclude 'christocentric', but christocentric is subject to 'theocentric'." With respect to His Person, Christ is equal to His Father and with respect to His work He is subject to His Father. (See Art. 33 of the Athanasian Creed). Therefore, Dr. Faber is not incorrect in his preference to speak about the Church not in terms of 'christocentric' but to speak about the Church in a christological way, expressing that Christ as Mediator was appointed Head of the Church to bring all things in subjection to God (1Cor.15:28).
- c. The above explanation is not in conflict with art.10 B.C., because there we confess the divinity of Christ in the defense against those denying this divine nature. But as stated before, the divinity has never been denied by Dr. J. Faber nor by Classis Ontario South.

D. RECOMMENDATION

Synod judge

not to accede to the request of br. L. VanZandwijk re subordinationist elements contained in Dr. Faber's writing.

The Committee Report as amended is

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 155

In closed session

Committee II presents:

Agenda Item VIII, D, 19

A. MATERIAL

- 1. Appeal br. L. VanZandwijkre Acts Synod 1986, Art. 159

B. OBSERVATIONS

- 1. Br. L. VanZandwijk requests the re-instatement of the word "Christian" in the title of art. 27 B.C., to read, "Catholic, Christian Church."
- 2. Synod Burlington-West, 1986, refused to comply with a similar request upon the consideration that "Br. L. VanZandwijk gives no (new) grounds why this should now be changed."

C. CONSIDERATIONS

- 1. The title of art. 27 B.C. used to read "the Catholic, Christian Church." (p.377 old *Book of Praise*) Br. L. VanZandwijk considers that, "No reason for the removal of the word 'Christian' or for the defeat of proposals to re-instate this word [Synod Cloverdale, Art.173, p.140] were ever given to any church or church-member."
- 2. Synod, having observed the grounds adduced by br. L. VanZandwijk, considers:
 - a. that for reasons of consistency among the Creeds and the Confessions the

word "Christian" should be used in the title of Art. 27 B.C.

- b. in view of the titles adopted by other English speaking denominations, the word "Christian" should be re-instated.

D. RECOMMENDATION

Synod decide:

to re-instate the word "Christian" in the title of art. 27 B.C.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 156

Committee IV presents:

Agenda VIII, L

A. MATERIAL

1. Report from the Church at Carman re General Fund.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. The Church at Carman reports that "all the churches have paid the requested assessments."
2. The consistory has appointed br. G. VanderSluis as bookkeeper to take the place of br. H. Veldman.
3. The books were twice audited by the consistory at Carman and were twice found to be in good order.
4. The bank balance as per March 25, 1981 was \$ 0.42.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide:

1. to express gratitude to the bookkeepers of the General Fund for the work done during the past three years.
2. to thank the Church at Carman for the administration of the General Fund, for auditing the books of the bookkeepers and to discharge the Church at Carman for the responsibility for the period 1986 - March 25, 1989.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 157

Adjournment

Br. A. VanEgmond gives notice that he must go home. Synod decides that because most matters of the agenda have been finished, it is not necessary to call for an alternate. Synod is adjourned for lunch.

AFTERNOON SESSION - FRIDAY, MAY 5, 1989

ARTICLE 158

Reopening

Synod is reopened.

Roll call shows that all delegates are present except br. A. Van Egmond who has been excused.

ARTICLE 159

Committee II presents:

Agenda Items VIII, B, 1, a, 2 c, h, i

A. MATERIAL

1. Report of the Standing Committee for the publication of the *Book of Praise* (Creeds and Confessions).
2. Letter from the Church at Hamilton, ON.
3. Letter from the Church at Ottawa, ON.
4. Letter from the Church at Cloverdale, BC.
5. Letter from the Church at Burlington-East, ON.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. The Committee proposes the following changes in the Belgic Confession:
 - a. Art. 2 - change "invisible qualities" to "invisible things"
 - b. Art. 24 - make the title "Our Sanctification and Good Works"
 - c. Art. 28 - change "state or quality" to "status or standing"
 - d. Art. 33 - change "infirmity" to "weakness".
2. The Committee proposes the following changes in the Heidelberg Catechism:
 - a. Lord's Day 4 - change to: "But does not God do man an injustice . . ."
 - b. Lord's Day 5 - change to: "Therefore we must make full payment, either by ourselves or through another."
 - c. Lord's Day 10 - change to: "indeed, all things, come to us not by chance but by His Fatherly hand."
 - d. Lord's Day 11 - change to: "Do those who seek their salvation and well-being in saints, in themselves, or anywhere else, also believe in the only . . ."
 - e. Lord's Day 28 - Add in the quotation of 1 Cor.11:23-26 the words "This cup is the new covenant in My blood."
 - f. Lord's Day 36 - change to: "Rather, we must use the holy name of God only with fear and reverence . . ."
 - g. Lord's Day 44 - change to: "Rather, with all our heart we should always hate all sin and delight in all righteousness."
 - h. Lord's Day 44 - change to: "First, so that . . .
Second, so that, while praying to God for the grace of the Holy Spirit, we may never stop striving to be renewed more and more after God's image, until after this life we reach the goal of perfection."

The Church of Burlington-East proposes to change Lord's Day 5, Q/A.13 from "can we ourselves" to "can we by ourselves."

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. The Committee adduces the following reasons for the changes in the Belgic Confession:
 - a. art. 2: "qualities" is further removed from the Greek text of Romans 1:20
 - b. art. 24: This is consistent with the heading of art. 22 and art. 23.
 - c. art. 28: "state or quality" is obsolete and open to misunderstanding.
 - d. art. 33: "infirmity" has a restricted meaning in modern English.The Church at Hamilton agrees with the proposed changes.
2. The Committee adduces the following reasons for the changes in the Heidelberg Catechism:

- a. Lord's Day 4: It is closer to the original.
 - b. Lord's Day 5: The original indicates that we must make payment.
 - c. Lord's Day 10: "to us" is in the original.
 - d. Lord's Day 11: This sentence structure makes memorization easier.
 - e. Lord's Day 28: The first sentence was inadvertently left out.
 - f. Lord's Day 36: The sentence, beginning with "In short . . .", is longer than the preceding one.
 - g. Lord's Day 44: "So that" reacts to the question "why?". The idea "that we may be zealous for good deeds" brings into the text more than the original expresses.
3. The Church at Cloverdale is against the change in Lord's Day 4 because it considers this hardly to be an improvement in style, but showing traces of stilted "Dutchism."
 4. The Church at Burlington-East states that "In light of the proposed change in Answer 12, we suggest this question to read, 'can we by ourselves make this payment?'"
 5. The German in Lord's Day 5, Question 13 reads, "durch uns selbst" and also the Latin has "per nos."
 6. The Church at Ottawa considers that the proof-text in Q/A 17 should be Isaiah 9:6 instead of Isaiah 9:5.
 7. Regarding Lord's Day 44, the Church of Cloverdale accepts the proposal by the Committee to insert the word "so" but considers the change in the second part unnecessary.
- D. RECOMMENDATIONS
1. to accept the Committee's proposed changes in the Belgic Confession.
 2. to accept the Committee's proposed changes in the Heidelberg Catechism including as well those proposed by the Churches at Burlington-East and Ottawa.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 160

Committee II presents:

Agenda Items VIII B, 2, a - f

A. MATERIAL

1. Report of the Standing Committee for the publication of the *Book of Praise*. (Canons of Dort)
2. Letter from the Church at Chatham, ON.
3. Letter from the Church at Brampton, ON.
4. Letter from the Church at Ottawa, ON.
5. Letter from the Church at Smithville, ON.
6. Letter from the Church at Burlington West, ON.
7. Letter from the Church at Cloverdale, BC.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. Synod receives a report from the Standing Committee for the publication of the *Book of Praise* (Creeds and Confessions) containing a revised translation of the Canons of Dort.

2. Synod receives a great number of comments pertaining to this report from the churches listed above.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

After having taken note of the revised copy of the Canons of Dort and having considered the various comments which have been received from the churches, the Advisory Committee has come to the conclusion that the following emendations and amendments should be considered for incorporation into the final text of the Canons of Dort. The corrections are numbered according to the pertinent chapters and articles of the Canons of Dort.

Chapter I

The Churches at Chatham and Cloverdale propose to retain as heading "First Head of Doctrine."

- Art. 4. The Church at Chatham proposes to insert a comma before "and" and after "faith."
 7. The Church at Cloverdale proposes to keep "a definite number of persons" instead of Committee's proposal "of specific persons."
15. The Church at Smithville proposes to use "to declare His justice" instead of the Committee's proposal "to display His justice."
16. The Church at Cloverdale proposes to keep "expect" instead of Committee's proposal "to await."
18. The Churches at Brampton and Ottawa observe that the text Job 39:34-37 does not exist. Ottawa proposes to change it to Job 34:34-37, or Job 36:23.

REJECTION OF ERRORS

- Art. 3. The Church at Chatham proposes "He chose certain specific persons and not others. No, but out of all possible" instead of the Committee's proposal "and not others, but that out of all possible."
 7. The Church at Chatham proposes to keep "fiery darts" instead of Committee's proposal "flaming darts."

Chapter II

- Art. 5. The Church at Ottawa proposes "and to all men, to whom God in His good pleasure" instead of the Committee's proposal "and to all men to whom God in His good pleasure."

REJECTION OF ERRORS

- Art. 2. The Church at Smithville proposes "this militates against Scripture" instead of the Committee's proposal "this is in conflict with Scripture."
 6. The Church at Chatham and Smithville propose to keep "without distinction" instead of the Committee's proposal "indifferently."

Chapter III/IV

- Art. 4. The Church at Cloverdale proposes to keep "in natural and civil matters" instead of the Committee's proposal "in matters of nature and society."
 9. The Church at Brampton proposes to read "Others do indeed receive it, but they do not accept it into their hearts" instead of the Committee's proposal "others do indeed accept it, but they do not receive it into their hearts."
 11. The Church at Cloverdale proposes "obedient" instead of the Committee's proposal "compliance."

12. The Church at Smithville proposes “preaching” instead of the Committee’s proposal “teaching,” and the Church at Chatham proposes “persuasion” instead of the Committee’s proposal “suasion.”
15. The Church at Cloverdale proposes to keep in the title “Christian attitude” instead of the Committee’s proposal “proper attitude.”
16. The Church at Brampton proposes to read “the wonderful Creator” instead of the Committee’s proposal “the wonderful Maker.”

REJECTION OF ERRORS

- Art. 1. The Church at Chatham proposes “it is improper to say” instead of the Committee’s proposal “properly speaking it cannot be said,” and to insert in the phrase “this contradicts the apostle” the words “the words of.”
3. The Church at Chatham proposes to delete from the following sentence “the will is of itself able to will and to choose, or else not to will and not to choose” the word “else.”
6. The Church at Chatham proposes to insert the text reference “Isaiah 44:3” behind the word “and streams on the dry ground.”
7. The Church at Chatham proposes to read “This manner of working, which consists in advising, is the most noble manner” instead of the Committee’s proposal “this manner of working which consists in advising is the most noble manner;” also to change “suasion” into “persuasion” in both the error and the refutation, and to change “This is entirely Pelagian and contrary to the whole Scripture” to “This is wholly Pelagian and contrary to the entire Scripture.”

Chapter V

- Art. 1. The Committee proposes to change its own translation “from the flesh and from the body of sin” to “from the flesh and the body of sin.”
2. The Church at Chatham proposes to read “Therefore, daily sins of weakness” instead of the Committee’s proposal “Therefore daily sins of weakness;” and the Church of Cloverdale proposes not to include the words “and strive.”
3. The Churches at Brampton and Cloverdale propose “persevere” instead of the Committee’s proposal “remain standing.”
5. The Church at Chatham proposes to leave out the word “however” in the sentence “by such gross sins, however, they greatly offend God,” and the Church at Cloverdale proposes to read “guilt worthy of death” instead of the Committee’s proposal “guilt of death.”
6. The Church at Brampton proposes to put the phrase “or the sin against the Holy Spirit” between brackets.
7. The Church at Chatham proposes to delete the word “And” in the sentence “And from now on they more diligently work out . . .”
9. The Church at Chatham proposes to delete the word “And” in the sentence “And they are indeed certain . . .”
10. The Church at Chatham proposes to delete the word “And” in the sentence “And if the elect of God . . .”, and the Church at Ottawa proposes to read the sentence “witnessing with our spirit that we are children and heirs of God and, finally, by the serious” as “witnessing with our spirit that we are children and heirs of God; and, finally, by the serious.”
11. The Church at Chatham proposes to read the sentence “have to struggle with various doubts of the flesh and, placed under severe temptation” as

“have to struggle with various doubts of the flesh. Placed under severe temptation, they do not,” also to read the sentence “will also provide the way of escape, and by the Holy Spirit will again revive in them” as “will also provide the way of escape. By the Holy Spirit will again . . .”

12. The Churches at Chatham and Cloverdale propose to change the sentence “This certainty of perseverance, however, so far from making true believers proud and complacent, is the true root of humility.”
13. The Church at Brampton complains that the entire article is revised without giving any ground. The Church at Chatham proposes to keep “This renewed confidence does not produce carelessness” instead of the Committee’s proposal “Neither does this renewed confidence produce carelessness,” and also to change the sentence “because of their abuse of His fatherly goodness, with the result that they would fall” to read “because of their abuse of His fatherly goodness. This would result in their falling into . . .”, and also to insert a comma behind the word “God” in the sentence “Indeed, to those who fear God the contemplation of His face . . .”
14. The Church at Smithville proposes to keep “perfects” instead of the Committee’s proposal “completes.”
15. The Church at Chatham proposes to put a period after “godly” in the sentence “and for the consolation of the godly, and He impresses it . . .”, and also to change the semi-colon into a period in the sentence “and defended it steadfastly as a treasure of inestimable value; and God, against whom . . .”

REJECTION OF ERRORS

- Art. 2. The Church at Chatham proposes “But even with all those things in place which are necessary to persevere” to read “But even with all those things in place, which are necessary to persevere . . .”
3. The Church at Chatham considers that the RSV reads “No one born of God commits sin; for God’s nature abides in him.”
5. The Church at Chatham considers that 1 John3:24 reads “by the Spirit which He has given us . . .” instead of “whom He has given us.”

CONCLUSION

The Church at Cloverdale proposes to keep “upright declaration” instead of the Committee’s proposal “straight forward explanation” (first line), and in the last line “edification” instead of “building up.”

D. RECOMMENDATION

Synod decide:

Chapter I

Headings to read “Head of Doctrine” instead of “Chapter”.

Art. 4. accept Committee’s proposal

7. idem

15. idem

16. accept proposal Cloverdale: change “await” into “expect”

18. accept proposal Ottawa: change “Job 39:34-37” to “Job 34:34-37”

REJECTION OF ERRORS

Art. 3. accept Committee’s proposal

7. idem

Chapter II

Art. 5. accept proposal Ottawa: insert comma

REJECTION OF ERRORS

Art. 2. accept proposal Smithville: change to "This militates . . ."

6. accept Committee's proposal

Chapter III/IV

Art. 4. accept proposal Cloverdale: change back to "natural and civil matters"

9. accept proposal Brampton: change to "Others do indeed receive it, but they do not accept it into their hearts" Art. 11. accept proposal Cloverdale: change back to "obedient"

12. accept Committee's proposal re "teaching", but Chatham's proposal re "persuasion"

15. accept Committee's proposal

16. accept the Committee's proposal: "the wonderful Maker".

REJECTION OF ERRORS

Art. 1. accept Committee's proposal re "properly speaking, it cannot be said," and to accept Chatham's proposal to insert "the words of"

3. accept Committee's proposal

6. accept Chatham's proposal to add "Is. 44:3"

7. accept Committee's proposal: leave commas out, but accept Chatham's "persuasion" (also in Refutation)

accept Committee's proposal re "entirely/whole".

Chapter V

Art. 1. accept Committee's proposal

2. idem (for both)

3. idem

5. idem (for both)

6. idem

7. idem

9. idem

10. accept Committee's proposal re "And"; accept Ottawa's proposal to insert semi-colon after God

11. accept Committee's proposal (for both)

12. idem

13. accept the entire Committee's proposal (Brampton's complaint is unfounded, since the Committee's proposal is indeed a linguistic improvement.)

14. accept Smithville's proposal: change back to "perfects"

15. accept Committee's proposal (for both).

REJECTION OF ERRORS

Art. 2. accept Committee's proposal

3. accept Chatham's correction of 1 John 3:9

5. accept Chatham's correction of 1 John 3:24.

CONCLUSION

accept Committee's proposal (for both).

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 161

Committee III, IV presents:

Agenda Items VIII, B, 3, a - f

A. MATERIAL

1. Letter from the Church at Burlington, ON, (Ebenezer) re Acts General Synod Burlington-West 1986, Art. 144 re Form for the Public Profession of Faith and the Form for Baptism.
2. Letter from the Church at Surrey, BC, re Acts Smithville 1980 (Art. 129, 130), Cloverdale 1983 (Art. 145), Burlington-West 1986 (Art. 144), re same.
3. Letter from the Church at Lower Sackville, NS, re same
4. Letter from br. and sr. L. Moes, Langley, BC, re same
5. Letter from the Church at Smithers, BC, re same
6. Letter from the Church at Langley, BC, re same

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. The Church at Burlington-East requests General Synod to restore the original formulation in the Form for Public Profession of Faith (1st question) and the Form for Baptism (2nd question)

Grounds:

- a. This change is not just a "linguistic revision"
 - b. The words "Articles of the Christian faith" are historical words and are also used in L.D. 7, Q.A. 22. Therefore no Synod may change this formulation without adducing any ground.
2. The Church at Surrey requests to bring back the historic formulation.

Grounds:

- a. The decisions of our Synods in this matter are somewhat "inconsequent", "poorly considered and impulsive."
 - b. Our Synods have not considered the historical background of these questions.
 - c. Our Synods have not considered the catholic nature of the original wording.
 - d. Synod 1980 did not give any ground for bringing about change in the first place.
3. Br. and sr. L. Moes request the same on the ground that "historically the phrase 'articles of the Christian faith' refers to the Apostles' Creed".
 4. The Church at Langley requests to return to the old wording "the Articles of the Christian faith".

Grounds:

- a. The historical origin of the expression
 - b. The relation between the Apostles' Creed and the Sacrament of Baptism
 - c. Our sister churches in The Netherlands still use this expression
 - d. A report which served at Synod 1980 recommended retention of this expression
 - e. The Acts of 1980, 1983, 1986 give no grounds for the change.
 - f. The basic rule is that change be considered only after proper study
5. The Church at Sackville requests Synod not to accede to the request of Surrey.

Grounds:

- a. A change would remove clarity and re-introduce a measure of ambiguity
- b. "There is no difference in meaning between creed and confession"
- c. "it would impoverish the churches by clinging to the past while ignoring present realities." "The present formulation in the *Book of Praise* does not in any way deny the unity with the church of all ages"

6. The Church at Smithers urges Synod to maintain the present formulation.

Grounds:

- a. "It states more accurately what persons, making profession of faith in the Canadian Reformed Churches, are subscribing to"
 - b. the expression "taught here in this Christian Church" is clarified when connected to the word "confessions"
 - c. by maintaining the present formulation "we remove all thought of making an unwarranted distinction between clergy and laity"
 - d. the current expression maintains our Catholic character
 - e. the "confessions" include the "creeds".
7. Both the Church at Burlington-East and Surrey state, "We have no problem with the remark of Synod Burlington 1986 (Article 144, C, 2) that 'the questions asked never excluded the allegiance to all the confessions which are maintained by the Canadian Reformed Churches'".
8. The Church at Langley states, "The 'doctrine' of the Canadian Reformed Churches has always been based on the Bible and summarized in the six creeds/confessions that we have officially adopted".

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. The references to "linguistic revision" and to L.D. 7 Q.A. 22 (see above, Observation I, 1, 2) have been considered by Synod 1986 (Art 144, C, 1 and 2).
2. Synod 1980 and 1983 may not have given grounds for this specific revision, but to consider the previous Synods' decisions for this reason as "inconsequent" and "poorly considered and impulsive" is an overstatement. Synod 1983 responded to a specific question with a clear answer, "in order to avoid misunderstanding . . ." (Acts 1983, Art. 145 Cons. C 4 A 8).
3. The historical character of the expression "summarized in the Articles of the Christian Faith" has been considered in Synod 1986 (Acts, Art. 144, C, 2). The appellants do not offer any new grounds on this point.
4. The Churches at Burlington-East and Surrey correctly note that the historical formulation "summarized in the Articles of the Christian Faith" should not be taken in a restrictive sense as if it pertains only to the Apostles' Creed and excludes the other Confessions (Synod 1986, Acts, Art. 144, C, 1; see above, Observation VII)
5. A contextual reading of the original wording (" . . . taught here in this Christian church . . . to be the true and complete doctrine of salvation . . .") shows that the present formulation is not a material change which is in conflict with the spirit of catholicity (see above, Observation II, 3).
6. Synod 1986 has dealt with the formulation used in the Dutch sister churches but did not agree that there is any real discrepancy in confessional practice (Synod 1986, Acts, Art. 144, C, 4; see above, Observation IV, 3).
7. The appellants have not demonstrated any compelling reasons to return to the original wording.

D. RECOMMENDATION:

Synod decide not to accede to the requests of the Churches of Burlington East, Surrey, Langley and br. and sr. L. Moes

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 162

Committee IV presents:

Agenda Items VIII, D 20, B, 1, d,e,g,h,j,

A. MATERIAL

1. Letter from the Church at Langley re word "Christian" in Apostles' Creed.
2. Letter from the Church at Orangeville re same
3. Letter from the Church at Brampton re same
4. Letter from the Church at Burlington-West re same
5. Letter from the Church at Cloverdale re same
6. Letter from the Church at Chatham re same.

B. OBSERVATIONS:

1. The Church at Langley appeals "the inclusion of the word 'Christian' in the Apostles' Creed." (Acts Synod 1986, Art.101)

Grounds:

- a. It is a basic principle of translation to go back to the original and authentic text.
 - b. The word "Christian" is a result of the influence of a medieval German tradition.
 - c. Scriptures never speak of "the Christian Church".
 - d. The Apostles' Creed falls under the heading, "The Ecumenical Creeds".
 - e. The adjective "Christian" makes it seem as if the church is the possession of the Christians.
2. The Church at Orangeville requests the same and gives as grounds the grounds given by the standing Committee for the *Book of Praise* (Agenda VIII B 1):
 - a. The word "Christian" is a late medieval Germanic rendering of the word catholic.
 - b. The early editions of the Heidelberg Catechism do not have "this superfluous adjective".
 - c. "We do not have the right to change the received text of the Apostles' Creed or add to it."
 3. The Church at Brampton asks the same and gives as grounds:
 - a. the Apostles' Creed can be found under the heading "The Ecumenical Creeds".
 - b. Scripture does not speak of "the Christian Church"
 4. The Church at Burlington-West requests the same and gives as ground that the considerations of Synod 1986 are incorrect.
 5. The Church at Chatham requests the same and gives as ground that the word "Christian" as used by Luther appears to express 'of the Christian' rather than 'of Christ' and therefore is a duplication of the term 'communion of saints'

6. The Church at Cloverdale requests that the text of the Apostles' Creed as contained in the 1984 edition of the *Book of Praise* be maintained since no substantially new grounds are adduced to change the present form of the Apostles' Creed.

CONSIDERATIONS:

1. Art. 33 C.O. states that matters once decided upon may not be proposed again unless they are substantiated by new grounds.
2. Comparison of the grounds with the decisions made by previous Synods shows that all the grounds brought forward by the Churches at Langley, Orangeville, Brampton, Burlington-West have been dealt with by previous Synods (See Acts 1983, Art. 70 and Acts 1986, Art. 101). The only exception is ground 5 of Langley which is also mentioned by Chatham.
3. This ground is not substantial for the word "Christian" can express 'of the Christian' and 'of Christ'.

RECOMMENDATION

Synod decide:

not to accede to the requests of the Churches at Langley, Orangeville, Brampton, Burlington-West and Chatham. The request from the Church at Cloverdale is hereby also answered.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 163

Committee III presents:

Agenda VIII, D, 13.

A. MATERIAL

Letter from the Church at Brampton, ON. re Acts Regional Synod East of October 15, 16, and 22, 1987, art. 6e, VI, 3.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. Regional Synod East Oct. 1987 refers to a decision that "whenever ministers from churches with which we have no sister church relationship are admitted to serve in the federation, these ministers first shall undergo the equivalent of a preparatory/peremptory examination. (See Acts of General Synod, Edmonton 1965, Article 39 A, p.16.) Regional Synod judges that this also applies to ministers who come into the federation with their congregations".
2. The Church at Brampton requests General Synod to decide which of the two examinations should be used (i.e. the level of preparatory or peremptory). They seek clarification so that one system of examination is used throughout the federation of Canadian Reformed Churches.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. Synod Edmonton 1965 Art. 39 A (English translation) adopted the following rule: "With respect to those who are serving or served in churches with which the Canadian Reformed Churches do not maintain church correspondence:
 - i. they shall not be called unless they have been declared eligible for a call in the churches;
 - ii. they may be declared eligible for a call only after
 - a. they have submitted proof of their ordination as a minister;
 - b. they have submitted a written exposition of the reasons why they desire to be declared eligible for call within the churches;

- c. they submit a good testimony about their conduct;
- d. they submit themselves to an examination on the level of the preparatory and peremptory examination.

The classis of their domicile shall examine them in the presence and with concurring advice of the Deputies of the Particular Synod, ad art 49 C.O.”

Regional Synod East Oct. 1987 judged correctly that this decision also applies to ministers who come into the federation with their congregations.

- 2. The preparatory examination is used to declare a person eligible for call in the federation of Canadian Reformed Churches while the peremptory examination is more comprehensive and determines whether a candidate may serve in the federation of Canadian Reformed Churches as a minister.

C. RECOMMENDATION

Synod decide:

ministers who come into the federation with their congregations should be examined at the peremptory level.

MOTION TO AMEND

The following motion to amend the Advisory Committee Report is made and duly seconded:

- 1. To add the following Consideration to the Advisory Committee proposal:

In suggesting an examination on the preparatory or peremptory level, Synod Edmonton 1965 referred to the general academic standing of ministers who enter the Canadian Reformed Churches.

- 2. And to change the Recommendation into the following:

Synod decide:

Synod’s 1965 ruling on this matter is sufficient.

DEFEATED

The Advisory Committee proposal is

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 164

Committee III presents:

Agenda Item VIII, E, 3.

A. MATERIAL

Letter from the Regional Synod West, Coaldale November 8, 1988, re art. 46 C.O.

B. OBSERVATIONS

- 1. Regional Synod West, 1988 overtures General Synod for the following change to Art. 46 C.O.: “At least every second year Classis shall authorize not less than two experienced and able ministers to visit the churches in those years”.
- 2. This matter was dealt with at Synod 1986, Acts, Art., 105 and Synod 1983, Acts, Art., 91.
- 3. Regional Synod West, 1988 suggests that the areas of both its Classes extend over approximately 1500 kilometers, and finds that the yearly church visitation is impractical, both financially and because of the time involved.
- 4. Regional Synod West, 1988 proposes to change this regulation so that the frequency of church visitation will be one time in two years and notes that churches are free to request church visitation any time and such requests are always honoured.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. Annual church visitation is based on the agreement that in the federation of churches we are to supervise and assist one another on a regular basis.
2. Synod 1983 addressed the matters of distances and costs as being no longer relevant in this time.
3. Within each classical district there are eight and nine churches respectively to share the practical concerns related to church visitations.

D. RECOMMENDATION

Synod decide:

not to accede to the request of Regional Synod West, 1988.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 165

Adjournment

Synod is adjourned for supper.

EVENING SESSION - MAY 5, 1989

ARTICLE 166

Reopening

Roll Call shows that all delegates are present except br. A. Van Egmond who has been granted leave.

ARTICLE 167

In closed session

Synod decide:

to make the following appointments:

1. Board of Governors:

Ministers:

Western Canada: Revs. B.J. Berends, M. VanderWel, C. Van Spronsen.

(Alternates: Revs. P.K.A de Boer, J. Moesker, and E. J. Tiggelaar (in that order).

Eastern Canada: Revs. P. Kingma, Cl. Stam, J. Van Rietschoten.

(Alternates: Revs. R. Aasman, G. Nederveen, P.G. Feenstra (in that order).

Non-ministers:

Brs. H. Buist [Burlington], C.G. Heeringa [Ancaster], A. Van Egmond [Smithville], A.L. Vander Hout [Hamilton], K. Veldkamp [Toronto].

(Substitutes: Dr. J. Boersema [Ancaster] and R. Lodder [Fergus]).

2. Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad:
Revs. Cl. Stam, M. VanderWel, Dr. J. Visscher (convener)
Brs. H.A. Berends, A. Nap, Dr. J. VanderStoep.
3. Committee for Contact with the OPC:
Revs. R. Aasman, J. Mulder (convener), D.G.J. Agema,
Brs. G.J. Nordeman and T.M.P. VanderVen.
4. Standing Committee for the *Book of Praise*:
Rev. J. De Jong, Dr. W. Helder (convener), brs. M. Kampen, J. Van Huisstede.

5. Committee on Bible Translations:
Revs. W. den Hollander, J. de Jong, Prof. J. Geertsema, Dr. C. van Dam (convener), Rev. G. Nederveen.
6. Churches for Days of Prayer:
The Churches at Burlington-West and Edmonton (Providence).
7. Church for the Administration of the General Fund:
The Church at Carman.
8. Church for the Archives of General Synod:
The Church at Burlington-East (Ebenezer).
9. Church for the Inspection of the Archives of General Synod:
The Church at Burlington-West (Rehoboth).
10. Church to Audit the Finances of the 1989 General Synod:
The Church at Carman.
11. The Address Church:
for Canada: the Church at Burlington-East,
for the U.S.A.: the Church at Grand Rapids.
12. The Committee for the printing of the Acts:
The first and second clerks e.t. of General Synod 1989.
13. The convening Church for the next General Synod to be convened in the fall of 1992: the Church at LINCOLN, Ontario.

ADOPTED

Synod decide:

that the Committees shall have the right, in case a vacancy occurs, to bring their membership up to its original strength in order to fulfill their mandates.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 168

Reopening

The chairman requests the delegates and guests to sing Psalm 125:1,4. He reports that a telephone call has been received from Dr. N.H. Gootjes informing Synod that he has accepted his appointment as professor of Dogmatology. Gratitude is expressed for this acceptance.

The roll call shows that all the delegates are present except br. A. Van Egmond who has been excused.

ARTICLE 169

Committee I presents:

Agenda Items VIII, C, 1, a - I, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

A. MATERIAL

1. Standing Committee for the *Book of Praise* Report II (Church Order) and Supplementary Report
2. Letter from the Immanuel Church at Edmonton
3. Letter from the Church at Attercliffe
4. Letter from the Church at Ottawa
5. Letter from the Church at Chilliwack
6. Letter from the Church at Brampton
7. Letter from the Church at Chatham

8. Letter from the Church at Smithville
9. Letter from the Church at Burlington-West
10. Letter from the Church at Orangeville
11. Letter from the Church at Grand Valley
12. Letter from the Church at Cloverdale
13. Letter from the Church at Burlington-East
14. Letter from the Church at Burlington-East re Art.13 C.O. (re Synod 1986, ad. Acts, Art. 95)
15. Letter from the Church at Brampton re Synod 1986, re Acts, Art. 95 (Art. 13 C.O.)
16. Letter from the Church at Fergus re Synod 1986, re Acts, Art. 95 (Art. 13 C.O.).
17. Letter from the Immanuel Church at Edmonton, re Synod 1986, ad. Acts, Art. 95 (Art. 13 C.O.).
18. Letter from the Church at Burlington-East, re Acts Synod 1986, ad Art. 95 (Art. 72 C.O.).

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. General Synod 1986 gave the Committee the mandate:
 - a. to pass on the linguistic changes proposed by br. R. Wildeboer to the Standing Committee for consideration of incorporation in the next printing of the *Book of Praise* (Art. 93).
 - b. to amend Art. 44 C.O. as given in Acts, Art. 94, D.
 - c. to amend Art. 13 C.O. as given in Acts Art. 95 D, p. 39.
 - d. to amend Art. 72 C.O. as given in Acts Art. 95 D, p. 40.
2. The Committee submitted two Reports proposing various changes to a number of articles of the Church Order (see Appendix).
3. The second or Supplementary Report was sent in response to reactions to Report 1 from a number of churches.
4. Synod received the following submissions from a number of churches:

Art. 4:

The Church at Chilliwack suggests that the word “not” is a typing error, since it does not belong in the first sentence of Par. B 2.

Art. 12:

The Committee in its Supplementary Report recommends to change the title to : ‘Permanent Release’. The Churches at Chilliwack, Burlington-West and Cloverdale suggest that the title of this article remain “Bound for Life”. Burlington-West further proposes to add the words “to resign from office. He may only be released from office and” between “allowed to” and “enter upon”.

Art. 13:

The Committee proposes, for the sake of clarity, to amend this article.

The Churches at Chatham and Burlington-West propose not to accept the Committee’s amendment.

The Church at Burlington East objects to the decision of Synod 1986, and proposes: “If a minister of the Word retires because of age, or because he is rendered incapable of performing the duties of his office, due to illness

or physical or mental disability, he shall retain the honour and title of minister of the Word.”

The Church at Brampton appeals the decision of Synod 1986, and proposes the following: “If a minister of the Word, upon reaching retirement age, does retire, or if he retires because he is rendered incapable of performing the duties of his office due to illness, physical or mental disability, he shall retain the honour and title of minister of the Word.”

The Church at Fergus expresses its disagreement with the decision of General Synod 1986, Art. 95, and suggests the following: “If a minister of the Word, upon reaching retirement age, does retire, or if, according to the judgment of the consistory with the deacons, with the concurring advice of Classis and of deputies of Regional Synod, he is rendered incapable of performing the duties of his office, he shall retain the honour and title of minister of the Word. If, however, he desires to remain in active service beyond retirement age, he may do so with the agreement of the consistory with the deacons.”

The Immanuel Church at Edmonton requests Synod to rescind the decision of Synod 1986, Art. 95, and to return to the phrasing as originally adopted by Synod 1983.

Art. 14:

The Committee suggests to include an article similar to Art. 14 of the Church Order of our Dutch sister churches. The Immanuel Church at Edmonton, and the Churches of Burlington-West, Cloverdale, and Burlington-East suggest that this is not necessary since the Church Order already provides for this.

Art. 19:

The Committee proposes a number of significant changes. The Immanuel Church at Edmonton opposes the changes in line 2 as suggested by the Committee. The Church at Ottawa objects to the addition as proposed by the Committee and offers its own proposal. The Church at Chatham proposes to follow the wording of our Dutch sister churches. The Church at Grand Valley and Cloverdale accept the Committee’s proposals but wish to retain the word “shall” in the first line.

Art. 21:

The Committee proposes a number of additions, changes, and deletions. The Churches at Ottawa, Cloverdale, and Burlington-East object to the deletion of the lines 3 b and 4 from this article.

Art. 26:

The Church at Ottawa proposes to eliminate the words “and professors of theology”. The Church at Chilliwack proposes to leave the article as it is. The Church at Chatham proposes to follow the wording of the Dutch sister churches.

Art. 34:

The Church at Attercliffe suggests that changes proposed by the Committee fall outside the Committee’s mandate.

Art. 35:

The Committee proposes to restructure this article and to shorten it by deleting “c” and “d”. The Church at Attercliffe suggests that changes proposed by the Committee fall outside the Committee’s mandate.

Art. 44:

The Church at Attercliffe suggests that changes proposed by the Committee fall outside the Committee's mandate.

Art. 45:

The Committee proposes some deletions. The Immanuel Church at Edmonton, the Churches at Attercliffe, Chilliwack, Brampton, and Cloverdale suggest that the article remain unchanged. The Churches at Ottawa, Chatham, and Smithville come with some proposals.

Art. 49:

The Church at Chatham proposes a linguistic change regarding the wording of Art. 49 to make it consistent with Art. 47.

Art. 55

The Church at Burlington-East suggests to add the word "only" before the word "metrical" as proposed by the Committee. The Church at Cloverdale observes that reasons given for the change to "metrical" are insufficient.

Art. 57, 58

The Churches at Attercliffe, Chilliwack, Orangeville, Grand Valley, Cloverdale and Immanuel Church at Edmonton all make submissions to maintain the present wording of these articles. The Church at Orangeville suggests to change Art. 58 from "ensure" to "see to it" because it is not as strong.

Art. 63:

The Immanuel Church at Edmonton and the Churches at Attercliffe, Chilliwack, Cloverdale, and Burlington-East suggest to leave this article as it is.

Art. 68:

The Church at Burlington-East suggests the use he/she in this article and throughout the Church Order where applicable.

Art. 72:

The Church at Burlington-East objects to a decision of General Synod 1986, Art. 95, where it deleted the word "habitual" before the term "drunkenness", because drunkenness indicates a possible one-time occurrence which is not necessarily worthy of suspension from office.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. The mandate given to the Standing Committee for the *Book of Praise* by General Synod 1986 was somewhat inconclusive, since br. R. Wildeboer's proposed changes appeared to include more than strictly linguistic changes.
2. Synod 1986 in its consideration (Acts, Art. 93) noted that br. Wildeboer's letter warranted a careful examination. Yet this was to occur within the framework of a linguistic revision only. In some respects the Committee may have exceeded its mandate.
3. With respect to the individual articles of the Church Order, Synod considers the following:

Art. 1

The Committee's proposals are acceptable.

Art. 2

The proposals exceed the Committee mandate.

Art. 3:

Better English is: "Only male members who have made profession of faith and may be considered to meet the conditions set forth in Holy Scripture (e.g., 1 Tim. 3 and Titus 1) shall be eligible for office."

Art. 4:

The Church at Chilliwack misreads Art. 4 B 2. This paragraph speaks of ministers coming from churches with which we do not have a sister church relationship. The Committee's proposals are acceptable.

Art. 5:

Committee proposal acceptable.

Art. 6:

Committee proposal acceptable.

Art. 12:

The Committee exceeds its mandate. Synod notes the proposed amendment is essentially covered in Art. 12 C.O. Also, since the Church Order has already been adopted by Synod 1983, and Synod 1986 only allowed for linguistic changes, amendments to the Church Order should be restricted as much as possible.

Art. 13:

Synod considers that the four overtures regarding this article were submitted independently from the Committee's report. These overtures indicate that Synod 1986's formulation of Art. 13 was problematic with regard to retirement of ministers in that it left insufficient provision for normal retirement. Consideration C 1 of Art. 95, Synod 1986 is overstated and given without proof. Retiring from service after a commonly accepted retirement age does not interrupt one's being bound to office for life as Art. 13 says: ". . . he shall retain the honour and title as minister of the Word and retain his official bond with the church he served last." Synod considers the proposed wording as submitted by the Church of Burlington East to be linguistically and substantially superior to the decision of Synod 1986.

Art. 14:

The Committee exceeds its mandate.

Art. 16:

Committee proposal acceptable.

Art. 19:

The Committee exceeds its mandate.

Art. 21:

To delete the word "also" may be considered a linguistic improvement to the article. The balance of the Committee's proposal exceeds the Committee's mandate.

Art. 22:

Committee proposal acceptable.

Art. 23

Committee proposal acceptable.

Art. 26:

Synod notes that the suggestions from the Churches at Ottawa and

Chatham fall outside the scope of linguistic changes. The Committee's proposal is acceptable except the deletion of (s) from "form(s)".

Art. 27:

Committee proposal acceptable.

Art. 31:

Committee proposal acceptable.

Art. 34:

Synod notes that the Committee's proposal, although major in scope, falls within the mandate of the Committee and is therefore acceptable.

Art. 35:

The suggestion to delete certain lines from this article fall outside the mandate of the Committee. The essence of point "c" and point "d" is more than what is said in point "b". The suggestion to restructure the article is valid.

Art. 36:

Committee proposal acceptable.

Art. 42:

Committee proposal acceptable.

Art. 44:

Committee proposal acceptable.

Art. 45:

The Committee exceeds its mandate.

Art. 46

Committee proposal acceptable.

Art. 47:

Committee proposal acceptable.

Art. 48:

Committee proposal acceptable.

Art. 49:

The proposal of the Church at Chatham falls within the scope of acceptable changes.

Art. 55:

Within the context of this article, the suggestion of the Church at Burlington East to add the word "only" before "metrical" is superfluous. The suggestion of the Church at Cloverdale is not necessarily a linguistic improvement. Committee proposal acceptable.

Art. 57:

The Committee's proposal does not improve the language.

Art. 58:

The Committee's proposal does not improve the language.

Art. 63:

The Committee exceeds its mandate.

Art. 68:

The suggestion by the Church at Burlington East to use the format he/she

throughout the Church Order is linguistically not necessary. Committee proposal acceptable.

Art. 69:

Committee proposal acceptable.

Art. 71:

Committee proposal acceptable.

Art. 72:

Although drunkenness does not become a serious and gross sin only when it is habitual (Acts, Synod 1986, Art. 95, Consideration 1, p. 40), in regard to office-bearers, Scripture speaks about not being a drunkard, 1 Tim. 3:3, Tit. 1:7. Historically the enslavement to drink (Tit. 2:3) has been the main concern of this article of the Church Order, (cf. J. Jansen, *Korte Verklaring van de Kerkenordering*, 2nd. ed., Amsterdam, 1976, p. 348).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide:

re Art. 1:

to accept Committee's proposal.

Art. 2:

to reject Committee's proposal.

Art. 3:

to read Art. 3 as follows: "Only male members who have made profession of faith and may be considered to meet the conditions as set forth in Holy Scripture (e.g. 1 Tim. 3, Tius 1), shall be eligible for office."

Art. 4:

to accept Committee's proposal.

Art. 5:

to accept Committee's proposal.

Art. 6:

to accept Committee's proposal.

Art. 12

to reject the Committee's proposal re the title. The title "Bound for Life" should be retained.

to deny the proposal of Burlington-West.

Art. 13:

to accept the proposal of the Church at Burlington-East, to read Paragraph 1 of Art. 13 as follows: "If a minister of the Word retires because of age, or because he is rendered incapable of performing the duties of his office due to illness or physical or mental disability, he shall retain the honour and title of minister of the Word."

to send this adopted proposal re Art. 13 as Synod's answer to the Churches at Burlington East, Brampton, Fergus and Immanuel Edmonton.

Art. 14:

not to accede to the Committee's proposal for an equivalent to the Dutch Art. 14.

- Art. 16:
to accept Committee's proposal.
- Art. 19:
to reject Committee's proposal.
- Art. 21:
to accept Committee's proposal re "also".
to reject the Committee's proposal on all other points.
- Art. 22:
to accept Committee's proposal.
- Art. 23:
to accept Committee's proposal.
- Art. 26:
to accept Committee's proposal except to retain the (s) after "form(s)".
- Art. 27:
to accept Committee's proposal.
- Art. 31:
to accept Committee's proposal.
- Art. 34:
to accept Committee's proposal.
- Art. 35:
to accept the Committee's proposal regarding restructuring of the article,
but not regarding the deletions of "c" and "d".
- Art. 36:
to accept Committee's proposal.
- Art. 42:
to accept Committee's proposal.
- Art. 44:
to accept Committee's proposal.
- Art. 45:
to reject Committee's proposal.
- Art. 46:
to accept Committee's proposal.
- Art. 47:
to accept Committee's proposal.
- Art. 48:
to accept Committee's proposal.
- Art. 49:
to accept the proposal of the Church at Chatham.
The second paragraph now reads: "If it appears necessary to convene a
General Synod before the appointed time, the convening church shall
determine the time and place with the advice of Regional Synod."

- Art. 55:
to accept Committee's proposal.
- Art. 57:
to reject Committee's proposal.
- Art. 58
to reject Committee's proposal.
- Art. 63:
to reject Committee's proposal.
- Art. 68:
to accept Committee's proposal.
- Art. 69:
to accept Committee's proposal.
- Art. 71:
to accept Committee's proposal.
- Art. 72:
to accept the Committee's proposal. To insert the word "habitual" before drunkenness.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 170

Censure, re Article 44 Church Order

The chairman expresses gratitude to the Lord that censure is not necessary and that all the delegates could work together in a brotherly way. Even though there was not always full agreement, it was clear that all the delegates are united in the same faith.

ARTICLE 171

Adoption and Publication of the Acts

Articles 150 - 170 of the Acts are read and adopted.
The two clerks are appointed to take care of the publication of the Acts. The chairman thanks the clerks for the work that they have done and the efficiency they have shown.

ARTICLE 172

Financial Matters

It is noted that nothing need be reported at this time concerning the finances of this Synod.

ARTICLE 173

Preparation for next General Synod

The Church at Lincoln, Ontario is appointed to convene the next Synod in Lincoln in the fall of 1992.

ARTICLE 174

Approval of the Press Release

Synod decide:

that the present moderamen is appointed to scrutinize and approve the Press Release.

Closing

In closing the chairman speaks the following words:

Esteemed brothers:

We have come to the close of this twelfth General Synod of our churches. Soon we will be — as Synod — history. We have worked together for 16 work-days, a time even shorter than our predecessor, General Synod Burlington, 1986. Our agenda was not one with a great abundance of items, although the pile of documents with appendices was alarmingly thick, but most of these items were of great importance.

I believe that we have treated each submission from committees, churches, members — and even some non-members — with due respect. We tried to read carefully and critically, but above all sincerely and honestly. In all this we tried to preserve “unity in continuity”, to refer to my opening words, which is the unity of faith. Now there are no items left on the agenda, except for the concluding acts, and therefore our reason to meet no longer exists.

Brothers, we have been very involved with all this material, and we will not judge our work. It is the task of the churches to judge what we have done. It is ultimately the judgment of the Lord Who must approve or disapprove of our efforts. May He be merciful to us, also with respect to this work.

We all know how things went: we are individually more pleased with some decisions than with others. On the whole, however, we may say that this has been a very united Synod. There was usually great consensus on the decisions which were made. We knew where we wanted to go, although we sometimes differed on the best way to get there. Yes, we had one purpose, and the mutual respect in speaking and debating was always evident. For this we may be extremely grateful, for not every General Synod experiences such a blessing.

There were some truly unforgettable moments which will be passed on in the private anecdotes of the members of Synod. There have also been a number of public highlights, of which I mention only a few: meeting Dr. and Mrs. Gootjes, having Dr. and Mrs. Faber as celebrity guests in our midst, hearing the words of delegates from afar, Rev. J.J. Peterson of the OPC and br. Jac. van der Kolk from our sister churches in the Netherlands. It was also a solemn moment when we heard our fellow member of Synod, Rev. J. De Jong, state his acceptance of the appointment as professor at our Theological College. Yes, this Synod had many important visitors who were all joyfully received.

I may thank you, brothers, for the support which you have given the moderamen and me as chairman. Please forgive any remark or ruling by which you were hurt or even offended, for it was never my intention to be personalistic. Together we have sought to serve the Lord, each with his own talents and gifts, and may He forgive us any self-seeking moments which have plagued us. Let me say that I have great admiration and appreciation for each of you personally and for the honourable way in which you have always conducted yourselves. We came as brothers and we may depart as brothers with even greater appreciation of one another than before.

I may also speak a word of gratitude to the hosting church here in Winnipeg. We have been made to feel very much at home in this building, in this congregation. The meals were delicious, appealing, and well-balanced, in fact so well-balanced that many members of Synod ate well and still lost weight. The dietary insight of the hospitality committee is truly remarkable. It is never really fair to single out persons, but may I specifically mention those in charge: srs. Alice Kuik, Grace Schriemer and Annie Teitsma. Your many hours of work and service will always be gratefully remembered.

This was in many ways a “Yuppie” Synod -as we heard more than once.

Designer track suits, Reebok running shoes, striped cravats and all! A Synod fully computerized, who would have dreamed of such a thing? Last minute info by fax, you saw it here at Synod '89. Truly a new era has arrived in synodical efficiency. Various "Yuppie" expressions such as "I can live with it" or "Let's just tighten this wording up a little" or "with your indulgence, Mr. Chairman" became standard items in the new synodical jargon. How things have changed since 1968 when Dr. J. Faber was appointed.

We are grateful, Rev. den Hollander, Consistory and congregation of Winnipeg, for your excellent hospitality. If we did not have families and work elsewhere, we might have been persuaded to stay longer. But now the agenda's done and the planes are waiting to lift us off to where we belong.

We are grateful to the Lord for all that He has given to us together as members of General Synod, as churches in this land, with our sister churches in this world.

May you all have a good trip home, receive health and happiness also in the future, and above all experience peace with God through Jesus Christ in the only comfort which remains both in life and in death.

He requests the delegates and guests to sing Psalm 125:1,2,3,4.

On behalf of Synod the second clerk expresses gratitude to the sisters who have served Synod with copious and delicious meals. He presents the three ladies who have organized it all with tokens of appreciation.

The vice-chairman requests the floor and addresses Synod with the following words:

Allow me at the count-down of this General Synod to speak a few words to you, Mr. Chairman. Soon we will be confronted with the sad, but nevertheless, Reformed rule of Article 35 of the Church Order, which reads: "In major assemblies the office of president shall cease when the assembly is ended." As we are used to in this Synod, Mr. Chairman, to "undergird" our statements with appropriate references, for the deep meaning of this rule of Article 35 I may refer to John Jansen, *Korte Verklaring van de Kerken Ordening* who in his turn refers to a certain Plantinus, who is believed to have said in his *Politica Ecclesiastica*, Volume IV, page 201: "De vlam is wel het naast aan de rook, nochtans kan door den rook niets verbrand worden, maar door de vlam wel." We are thankful for these enlightening words of Plantinus and we may conclude from them, that soon, Rev. Stam, your chairmanship will evaporate in smoke. Being confronted with this sad reality, we like to thank you for the work you have done as chairman of this Synod. As vice-chairman I had no reason to complain. Except for a few urgent escapades which you had to make, you did not bother your neighbour too much even when you were a little "under the weather". On behalf of all members of Synod, I like to express our appreciation for the way you knew how to usher us "through" all divergencies, and we are also appreciative for the benevolence in which you have let us "use" and sometimes "abuse" you. Your indulgences and your witty and cheerful manner in which you have put the matters of our extensive agenda before us has contributed much to the pleasant and brotherly atmosphere in which the work of this Synod could be done. In short, Rev. Stam, we thank you for the firm and able leadership which you have given to General Synod Winnipeg, 1989.

The chairman requests Rev. M. VanderWel to close Synod. Rev. M. VanderWel requests the assembly to sing Psalm 48:1,4 and leads in prayer.

Synod is closed.

By order of Synod:

| | |
|---------------------|---------------|
| Rev. C.I. Stam | Chairman |
| Rev. M. VanderWel | Vice-chairman |
| Rev. P.K.A. de Boer | First clerk |
| Rev. R. Aasman | Second clerk |

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APPENDIX II

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE FOR CONTACT WITH THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH TO GENERAL SYNOD 1989 OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES

I. MANDATE

General Synod 1986 decided

1. To continue the Committee with the mandate to continue the contact with the OPC taking into account the rules for ecclesiastical contact which include "continued discussion" on "issues of mutual concern" (p. 57, Recommendation 2).
2. To charge the Committee to continue the discussion on divergencies, which are an issue of mutual concern and to report on this to the next synod (p. 57, Recommendation 3).
3. That the Committee for Contact OPC continue the contacts about the relationships which the OPC entertains with others expressing the following concerns:
 - a. that the relationship of the OPC with the CRC and their membership in the RES remain stumbling-blocks in reaching full correspondence;
 - b. to inform the OPC that in the event that the OPC joins and is received into the PCA, the official contact with the OPC is not transferrable to the PCA.
The Committee should continue to solicit clear commitments from the OPC concerning these matters (p. 58, Recommendation 1).
4. To pass on the report about the fencing of the Lord's table (including the sections A, B, and C) to the OPC through its Committee on Ecumenicity and Inter-Church Relations (CEIR), along with the above considerations of the General Synod of 1986 and invite the CEIR to have meetings about these matters (p. 60, Recommendation 3).
5. To ask the OPC to study this report and to respond to it. This response should pay attention to the related doctrinal subjects which were listed in the section dealing with the controversy at Blue Bell (p. 60, Recommendation 4).
6. To invite their CEIR to have joint meeting(s) about this matter of mutual concern (p. 19, bottom; p. 60, Recommendation 5).

II. HISTORICAL SURVEY

1.0 Introductory Remarks

A number of letters and phone calls have been exchanged between our Committee and CEIR: our letters of May 19, 1987; April 18, 1988; April 20, 1988; their letters of March 24, 1987; September 15, 1987; February 17, 1988; May 5, 1988; June, 1988; December 14, 1988. These letters dealt with issues of mutual information, invitations to General Assemblies of the OPC, and attempts to organize an official meeting of the two Committees.

We also maintained contact by sending a delegate to two General Assemblies (the 53rd and 54th General Assemblies).

On January 24, 1989, there was an official meeting of the Committee for Contact of the Canadian Reformed Churches and the CEIR of the OPC in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

There are several reasons why we have not had earlier and more frequent meetings.

The mandate of our Committee required that a number of reports and concerns be sent to CEIR for their study and response. These were sent to CEIR and time was given for them to prepare a response before we had an official meeting between the two Committees. Similarly CEIR sent our Committee matters for our study and advice, namely a report on the OPC's withdrawal

from the Reformed Ecumenical Synod (RES) and a statement on "Biblical Principles of the Unity of the Church."

In addition, CEIR has been busy, particularly with preparations for the General Assembly's decision regarding the process of possible joining and being received into the PCA (the Presbyterian Church in America).

Further, CEIR has had some changes in its membership which made an earlier meeting virtually impossible because now one member of CEIR is in California and another in Texas.

Finally, since the chairman of CEIR, the Rev. John P. Galbraith, was also heavily involved in the RES and instrumental in the OPC's resignation from the RES, our meeting of January, 1989 was the first time that we could suitably sit down together and have a comprehensive discussion.

2.0 Report on Activities and Communications

The Committee for Contact with the OPC can report on the following items related to the official contact between the Canadian Reformed Churches and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

2.1 53rd General Assembly of the OPC

Dr. J. Faber was delegated to the 53rd General Assembly of the OPC, 1986. He reported the following observations.

The proposal of joining the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) was extensively discussed and defeated. A majority report and a minority report on paedocommunion (partaking of the Lord's Supper by children) was referred back to an enlarged Committee for further study. A report on the hermeneutics of women in office concluded that Holy Scripture prohibits women specifically from exercising the teaching and ruling functions reserved to the office of elder; this report was approved, the Committee was continued to complete the work on the section concerning women and the office of deacon.

There was an extensive report on the International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC); it was decided to keep observing the ICRC with a view to considering membership. This report also examined the differences among the churches in the ICRC, noting particularly the difference between the European continental churches and Presbyterians; the continental churches (e.g. Canadian Reformed Churches) see only the local congregation as church, whereas Presbyterians recognize the church as existing not only locally, but also regionally, nationally, and universally; thus the continental brothers feel that Presbyterians hold to a form of hierarchicalism, whereas Presbyterians feel that the continental brothers tend to congregationalism. This report also noted that the Liberated churches of 1944 have a highly articulate doctrine of the covenant and demonstrate its far-reaching implications for Christian life and thought; a concern was expressed at the ICRC of the danger of using one doctrine as the architectonic framework for the whole of theology.

In Dr. Faber's address to the General Assembly he tried to show how the doctrine of the covenant is indeed connected with all of life. He also corrected a mistaken allegation that the Canadian Reformed Churches teach "that there can be only one true church in each nation." There is a distinction between "can" and "should": there *should* only be one true church in each nation.

2.2 54th General Assembly of the OPC

The Rev. R. Aasman was delegated to the 54th General Assembly of the OPC, 1987. He reported the following observations.

The Trinity Hymnal Revision Committee introduced some proposed additions to the revised *Trinity Hymnal*; there was some debate about the superficiality and doctrinally weak character of some of the proposed hymns, but the

Assembly accepted the proposed hymnal. The Committee on Christian Education reported that the Reagan administration has been extremely favourable to Christian schools; it was evident from the report and the ensuing discussion that there is a real desire within the OPC for Christian education, preferably within denominational schools. This Committee also presented a recommended Curriculum for seminary students within the OPC; this clarifies for students in various seminaries which subjects are required in order to be ordained as a minister of the Word in the OPC.

CEIR recommended to the Assembly that the OPC continue the investigation into what options are feasible to move to the common goal of union with the PCA; CEIR recently met with the PCA's Committee on Interchurch Relations and proposed to do so again in November 1987; this proposal was adopted.

The Committee on RES Matters presented a report entitled, "Why the Membership of the GKN in the RES Must be Terminated Now"; the Assembly decided to commission this Committee to present its report to the RES, Harare, 1988, demand the termination of the GKN in the RES, and failing that to withdraw the OPC from the RES. A report on paedocommunion was sent back for further study. A report on Hermeneutics of Women in Ordained Office was recommitted for improvement; it was evident from the discussion that the ordination of women received no support, whereas the office of women deacons is still a matter of study.

2.3 OPC's Withdrawal from the RES

The Committee for Contact with the OPC received from the OPC an official statement that the OPC had withdrawn from the Reformed Ecumenical Synod (RES, now Reformed Ecumenical Council). See Addendum 1: the "News Release" of the OPC, and the "Statement of Resignation of the OPC from the RES," June 10, 1988.

This withdrawal took place at the RES's meeting in Harare, Zimbabwe, May 30 - June 10, 1988 after this body refused to request the resignation of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (GKN - Synodical). The primary concern with respect to the GKN is its acceptance of homosexuals as members in good standing and eligible for office in the church. However, also of concern was the GKN's membership in the World Council of Churches, the ordaining of women as ministers and elders, the retention of ministers who hold heretical views on basic doctrines and, more recently, a doctrine of Scripture that resulted in the statement that "we know better than (the apostle) Paul." This withdrawal resulted in the termination of almost forty years of OPC membership in the RES. The OPC departed with a sincere plea that the RES recognize "the enormity of what it has done and is doing to churches seeking to be faithful to the Word of God."

2.4 OPC's "Biblical Principles of the Unity of the Church"

At the instruction of the 54th (1987) General Assembly of the OPC, the Committee for Contact with the OPC was sent a copy of the OPC's "Biblical Principles of the Unity of the Church." (Please see Addendum 2). It was accompanied by the following remark,

"The Assembly wished it sent to you for your response. We value your counsel, and we shall deeply appreciate any comments you might feel appropriate. Perhaps you might wish to discuss the statement with our Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations, but we shall be glad to receive a response in the way most convenient for you."

Since our Committee felt that this was an important matter and that the OPC sincerely wanted our advice, we took the time to draw up a detailed analysis which was presented and discussed at the meeting of January 24, 1989. (See

Addendum 3, "Some Remarks on the OPC Statement.") As is evident from our analysis, our Committee has much appreciation for the direction of this statement. However, it is also evident that we have some critical remarks. These critical remarks were discussed at the meeting and were well received by the OPC brothers of the CEIR. They promised to keep us informed of whatever changes would be made to this statement, especially with respect to their relationship with the PCA.

2.5 Communications from Classis Alberta-Manitoba

The Committee for Contact with the OPC received two reports from Classis Alberta-Manitoba of classis-observers delegated to the Presbytery of the Dakotas of the OPC. The first report was drafted by the Rev. J.D. Wielenga who attended a meeting of September 23, 24 and 25, 1986; the second was drafted by the Rev. A. de Jager who attended a meeting of March 3, 4 and 5, 1987. Both reports not only presented facts and decisions but also the observer's personal reflections and insights. These reports are much appreciated since they give our Committee insight into ecclesiastical practices at the presbyterial level.

2.6 Communications from Classis Ontario-South

The Committee received d.d. Oct. 15, 1987 a copy of the decision of Classis Ontario-South d.d. March 25, 1987 concerning the admittance of the Tri-County Reformed Church at Laurel, MD, into the federation of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

It also received a copy of the decision of Classis Ontario-South d.d. Dec. 9, 1987 with regard to a request of Mr. T.M.P. VanderVen related to the grounds of this admittance.

2.7 Communication from the Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad of The Reformed Churches in the Netherlands

The Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad of our sister churches in the Netherlands sent in Sept. 1988 a copy of their letter to the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations of the OPC. They expressed on behalf of their previous Synod a desire, "to look into possibilities with you of a closer relationship in the future."

"The contact practice with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (has) appeared (to be) rather ineffectual so far; we hope and pray that in the years to come a contact practice will (grow) which can be fertile for the case of our Lord Jesus Christ in the world."

Apparently the OPC also sent our sister churches in the Netherlands the statement on "Biblical Principles of the Unity of the Church" for their letter makes this comment,

"In your letter you give evidence of taking the Biblical dedication to unity of the children of the Lord seriously. We also noted with gladness and approval the 'Biblical Principles of the Unity of the Church' which (have) been accepted for that purpose. Much of that is also the basis for our policy concerning the relations with churches abroad. . . ."

They also express appreciation for the OPC's withdrawal from the RES and concluded from that action the following:

"We see in it an evidence of your longing for a unity which is based on the true belief and your refusal of a feigned unity which is at the expense of the only truth."

By way of conclusion the Committee of our sister churches remarked that they would like to deal with the OPC "in close deliberation" with the Canadian Reformed Churches. Consequently we were sent a copy of this letter.

2.8 Meeting with CEIR on January 24, 1989

2.8.1 Biblical Principles of the Unity of the Church

This statement by the OPC has been mentioned earlier in this report. It was clarified by the OPC brethren that this statement was not drawn up only with the PCA in mind, although it certainly will be used in any further discussions between the OPC and the PCA. Our Committee expressed deep appreciation for the fact that the OPC in this statement does not take the easy way out with respect to the church's ecumenical task by fleeing into fantasies about an "invisible church." The OPC understands that two true churches of Jesus Christ may not exist alongside each other without seeking ecclesiastical union, but at the same time acknowledges that *union* of churches can only come about on the basis of *unity* of faith.

2.8.2 Fencing the Lord's Supper

According to the mandate of Synod 1986 our Committee conveyed the concerns of the Canadian Reformed Churches with respect to the doctrine of the covenant, confessional membership, ecclesiology and the autonomy of the local church. They did so especially by dealing with the issue of the fencing of the Lord's Table.

The CEIR reminded us again of the clear statements of the Westminster Confession (XXIX.8), the Form of Government (XII.7) and the Directory for Worship (V.4), quoted in our evaluation of the Hofford Complaint *Acts* 1986, p. 133). They explained that local sessions use different methods to prevent the Lord's Table from being profaned. They stressed that Holy Scripture does not prescribe one specific method. 1 Cor. 11:28 ("Let a man examine *himself*") emphasizes the personal responsibility.

Our Committee covered the areas mentioned in our previous report:

- a. The need for direct supervision of guests by the overseers who should determine who may attend the Lord's Table.
- b. The desirability for using (travel-) attestations.
- c. The need to see to it that certain conditions are met by guests who are to be admitted to the Lord's Table.
- d. The need for corporate responsibility with respect to attendance at the Lord's Supper.

In connection with the last point we asked when and whence the difference between the methods in e.g. the Free Church of Scotland and the OPC came about. One may think of the old system of handing out "tokens" for admission to the Lord's Supper. We also wondered whether the variety in methods within the OPC and the most frequently used method of issuing only a general warning is not due to the influence of American individualism. The personal responsibility, expressed in 1 Cor. 11, does not exclude the corporate responsibility as 1 Cor. 5 shows in agreement with Acts 20:28.

Our Committee was assured that the OPC would study this matter further and discuss it again with us in the near future.

2.8.3 "The Blue Bell Situation"

The CEIR asked us for

"any further information about the Blue Bell situation so that we may try to put the matter to rest. Apparently a point of interest is the question of schism on the part of the Blue Bell congregation, whether your classis received them without consultation with our presbytery, and if so, whether your churches thus fostered the alleged schism. We do

not feel that this should be a barrier between us but there seems to be need for final clarification." (letter December 14, 1988)

The CEIR pointed out that, when the Blue Bell congregation had decided to accept the Three Forms of Unity as its secondary standards and the Church Order of Dordt as its form of government, the presbytery of Philadelphia, upon request of the Reformation Church at Blue Bell, could have arranged for an orderly transition to the confederation of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

Our Committee received this for information and emphasized the limits of its mandate and furthermore the responsibility of the churches in Classis Ontario-South.

2.8.4 Reformed Ecumenical Synod (See 2.3)

Little needed to be said about this because the OPC had done exactly what we urged them to do with respect to the RES, namely, withdraw from it. We expressed our gratitude and appreciation for the manner in which the OPC withdrew from the RES: on the one hand showing that the OPC cannot have contact with any organization which is still receptive to the GKN (Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland - Synodical), and on the other hand calling those in the RES in a pastoral manner to have nothing more to do with the GKN lest the disease which infects the GKN will spread to all in the RES.

2.8.5 Christian Reformed Church

Although the Committee for Contact with the OPC could express real appreciation for what the OPC did with respect to the RES, it could not do so for what the OPC is doing with respect to the CRC. Presently the OPC and the CRC send fraternal delegates to each other's assemblies, work together on certain issues, comment on each other's practices and cautiously exchange pulpits. Our Committee pointed out how the Canadian Reformed Churches have exchanged correspondence with the CRC some years ago and found them unreceptive to the warnings and exhortations which we made to them. Indeed the CRC is showing that it is following in the same direction as the GKN — not nearly at the same level — and yet going in the same direction. Our Committee expressed the concern that the OPC has too optimistic a view of the CRC.

The brothers of the CEIR explained that in reality they do not have too optimistic a view of the CRC. In fact they have experienced the very same thing as our churches, namely, that the CRC is not receptive to warnings and exhortations. If the OPC presently did not have a fraternal relationship with the CRC, they would not start one. But they have such a relationship and are maintaining it for the sake of the many believers who are still in the CRC.

2.8.6 Concluding Remarks of the Meeting

The OPC brothers pleaded that we continue the contact which our churches have together because they, the OPC, feel very much enriched by our Reformed background and they believe that it is the Lord Jesus Christ's command to seek ecclesiastical union where there is a unity of faith. They also expressed regret that they had spent too much time with the PCA to the detriment of our discussions together.

What really encouraged us as Committee was the appreciation of the OPC brethren for our constructive criticism and advice, their plea to keep up the contact, and their commitment to meet and talk together more frequently and regularly in the future.

In order to ensure that there will be such a follow-up to our discussions soon, the next meeting between our respective Committees was scheduled for February 27, 1990 in the Burlington-Hamilton area.

III. EVALUATION

Evaluating the present situation, our Committee recommends to maintain the ecclesiastical contact of the Canadian Reformed Churches with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

1. The fact that the OPC has the Westminster Standards and a Presbyterian church government can not be a reason for terminating this contact. Reformed churches have always acknowledged faithful Presbyterian churches as churches of the Lord Jesus Christ. Our previous Committee gave an evaluation of the confessional and church political divergencies and came to a similar conclusion. This evaluation was received by the previous synod as the argument for the statement of General Synod 1977 that these divergencies "do not form an impediment to recognize the Orthodox Presbyterian Church as churches of the Lord Jesus Christ."

This decision of 1977 has never been revoked and still governs our present relation with the OPC.

2. The previous Committee considered that the General Assembly "has not allowed deviation from their standards, nor has it sanctified heresy such as would require to break off our relations with the OPC" (*Acts* 1986, p. 136).

The present Committee is of the same opinion after the 53rd and 54th General Assemblies.

3. Our membership in the International Conference of Reformed Churches and the recognition of its basis leads to the same conclusion. Divergencies between Reformed confessions and church orders of the European continent and those of Great Britain do not form an impediment for their Council either. Therefore, it is consistent to maintain ecclesiastical contact with the OPC in April 1989 and to act as host of delegates of e.g. the Free Church of Scotland and of observers of the OPC in June 1989.

4. Although modest, the ecclesiastical contact with the OPC reminds us of the greatness of the ongoing church gathering work of our Lord Jesus Christ. We need these contacts: they may keep us free from sectarianism. Termination of the ecclesiastical contact with the OPC (and of the membership of the ICRC for that matter) would impoverish the Canadian Reformed Churches.

5. Our Committee speaks of *modest* contacts with the OPC. Their confederation and ours are small in number and sparsely spread over the vast North American continent. Moreover, our contacts are limited. We should not expect too much from the mutual influence on the life of the churches of Christ in these two confederations, neither do we have to be overly afraid of some imperfect expressions or practices.

In this context the Committee also reminds the churches of Art. 50 of our Church Order: "With foreign Churches of Reformed confession a sister-Church relationship shall be maintained as much as possible. On minor points of Church Order and ecclesiastical practice Churches abroad shall not be rejected."

While Art. 50 speaks of sister-Church relationship, we are here still dealing with a more limited relationship of ecclesiastical contact as defined by Synod 1977.

6. As far as the membership of the OPC in the RES is concerned, our Committee recommends that our General Synod 1989 gratefully acknowledges the Scriptural witness that the OPC delegates have given within the RES — especially with respect to the apostasy in the synodical Reformed Churches in the Netherlands—, the exemplary way in which they have spoken the truth in love (Eph. 4) and the clear manner in which they finally terminated their membership in the RES.

The Canadian Reformed delegates should convey this acknowledgement to the ICRC in Vancouver 1989 and recommend to receive the OPC wholeheartedly, if they would apply for membership after the Vancouver meeting.

As far as the relationship with the CRC is concerned, the CEIR repeated the statement that there are no plans to strengthen this historic bond, while our Committee again declared that it is a stumbling-block on the road to full correspondence. We urged the brothers at least to use their limited contact for a stronger testimony against the tendency within the CRC of following the lead of the (synodical) GKN.

In regard to the relationship with the PCA the following remarks can be made: The CEIR understood that our official contact with the OPC is not transferable to another body. It is clear that this relation to the PCA is one of the most important issues for the OPC at the moment. It was especially with a view to this relationship that the 1987 General Assembly affirmed the statement "Biblical Principles of the Unity of the Church." At present the PCA has stipulated that certain principles of ecumenical relations be approved by both churches before further action on union may be taken. In the meantime some sessions and ministers have chosen locally or individually to realign with the PCA.

On the other hand there is the relationship of the OPC with the Reformed Presbyterians (the "Covenanters"). Some brothers in the OPC would rather strengthen the bond with the Reformed Presbyterians than with the PCA.

Our General Synod could again advise the Canadian Reformed Churches to remember the OPC in their prayers as they struggle to come to a decision in these matters. In this time of trial for the OPC the Canadian Reformed Churches should use the opportunities given to support and assist the OPC in their search for ecclesiastical union in the unity of faith, wherever and whenever possible.

7. The Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations requested a discussion and critique of the OPC statement "Biblical Principles of the Unity of the Church." Our Committee complied with this request. In the combined meeting of January 1989 both papers were discussed. The CEIR would like to continue this discussion. They promised to give a response to our remarks and to consider changing some expressions in their statement. This response would be one of the agenda items in the meeting planned for February 1990. In this discussion several issues of mutual concern, mentioned in the decisions of our 1986 General Synod will again play a role. The Canadian Reformed Churches first requested this discussion, then entered into it and may not abandon it prematurely now that the CEIR is eager to pursue it.
8. Our Committee would like to urge our Canadian Reformed Churches to be patient. Some may be inclined to break off ecclesiastical contact, if within a few years and after some discussions it does not lead to "the sister-Church relationship" of Art. 50 C.O. or the "full correspondence" of which the rules for ecclesiastical contact speak. Should we not be aware of the fact that these rules for ecclesiastical contact also speak of "continued discussions" as the means to reach full correspondence?

Further, we may remind the churches of the fact that since 1965, when the Canadian Reformed Churches requested the OPC to start discussions with them, we could thankfully note that some major barriers for establishing such a sister church relationship have been removed. In 1973 the OPC decided to terminate the sister church relationship with the GKN (the synodical churches in the Netherlands). In 1975 an invitation from the same churches to enter into the relationship of "churches in ecclesiastical fellowship" was declined "in view of the fact that the reasons leading to the decision of 1973 are still valid" (*Minutes* 42nd General Assembly). In 1988 the OPC terminated its longstanding membership in the RES.

In our last meeting the CEIR was receptive to our plea to use their contact with the Christian Reformed Church for a stronger testimony against the tendency of following the unscriptural lead of the (synodical) GKN.

Finally, should we not also remember the fact that discussions between e.g. our sister churches in the Netherlands and the "Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken" have taken decades? These are confederations of churches with the same three Forms of Unity and the same Church Order of Dordt. Even if we would entertain similar discussions with the Free Reformed Churches of North America, we would have to exercise similar patience. How much more is this requirement of patience and endurance needed in a relationship as that of the Canadian Reformed Churches to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. The gathering of God's Church is not a matter of a few years.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of this evaluation the Committee recommends that General Synod 1989 of the Canadian Reformed Churches decide

1. to acknowledge gratefully the Scriptural witness that the OPC delegates have given within the RES — especially with respect to the apostasy in the synodical Reformed Churches in the Netherlands—, the exemplary way in which they have spoken the truth in love (Eph. 4) and the clear manner in which they finally terminated the membership of the OPC in the Reformed Ecumenical Council.
2. to convey this acknowledgement to the International Conference of Reformed Churches in Vancouver 1989 and to recommend that it receive the OPC wholeheartedly, if they apply for membership.
3. to receive the statement on "Biblical Principles of Church Unity," affirmed by the 1987 General Assembly of the OPC, and the written remarks made by the Committee.
4. to continue the Committee with the mandate
 - a. to maintain the contact with the OPC taking into account the rules for "Ecclesiastical Contact";
 - b. to include in the "continued discussions" on "issues of mutual concern" (Synod 1977, p. 42) the statement on "Biblical Principles of Church Unity";
 - c. to send the report 1989 of the Committee and the decision of Synod to the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations of the OPC and to the Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad of "De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland";
 - d. to serve the following General Synod with a report, to be sent to the churches at least three months before the beginning of this Synod.
5. to advise the churches to remember the OPC in prayer that God may give insight with respect to the principles and practice of the unity of His Church.

We wish the General Synod God's blessing and the wisdom of the Holy Spirit in its deliberations.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. R. Aasman, secretary
J. Boot, treasurer
Dr. J. Faber
Rev. J. Mulder, convener
T.M.P. VanderVen

Addendum 1

NEWS RELEASE

The Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC) has resigned its 39-year membership in the Reformed Ecumenical Synod (RES). The action followed the refusal of that body to request the resignation of a member denomination that accepts homosexuals as in good standing and eligible for office in the church. The Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (GKN) have held steadfastly to their homosexual position since 1980 when it first came to the attention of the RES. Although the RES protested the church's position at its quadrennial meetings in 1980 and 1984 it failed to take definitive action at its recently-concluded 1988 meeting after the GKN had refused to rescind their policy. Three other denominations, from the Netherlands, New Zealand, and South Africa, also announced their intention to withdraw. That will bring to nine the number of churches that have withdrawn from the RES in the past 10 years.

The RES is an international body of churches that are committed to maintaining the Reformed creeds, including the Westminster Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Belgic Confession, based on the infallible Scriptures. It was founded in 1946 and is composed of some 30 denominations in all the continents. The Orthodox Presbyterian Church was one of its early members, joining at the second assembly, in 1949. There are now two other North American denominations remaining in the RES.

The withdrawal of the OPC was taken at the RES's meeting in Harare, Zimbabwe, May 30-June 10, 1988, after years of struggle to bring about the reform of the Netherlands church or its expulsion. During that time the Netherlands church had been allowed to remain in the RES even though it differed with the RES not only on the homosexual question but also on such other matters joining the World Council of Churches, starting to ordain women as ministers and elders, retaining ministers who had held heretical views on basic doctrines and, more recently, a doctrine of Scripture that resulted in their stating that "we know better than (the apostle) Paul."

The withdrawal of the OPC came on the final day of the meetings, after the previous day's decision to retain the Reformed Churches as a member. The quick response was due to the fruitlessness of the many years of seeking reform. It was made possible by the General Assembly giving full authority to its four-man delegation to withdraw the denomination from the RES. In their resignation statement the delegation said that "until yesterday we could not leave the RES because of conscience; today we cannot remain because of conscience."

The statement also asked the RES to recognize what is called "the enormity of what it has done and is doing to churches seeking to be faithful to the Word of God" as the RES "has forced" such churches to withdraw. The statement also claimed that those decisions are keeping other churches from joining. The delegates also pled with the RES "to keep the disease that infects the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands from spreading to other member churches."

The OPC has long had fellowship with other Reformed denominations both in the U.S. and abroad and will seek other fellowship to replace that of the RES.

(See attached *Statement of Resignation*)

Ref.: Orthodox Presbyterian Church
John P. Galbraith, Stated Clerk
2345 Willow Brook Dr.
Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006
215/657-1778
June 17, 1988

Statement of Resignation of the OPC from the RES
June 10, 1988

Mr. Moderator,

The General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church has given its delegation to this Synod full authority to act on behalf of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church at this meeting of the RES. We therefore speak on behalf of our denomination.

First of all, we wish to express our deep appreciation for the blessings that God has given us over a period of nearly 40 years, as members of the RES. We have experienced a wonderfully enriching fellowship with believers from all parts of the world. Our horizon has been increased, and we have learned much. Relationships have been established over these years, and we hope that we may continue some of them in the years ahead. So much have we valued this fellowship that nothing could bring us to relinquish it but the strong conviction that we must do so in order to be faithful to the Word of God.

We leave because of the persistence of the GKN in holding positions well known to the RES over a period of 25 years, that the RES has judged to be out of accord with Scripture and because the RES is unwilling to enforce its own qualifications for membership. We leave also because for us to remain in an organization that harbors a church in such a condition as the GKN so implicates our church in its sin that we have no choice but to separate ourselves from it.

We now have become *another* church that feels itself forced out of the RES by the Synod's decision to continue the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (GKN) in the RES membership, and we hereby resign the membership of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church from the RES, effective immediately. Until yesterday we could not leave the RES because of conscience; today we cannot remain because of conscience.

But we assure you, Mr. Moderator, that we do not leave this organization in pride or bitterness. We are too sinful ourselves to be proud, and because God is sovereign we cannot be bitter. We are all losers because of the decision yesterday. The Orthodox Presbyterian Church loses because we shall not have the benefit of the close fellowship with many of you who want to be faithful to the gospel and the Reformed Confessions. The GKN loses because it has been deprived of the blessing of much needed correction. And the RES loses because it has again demonstrated its unwillingness to maintain the Basis which requires member churches to "profess and maintain" the Reformed faith, has lost its credibility as a Reformed body, and thus becomes more akin to such organizations as the WARC and the WCC. Yet we know that though we lose, Christ the king of the church, will triumph.

We wish you to know that we do not depart with an inward-looking focus. Our zeal for international ecumenicity among Reformed churches worthy of the name is stronger than ever. And we can assure you that we will seek, now, in some other way to have such fellowship. If the RES should, in future days, return to a credible maintenance of its Basis we would certainly feel obliged to consider returning.

We close with some pastoral advice which we hope the RES will be willing to receive. The RES must face up to the enormity of what it has done and is doing to churches seeking to be faithful to the Word of God as the *RES* by its decisions, *not* the GKN, has forced nine or ten churches, *so far*, out of the RES and has kept other faithful churches from joining. And you must face up to your responsibility to member churches to keep the disease that infects the GKN from spreading to those churches. Some of them live in fear of that spread, and we plead with you to help protect them from it.

Mr. Moderator, we shall continue to pray for all the churches that remain with sincere love in our hearts. We hope that you will understand that we cannot participate further in the schedule of this Assembly. As others have already said, we bid you farewell, may God help you—and us.

Addendum 2

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES OF THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH

I The 1961 Statement, the Biblical Basis for Ecclesiastical Union

In ecclesiastical union two denominations join in submitting to one common form of government. Since ecclesiastical jurisdiction includes the maintenance of spiritual discipline, unity in polity requires agreement in the standards of faith and worship which such discipline maintains. Hence unification in polity, when properly sought and achieved, involves also unity in faith, discipline, and worship.

As we take account of the diversity that exists between denominations arising from differences of ethnic identity, cultural background, and historical circumstance the most conclusive evidence derived from Scripture is required to support the position that the obliteration of denominational separateness is an obligation resting upon these Churches of Christ. The differences that exist often manifest the diversity which the church of Christ ought to exemplify and make for the enrichment of the church's total witness. If ecclesiastical union impairs this diversity, then it may be achieved at too great an expense and tends to an impoverishment inconsistent with the witness to Christ which the church must bear.

Though the diversity which manifests itself in differentiating historical development might appear to make ecclesiastical union inadvisable or even perilous in certain cases, yet the biblical evidence in support of union is so plain that any argument to the contrary, however plausible, must be false.

A. The Ethnic Universalism of the Gospel

In Christ there is now no longer Jew or Gentile, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free (cf. Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:11). The New Testament does not suppose that the differences natural to individuals nor those arising from ethnic identity, cultural background, and historical circumstance are to be obliterated by the gospel. But it does mean that the unity of Christ transcends all diversity arising from language, race, culture, history. What is more, this unity embraces and utilizes all the diversity that is proper and this is created by God's providence. If we should maintain that the diversity is in any way incompatible with the unity of which the church is the expression, then we should be denying THAT unity which the ethnic universalism of the gospel implies. Implicit in the universalism of the gospel is the same kind of universalism in that which the gospel designs, the building up of Christ's church.

B. The Universalism of the Apostolic Church

The church of the apostolic days embraces all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues. There is no evidence in the New Testament for the diversification of distinct denominations and anything tending to such diversification was condemned (cf. 1 Cor. 1:10-13). The emphasis falls upon the oneness of faith (cf. Eph. 4:5) and the oneness of the fellowship of the saints (cf. Eph. 4:2-4; 11-16; Phil. 2:2,3; 4:2).

C. Jesus' Prayer for Unity (John 17:20,21)

It is a travesty of this text, as of all others bearing upon the unity of the church, to think of the unity for which Christ prayed apart from the unity of the bond of truth. Verse 21 must not be dissociated from verse 20. To divorce the unity for which Christ prayed from all that is involved in believing upon Him through the apostolic witness is to sunder what Christ placed together. Furthermore, the pattern Jesus provides in this prayer — "as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee" — makes mockery of the application of the text when unity is divorced from the characteri-

zation which finds its analogy in trinitarian unity and harmony.

But while these and other distortions of this text are to be shunned, the prayer of Jesus does bear upon our question in two respects.

1. The fragmentation and consequent lack of fellowship, harmony, and cooperation which appear on the ecclesiastical scene are a patent contradiction of unity exemplified in that to which Jesus referred when he said, "as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee."
2. The purpose stated in Jesus' prayer — "that the world may believe that thou has sent me" — implies a manifestation observable by the world. Jesus prays for a visible unity that will bear witness to the world. The mysterious unity of believers with one another must come to visible expression so as to be instrumental in bringing conviction to the world.

D. The Unity of the Body of Christ

The church is the body of Christ and there is no schism in the body (cf. 1 Cor. 12:25). As in the human body, there is diversity in unity and unity in diversity (cf. 1 Cor. 12). The point to be stressed, however, is the unity. If there is unity it follows that this unity must express itself in all the functions which belong to the church. Since government in the church is an institution of Christ (cf. Rom. 12:8; 1 Cor. 12:28; 1 Tim. 5:17; Heb. 13:7, 1 Pet. 5:1,2), this unity must be expressed in government. The necessary inference to be drawn is that the government should manifest the unity and be as embracing in respect of its functioning as the unity of which it is an expression. A concrete illustration of this principle is the decree of the Jerusalem council (Acts 15:28,29; 16:4).

E. The Kingdom of Christ, etc.

1. Christ is the head of the church. So ultimately there is the most concentrated unity of government in the church of Christ. He alone is King. Any infringement upon this sovereignty belonging to Christ is a violation of what is basic and central in the government of the church. It follows that all government in the church must adhere to the pattern of a cone which has its apex in Christ.
2. Christ also instituted the apostolate with authority delegated from him (Matt. 16:18,19; cf. Jn. 20:21,23; Eph. 2:19-22). This apostolic authority is exercised now only through the inscripturated Word. But in the sphere of delegated authority the apostolate is supreme and will continue to be so to the end of time. This is the way the Holy Spirit, as the vicar of Christ, abiding in and with the church, exercises his function in accordance with Christ's promise. He seals the apostolic witness by his own testimony and illumines the people of God in the interpretation and application of the same.
3. Subordinately, however, in terms of Matt. 16:19, the hegemony of the apostolate is undeniable and it exemplifies the descending hierarchy which Christ has established.
4. There is also in the New Testament institution the delegated authority of the presbyterate, always subject to the apostolic institution, to the Holy Spirit who inspired the apostles (Jn. 16:13; 20:22), and ultimately to Christ as King and Head of the church, but nevertheless supreme in this sphere of government.
5. Since all office in the church of Christ can be filled only by the gifts of the Spirit, this structural subordination of the government of the church to the rule of Christ functions in living reality as a fellowship of the one Spirit. Everyone who has the Spirit of Christ is thereby called as a good steward of the manifold grace of God to minister his spiritual gifts to all the saints, so far as he is given opportunity. In particular, those whose gifts are for rule in

the church must exercise such gifts in the communion of Christ and his church.

When these principles of gradation and communion are appreciated, and when coordinated with other considerations already established, especially that of the unity of the body of Christ, we appear to be provided with a pattern that points to the necessity of making the presbyterate as inclusive as is consistent with loyalty to Christ and the faith of the gospel. In a word, we are pointed to the necessity of unity in government, a unity that is violated when churches of Christ adhering to the faith in its purity and integrity are not thus united. (End of report to the 28th General Assembly).

That statement has provided the Orthodox Presbyterian Church with principles that have guided us in the exercise of our ecumenical calling in the years since. Your Committee commends that statement to the church.

II A Further Statement, Biblical Principles of the Unity of the Church

A. The Nature of the Church

1. The church is the covenant people of God — the body of people to whom God has made the promise to be their God and they to be his people and he to dwell with them. The church is the covenant people of God in all ages and among all nations.
2. All those who believe the promise of God and their children and have had the promise sealed to them in baptism are to be recognized and treated as God's people, as members of the organized church.
3. The church belongs to her covenant head Jesus Christ and "there is no other head of the church but the Lord Jesus Christ" (Confession of Faith XXV, 6).
4. The work of the church, in fellowship with and in obedience to Christ, is divine worship, mutual edification, and gospel witness (Form of Government II,4), under the teaching and rule of elders.
5. The Lord governs his church also through the application of his Word to the people by the Spirit as the Word is expounded and applied by the officers of the church (Ephesians 4:11-16).

B. The Unity of the Church

1. The church finds its unifying principle in the covenant promise "my dwelling place will be with them; I will be their God, and they will be my people" (Ezekiel 37:27; Leviticus 26:12). This finds fulfillment in Jesus as Emmanuel ("God with us," Matthew 1:23, John 1:14), who came as the mediator of the covenant of grace to redeem and purchase this people for his dwelling by his blood. The ultimate consummation of the promise is the new Jerusalem, the Bride of Christ (Revelation 21:3).
2. The church must recognize, appreciate, and confess this fundamental unity of the covenant people of God, the body of Christ; which is a God-given creation and not a human achievement.
3. The church, the visible organization, is described in the Bible as one church. God has given only one covenant of love (Deuteronomy 7:6-12) and has only one people of the covenant.
4. In the New Testament this teaching of the unity of the people of God is sustained (see Ephesians 2:11-22 and 4:1-16). Yet the situation is different. No longer are the people of God circumscribed by ethnic, political, or geographical boundaries. All nations are to be discipled.
5. This unity includes those people of God in past ages and also looks to the future and includes the people of God who will believe on His name (John

17:20-21).

6. The gospel proclaimed by the apostles as the foundation of the church resulted in establishing churches as covenant communities in various locations, churches which were ruled by elders. These churches and these elders were not independent, but were one body united by Christ their head, by the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit, and by the covenant promise of God. The elders at Antioch and Jerusalem resolve a problem, under God, and their decision is binding on the churches (Acts 15, 16:4).
7. The unity of the church is attained unto by growing in spiritual maturity (Ephesians 4:13). Unity and maturity are the result of mutual, loving admonition and joint submission to Scripture. Such maturity is manifested by speaking and acting the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15).
8. Each member is essential to the body, and the growth of the body depends on the active participation of each part (Ephesians 4:13,16). The work of the officers of the church is to prepare the members for, and assist them in this work (Ephesians 4:11-12).

C. Toward Perfecting Biblical Unity

1. The unity of the church is in Christ and it is both a given reality and also a requirement. The unity of the faith is both gift and mandate.
2. The church is compelled to give expression to this reality and requirement, this gift and mandate, by actively seeking the promised goal, namely, that of being one body which serves the Lord in perfect peace, purity, and unity.
3. The ultimate goal of the unity of the church is nothing less than one worldwide presbyterian/reformed church.
4. The unity of the church is unity in Christ, unity in the gospel of Christ, "unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God" (Ephesians 4:13). This Christ, this gospel, this faith and knowledge, the church must confess. It is summarized for us in our Confession of Faith.
5. The present division into separate denominations is because of unfaithfulness to God as expressed in beliefs, teaching, and living, on the part of both individuals in the church and the churches that are contrary to the Word of God.
6. We find ourselves in this sinful situation as we undertake to pursue the mandate to unity. There exists between us and all other churches a sinful disunity that demands reconciliation in a biblical way. This sin must be faced and removed so that true and full unity and fellowship of the church may be reached.
7. In seeking actively the unity of the church, we must recognize several levels of separateness (i.e., degrees of purity) among the churches. There are Presbyterian and Reformed churches that are more or less faithful. There are non-Reformed churches that are more or less faithful. There are also churches that have apostatized, and no longer have the right to be called church.
8. In seeking unity with faithful Presbyterian and Reformed churches:
 - a. There should be mutual agreement on what the gospel is. The churches must confess in their official documents of faith and life the same gospel.
 - b. There should be a relationship of ecclesiastical fellowship established in which official interchange may take place including the exchange of delegates at the meetings of the ruling bodies of the church.
 - c. There will be fellowship and cooperation in organizations, both domestic and international, which give expression to oneness of faith and life.
 - d. There then may take place the actual steps toward uniting. These include:

1. The recognition of each other as true churches of Christ, more or less pure (Confession of Faith XXV,4), in which the marks of the church are found.
2. Reconciliation between the bodies (the sin that is involved in the separate existence must be faced and resolved: this may be only the sin of separate existence; or a sin which has historical roots; or doctrinal error; or error in the life of the church).
3. Self-examination on the part of each church.
Agreement that the confession of the united church must be apparent in the life of the church.
4. The offering of each church to the other for examination; willingness to give, receive and respond to reproof (2 Timothy 3:16-17); speaking and acting the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15).
5. Agreement on the same ecclesiology and government of the church.
6. Maintaining the peace, purity and unity of the churches.
 - e. There would then be the actual uniting into one organization.
9. There is also responsibility to call all churches, including our own, to faithfulness in order to seek the unity of the whole church.

Submitted to the 53rd (1986) General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church by the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations

Affirmed by the 54th (1987) General Assembly

Addendum 3

SOME REMARKS ON THE OPC STATEMENT "BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES OF THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH"

The statement consists of two parts, a 1961 and a 1987 statement.

- I. The 1961 statement rightly argues that diversity arising from differences of ethnic identity, cultural background and historical circumstance does not make ecclesiastical unity unnecessary, if churches are united in faith, discipline, and worship. The unity of Christ transcends all diversity and there is no evidence in the N.T. for diversification of distinct denominations. The purpose stated in the prayer of the Lord Jesus in John 17:20,21 implies a manifestation observable by the world. It is laudable that this statement does not flee into fantasies about an "invisible church" in order to escape the Scriptural demand for ecclesiastical union. Christ as Head and King of the church instituted the apostolate. The Holy Spirit is the Vicar of Christ and apostolic authority is exercised now only through the inscripturated Word. But then follows in I E 3 and 4 these statements:
 3. Subordinately, however, in terms of Matt. 16:19, the hegemony of the apostolate is undeniable and it exemplifies the descending hierarchy which Christ has established.
 4. There is also in the New Testament the delegated authority of the presbyterate, . . . , supreme in this sphere of government.

One could ask two questions.

First, what is meant by the term "hierarchy?" Is this term not infelicitous, since the apostle Peter "as a fellow elder" exhorts the elders not to domineer over the flock of God (1 Peter 5:1,2)? Second, could there not be some difference between "the presbyterate" of which this statement speaks and "the elders" in 1 Tim. 4:14?

Section I E 5 expresses the necessity of making the presbyterate as inclusive as is consistent with loyalty to Christ and the faith of the gospel. This is fine as far as

the striving for union is concerned, but does "the presbyterate" here not presuppose a structural form which as such is not (yet) present in the New Testament? Is there no difference between an elder in the New Testament and a member of a presbytery in the O.P.C.? Is there not a difference between *presbyterian* and *presbyteria*? And is viewing the elder in a *presbyterian* manner necessary for church union?

- II. The 1987 statement begins with a section about the nature of the church: "The church is the covenant people of God."

Although it is no dogmatic treatise, the statement could have spoken about the nature of the church in a more trinitarian manner: The church is the assembly of the people of God, the body of Christ, and the temple of the Holy Spirit. The communion or fellowship of the Holy Spirit, e.g., is fundamental for church unity.

When the statement calls the church "the covenant people of God," it could refine its description by adding the word "assembly" or "congregation": the church is the *assembly* or *congregation* of God's covenant people. Both the O.T. words for assembly and congregation and the N.T. secular usage of the word "assembly" (Acts 19:39, 41, the same word as "church") point into this direction. The statement rightly upholds the necessity of the manifestation of the unity of true faith in "the visible organization" (B3).

This emphasis could be strengthened by introducing words as "assembly" or "congregation" in the description of the church.

The covenant is a gracious relation of God and His people in the mediator Jesus Christ. The Westminster Confession beautifully maintains that "there is no other head of the church but the Lord Jesus Christ" (XXV,6). But why does the statement call Him "her covenant head" (II A 3)? The church is a body, the covenant is a relationship. One may speak of the head of a body and the mediator of a relationship. Christ is the head of the church and the mediator of God's covenant. Would it not be good to keep this distinction in order to prevent confusion?

Section II B 6 describes the N.T. churches as covenant communities in various locations, churches which were ruled by elders. "These churches and these elders were not independent, but were one body. . . . The elders at Antioch and Jerusalem resolve a problem, under God, and their decision is binding on the churches (Acts 15, 16:4)."

Some questions arise.

The churches were indeed one body but can the same be stated of the elders?

In Acts 15 we read of "the church (at Jerusalem) and the apostles and the elders" (15:4), and of a meeting of "the apostles and the elders" (15:6). There was a decision of "the apostles and elders who were *at Jerusalem*" (16:4). It was a meeting of the church at Jerusalem under the leadership of the apostles and the elders of Jerusalem. The statement, "The elders *at Antioch and Jerusalem* resolve a problem" (underlining ours) goes further than the data from Holy Scripture warrant.

A following remark regards the place and function of the confession. The statement later speaks of the confession of faith (C 4, C 8 a), but should it not have been mentioned under B, "The Unity of the Church?" It should be emphasized that the unity we seek is a unity of *faith*.

One should applaud the covenantal flavour of the description of the church and of the biblical unity as both gift and mandate (C 1). There is a remarkably broad sweep in setting the ultimate goal as "nothing less than one world-wide *presbyterian/reformed* church." The division into separate denominations is because of unfaithfulness to God, and sinful disunity demands reconciliation in a biblical way.

The 1987 statement escapes from two dangers here: denominationalism (or false pluriformity of the church) on the one hand and false ecumenicity on the other hand.

However, in section C 7 it is stated that "we must recognize several levels of separateness (i.e. degrees of purity) among the churches." Is this meant in the sense of the differences between the churches in Asia Minor (Rev. 1-3)? The distinction "more or less pure" should never obliterate the basic contrast between "true and false."

The statement had set as goal "one worldwide presbyterian/reformed church." Would it then not be better to leave out the sentence: "There are *non-Reformed* churches that are more or less faithful" (C 7)?

We thankfully notice that in section C 8 d (1) is spoken of "true churches of Christ, in which the marks of the church are found." It reminds us of the language of the Scotch Confession (1560) and of the Belgic Confession (1561).

In this section on the actual steps toward uniting the statement not only mentions the recognition of each other as true churches of Christ but also e.g. "reconciliation between the bodies" and "agreement in the same ecclesiology and government of the church." The O.P.C. statement shows a Scriptural depth here which is sadly lacking in many twentieth-century ecumenical declarations.

APPENDIX III A I

BOOK OF PRAISE – REPORT 1 (CREED)

To the General Synod of the Canadian Reformed Churches
to be held in Winnipeg 1989.

From: Standing Committee for the *Book of Praise*

Hamilton, June 10, 1988

Esteemed Brothers:

INTRODUCTION

Synod Cloverdale 1983 decided "to adopt provisionally the revised Canons of Dort as amended by Synod . . . and to have the entire text subjected to linguistic scrutinization before publication in the *Book of Praise*" (Art. 171 D).

Because no good mechanism was put in place for the linguistic scrutinization and in order to have this revised edition available as soon as possible, the correction was at that time kept to a minimum.

The Preface of the 1984 edition of the *Book of Praise* stated: "Except for the Nicene Creed and the Athanasian Creed, our Creeds and Confessions are now presented in the more modern English versions *provisionally* adopted by General Synod 1983" (emphasis ours).

Synod Burlington 1986 charged the Standing Committee for the *Book of Praise* among other things with the mandate

- g. to see to the linguistic revision of the Nicene Creed and the Athanasian Creed and to present a draft of this revision to the churches no later than 1 year before the next general synod and to include this revision in the report to the next general synod for the final edition of the *Book of Praise*.

Synod 1986 also decided "to set the General Synod of 1989 as target date for the final edition of the *Book of Praise*" (Art. 118 D).

In the light of the above the Standing Committee took the 1984 edition of the Confessions and Creeds as a provisional edition and established a sub-committee, consisting of Rev. J. De Jong, Dr. J. Faber (convener), Dr. W. Helder and Dr. C. Van Dam to prepare the prose contents of the *Book of Praise* for its final edition.

Because this sub-committee was aware of problems remaining with the translation of the Canons of Dort, it decided to concentrate on the correction and scrutiny of the Canons and on the retranslation of the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds. It also dealt with a communication of the Deputies Church Book appointed by Synod 1985 of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia, sent to the Standing Committee of the *Book of Praise*, and with a decision of Synod 1987 of these sister churches.

With respect to the other prose parts of the *Book of Praise*, e.g. the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism and the Liturgical Forms and Prayers, the Committee deemed it sufficient to evaluate the remarks and proposals sent in by users of the provisional edition.

In this Report we deal with the following Creeds and Confessions:

- I. THE CANONS OF DORT
- II. THE APOSTLES' CREED
- III. THE NICENE CREED
- IV. THE ATHANASIAN CREED
- V. THE BELGIC CONFESSION
- VI. THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

I. THE CANONS OF DORT

The sub-committee scrutinized the provisional version of the Canons of Dort and compared it with the original and authentic Latin and Dutch texts and with the two following new translations:

- a. the Dutch version, authorized by Synod Heemse (1984/85) of *De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland* and published in *Gereformeerd Kerkboek* (1986);
- b. the English version in *Acts of Synod 1986* of *The Christian Reformed Church of North America*.

The perusal of *Gereformeerd Kerkboek* made the Committee aware of the fact that our Dutch sister churches added many Scripture references at the end of each article of the Belgic Confession, in the margin of the Canons of Dort and of the Liturgical Forms. Although the Preface rightly mentions that these references are not part of the Confession, they certainly enrich this edition and enhance its usefulness.

The Standing Committee proposes to follow the same course for the final edition of the *Book of Praise* of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

By way of example the Committee includes in the margin of the text of the Canons, which accompanies this Report, the Scripture references we added.

If the churches so desire and Synod 1989 thus decides, the Standing Committee could be authorized to add Scripture references in a similar manner to the Belgic Confession and the Liturgical Forms and to make it clear in the Preface of the final edition that the added Scripture references do not form an integral part of the Confessions.

Another point of interest for the final text of our *Book of Praise* is the fact that the introductions to our Creeds and Confessions have never been updated. They contain obsolete material. Our Committee took the liberty to propose to the churches an updated text for the preface to the Canons of Dort. We are of the opinion that also the prefaces of the other Confessions and of the Creeds should be updated and hope that consistories of Canadian Reformed Churches will forward a proposal to General synod 1989 to have a Committee scrutinize these prefaces for the final edition of our *Book of Praise*.

The results of the work with respect to the Canons of Dort are enclosed herewith.

II. THE APOSTLES' CREED

The Deputies Church Book appointed by Synod 1985 of The Free Reformed Churches of Australia sent us a copy of the Report to their Synod 1987. Their mandate had been

- a. 1. to invite comment and collect material on
 - a the Ecumenical Creeds and the Three Forms of Unity, and
 - b the Liturgical Forms which were provisionally adopted;
2. to evaluate these and report to next Synod.
- b. to examine the matter of the word "Christian" in the Apostles' Creed further, and to make a suitable recommendation to next Synod.

Synod 1987 (*Acts*, Art. 100) decided

1. to adopt the text of the Three Forms of Unity and of those Liturgical Forms which were provisionally adopted by the 1985 Synod;
2. to adopt the text of the Ecumenical Creeds with the exception of the word "Christian" in Art. IX of the Apostles' Creed, in Lord's Day 7 of the Heidelberg Catechism, and wherever the text of the Creed is quoted in the Liturgical Forms and Prayers;
3. to insert the words "only-begotten Son" in the places mentioned by the 1986 Synod of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

Although the mandate of our Committee does not speak about the linguistic revi-

sion of the Apostles' Creed, the Committee was of the opinion that it should not bypass the Report of the deputies, sent to our Committee, and the decision of Synod 1987 of our Australian sister churches with respect to the word "Christian" in Art. IX.

Synod 1987 summarized the conclusions of deputies as follows:

- a. The received text (textus receptus) of the Apostles' Creed does not contain the equivalent of the word "Christian."
- b. The words 'a catholic Christian church' are a translation from the Dutch text, which was based on Martin Luther's double translation of the word 'catholicam,' which in the late Middle Ages sometimes would be translated by 'christliche' ('Christian').
- c. Neither the English translation – over a thousand years old – nor the French (John Calvin and others) have a double translation of the word 'catholicam.'
- d. Correctly the Apostles' Creed is, in the new *Book of Praise*, printed under the heading 'The Ecumenical Creeds.' Therefore its text should stand in the ecumenical tradition, the community with believers of all ages.
- e. The word 'Christian' as used by Luther appears to express 'of the christian' rather than 'of Christ,' and in this sense provides a duplication of the term 'communion of saints' in the next line of the creed.
- f. Scripture speaks of 'the church(es) of God,' not of 'the Christian Church.' The creeds should follow the language of Scripture consistently.

Synod 1987 of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia added these considerations:

3. Following a tradition that originates from the European continent, the *Book of Praise* has inserted the word 'Christian' in the article on the church. This is a rather old tradition. However, the tradition of maintaining the received text is much older.
4. The text of the creeds is usually printed under the heading 'Ecumenical Creeds' – as is done in the *Book of Praise* (1984). This 'ecumene' is not only a matter of 'all places' but also of 'all ages.'
5. In the text which is recommended by the Committee on Ecumenical Creeds, appointed by the ICRC held at Edinburgh, Scotland in 1985, to the member churches, the word 'Christian' will be absent.

Our Committee is of the opinion that the position, taken by our Australian sister churches, is right.

General Synod 1986 of the Canadian Reformed Churches mistakenly spoke in its Considerations (Art. 101) about 'the addition of the word 'Christian' in the age of the reformation.' It was nothing but a late medieval Germanic rendering of the word 'catholic,' as has been proven by J.N. Bakhuizen van den Brink in his essay "*Credo Sanctam Ecclesiam Catholicam*" in his *Ecclesia II* ('s Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966), pp. 262-295.

Our General Synod 1986, therefore, mistakenly stated that the expression was "purposely used in the time of the great Reformation." Synod did not give any evidence for this statement. A fact is that also Roman Catholics in sixteenth century Germany used the same expression as they had done since the late Middle Ages. There is no Reformed or even Lutheran confession of the sixteenth century that makes the replacement of the word 'catholic' by 'Christian' or the addition of this adjective a confessional matter.

It should not be construed as "a part of the catholic and apostolic faith," as our Synod 1986 did.

The Latin 1563 text of our Heidelberg Catechism shows that our forefathers were not even sure about the meaning of the word "Christian." They translate the expression "Christian faith" in Lord's Day 7 with the words *omnium Christianorum fides*, the faith of all Christians. In Lord's Day 21 they replaced the expression "Christian church" by *Christi ecclesia*, the church of Christ. In Lord's Day 27, however, they chose the expression *ecclesia Dei*, church of God. This variety of translations shows the vagueness of the adjective "Christian," as rightly indicated by our Australian sister churches.

Moreover, the authentic Dutch translation of the Heidelberg Catechism did not have the word "Christian" in the text of the Apostles' Creed in Lord's Day 7 and 21 (see J.N. Bakhuizen van den Brink, *De Nederlandse Belijdenisgeschriften*, second edition, Amsterdam: Ton Bolland, 1976).

The best Dutch edition of Richard Schilders in Middelburg 1611 – present at and used by the Synod of Dort – does not have this superfluous adjective. The publisher Mattheus de Vries in Dordrecht put it between brackets in his edition of 1725.

We do not have the right to change the received text of the Apostles' Creed or to add to it. Therefore, our Committee is of the opinion that the Canadian Reformed Churches should rescind their addition of the word "Christian" to Article IX of the Apostles' Creed. It is not found in the Latin received text or in the ages-old English and French translations of this ecumenical creed.

Our Committee, therefore, having studied the Report and the considerations of our Australian sister churches agrees with their decision to delete "the word 'Christian' in Art. IX of the Apostles' Creed, in Lord's Day 7 of the Heidelberg Catechism, and wherever the text of the Creed is quoted in the Liturgical Forms and Prayers" in the *Book of Praise*.

We propose to rescind the decision of Synod 1983, Art. 70 II, and of Synod 1986, Art. 101 and to delete the word 'Christian' as indicated.

Since our Committee would like to prevent a debate about the question whether the Committee's proposal to rescind the decision of 1986 and to delete this word from the text of the Apostles' Creed is admissible, we would like to see consistories of the Canadian Reformed Churches place this item on the agenda of the General Synod 1989.

III. THE NICENE CREED

In discussing our mandate with respect to the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds our Committee became aware of the work done by ICET (the International Consultation on English Texts).

The English text of the Nicene Creed, proposed by ICET, has found widespread acceptance in Christianity, not only by Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Lutherans, Presbyterians, etc., but also by Reformed Christians.

By way of example we refer to the publication *Worship the Lord of The Reformed Church in America* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987). In the liturgy for the congregational services the Reformed Church in America gives the choice between the old translations of the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed (as used in our *Book of Praise* before 1984) and the ICET texts.

The question arose in our Committee: Should the Canadian Reformed Churches not first of all decide whether this new English text of the Nicene Creed is acceptable or should be adhered to at least as closely as possible?

Moreover, the Committee became aware of the fact that the ICRC (the International Council of Reformed Churches), to be hosted by the Canadian Reformed Churches in 1989, will discuss the same question. A draft proposal for an English text of the Nicene Creed was sent to the Canadian Reformed Churches and to the other members of the ICRC.

Again the question arose: Would it not be wise to wait for the results of this conference?

At least, the Committee, to be appointed by General Synod 1989, should receive guidelines from this Synod that show in which direction the Canadian Reformed Churches want to proceed.

Since consistency of translation policies is desirable, General Synod 1989 might also consider guidelines for a new English translation of the Apostles' Creed in the light of the ICET text and the forthcoming proposal of the ICRC.

In order to facilitate the discussion we present to the churches the ICET texts.

The Apostles' Creed (ICET)

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Nicene Creed (ICET)

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven;
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the virgin Mary,
and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy, catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

IV. THE ATHANASIAN CREED

With respect to the Athanasian Creed, there is no ICET translation. There is a new English text by J.N.D. Kelly, *The Athanasian Creed* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1964), another by R. Beckwith, *Confessing the Faith in the Church of England Today* (Oxford: Latimer Studies 9, 1981), and there may be a proposal of the ICRC.

Our Committee adopted the Kelly translation, although we changed it in a few instances. We propose the following English text:

The Athanasian Creed

(1) Whoever desires to be saved must above all things hold to the catholic faith.
(2) Unless a man keeps it in its entirety inviolate, he will assuredly perish eternally.

(3) Now this is the catholic faith, that we worship one God in trinity and trinity in unity, (4) without either confusing the persons, or dividing the substance. (5) For the Father's person is one, the Son's another, the Holy Spirit's another; (6) but the God-head of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit is one, their glory is equal, their majesty co-eternal.

(7) Such as the Father is, such is the Son, such also the Holy Spirit. (8) The Father is increate, the Son increate, the Holy Spirit increate. (9) The Father is infinite, the Son infinite, the Holy Spirit infinite. (10) The Father is eternal, the Son eternal, the Holy Spirit eternal. (11) Yet there are not three eternals, but one eternal; (12) just as there are not three increates or three infinities, but one increate and one infinite. (13) In the same way the Father is almighty, the Son almighty, the Holy Spirit almighty; (14) yet there are not three almighties, but one almighty.

(15) Thus the Father is God, the Son God, the Holy Spirit God; (16) and yet there are not three Gods, but there is one God. (17) Thus the Father is Lord, the Son Lord, the Holy Spirit Lord; (18) and yet there are not three Lords, but there is one Lord. (19) Because just as we are obliged by Christian truth to acknowledge each person separately to be both God and Lord, (20) so we are forbidden by the catholic religion to speak of three Gods or Lords.

(21) The Father is from none, not made nor created nor begotten. (22) The Son is from the Father alone, not made nor created nor begotten. (23) The Holy Spirit is from the Father and the Son, not made nor created nor begotten but proceeding. (24) So there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Spirit, not three Holy Spirits. (25) And in this trinity there is nothing before or after, nothing greater or less, (26) but all three persons are co-eternal with each other and co-equal. (27) Thus in all things, as has been stated above, both trinity in unity and unity in trinity must be worshipped. (28) So he who desires to be saved should think thus of the trinity. (29) It is necessary, however, to eternal salvation that he should also faithfully believe in the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. (30) Now the right faith is that we should believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is equally both God and man.

(31) He is God from the Father's substance, begotten before time; and He is man

from His mother's substance, born in time. (32) Perfect God, perfect man composed of a human soul and human flesh, (33) equal to the Father in respect of His divinity, less than the Father in respect of His humanity.

(34) Who, although He is God and man, is nevertheless not two but one Christ. (35) He is one, however, not by the transformation of His divinity into flesh, but by the taking up of His humanity into God; (36) one certainly not by confusion of substance, but by oneness of person. (37) For just as soul and flesh are one man, so God and man are one Christ.

(38) Who suffered for our salvation, descended to hell, rose from the dead (39) ascended to heaven, sat down at the Father's right hand, from where He will come to judge the living and the dead: (40) at whose coming all men will rise again with their bodies, and will render an account of their deeds; (41) and those who have done good will go to eternal life, those who have done evil to eternal fire.

(42) This is the catholic faith. Unless a man believes it faithfully and steadfastly, he cannot be saved.

V. BELGIC CONFESSION

Apart from typographical errors we propose to change the following:

Art. 2: *invisible qualities* becomes *invisible things* again.

Reason: *qualities* is further removed from the Greek text of Rom 1:20.

Art. 24: Title becomes: Our Sanctification and Good Works.

Reason: This is consistent with the headings of Art. 22 and Art. 23.

Art. 28, line 5: "state or quality" becomes "status or standing."

Reason: "state or quality" is obsolete and open to misunderstanding.

Art. 33, line 2: "infirmity" becomes "weakness."

Reason: "infirmity" has a restricted meaning in modern English.

VI. HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

Apart from the correction of minor typographical errors we propose the following:

Lord's Day 4, Question and Answer 9:

"But does not God do man an injustice . . ."

Reason: It is closer to the original.

Lord's Day 5, Question and Answer 12:

"God demands that His justice be satisfied. Therefore we must make full payment, either by ourselves or through another.

Reason: The original indicates that *we* must make payment.

Lord's Day 10, Question and Answer 27:

Last three lines: "indeed, all things, come to us not by chance but by His fatherly hand."

Reason: "to us" is in the original.

Lord's Day 11, Question and Answer 30:

"Do those who seek their salvation and well-being in saints, in themselves, or anywhere else, also believe in the only Saviour Jesus?"

Reason: This sentence structure makes memorization easier.

Lord's Day 28, Question and Answer 77:

Add in the quotation of 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 the words "*This cup is the new covenant in My blood. Do this . . .*"

Reason: The first sentence was inadvertently left out.

Lord's Day 36, Question and Answer 99:

Last sentence: Rather, we must use the holy name of God only with fear and reverence, . . ."

Reason: The sentence, beginning with "In short . . .", is longer than the preceding one.

Lord's Day 44, Question and Answer 113:

Last sentence: "Rather, with all our heart we should always hate all sin and delight in all righteousness."

Reason: "with all our heart" should determine the entire sentence.

Lord's Day 44, Question and Answer 115:

"First, so that . . .

Second, so that, while praying to God for the grace of the Holy Spirit, we may never stop striving to be renewed more and more after God's image, until after this life we reach the goal of perfection."

Reason: "So that" reacts to the question "why?" The idea "that we may be zealous for good deeds" brings into the text more than the original expresses.

CONCLUSION

We would like to request that a member of the sub-committee be given the privilege of the floor at Synod, in order to answer any questions and partake in the discussions of this report.

Yours in Christ's service,
Standing Committee for the *Book of Praise*

W. Helder (convener)
J. De Jong
M. Kampen
C. Van Dam
C. Van Halen-Faber
J. VanHuisstede
J. Faber (reporter)

APPENDIX III A II
REVISED TRANSLATION OF THE
CANONS OF DORT

prepared by the
Standing Committee for the Publication
of the
Book of Praise

for the General Synod
of the Canadian Reformed Churches
to be held, D.V., in Winnipeg in 1989

THE CANONS OF DORT

The third of our doctrinal standards is the Canons of Dort, also called the Five Articles Against the Remonstrants. These are statements of doctrine adopted by the great Reformed Synod of Dort in 1618-1619. This Synod had an international dimension, since it was not only composed of the delegates of the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands but also attended by twenty-seven representatives of foreign churches.

The Synod of Dort was held in view of the serious disturbance in the Reformed Churches caused by the rise and spread of Arminianism. Arminius, a theological professor at the University of Leyden, and his followers departed from the Reformed faith in their teaching concerning five important points. They taught conditional election on the ground of foreseen faith, universal atonement, partial depravity, resistible grace, and the possibility of a lapse from grace. These views were rejected by the Synod, and the opposite views were embodied in what are now called the Canons of Dort or the Five Articles Against the Remonstrants. In these Canons the Synod set forth the Reformed doctrine on these points, namely, unconditional election, particular atonement, total depravity, invincible grace, and the perseverance of the saints.

Each of the Canons consists of a positive and a negative part, the former being an exposition of the Reformed doctrine on the subject, and the latter a repudiation of the corresponding Arminian error. Although in form there are only four chapters, occasioned by the combination of the third and fourth sections into one, we properly speak of five Canons, and the third chapter is always designated as Chapter III/IV. All office-bearers of our Churches are required to subscribe to these Canons as well as to the Belgic Confession and the Heidelberg Catechism.

CHAPTER I
DIVINE ELECTION AND REPROBATION
ARTICLE 1

ALL MANKIND CONDEMNABLE BEFORE GOD

- Rom 5:12 Since all men have sinned in Adam, lie under the curse, and deserve eternal death, God would have done no one an injustice if it had been His will to leave the whole human race in sin and under the curse, and to condemn it on account of its sin, according to these words of the apostle: *that . . . the whole world may be held accountable to God. All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; and, the wages of sin is death.*
- Rom 3:19,23
- Rom 6:23

ARTICLE 2

THE SENDING OF THE SON OF GOD

- 1 Jn 4:9 But in this the love of God was made manifest, that He sent His only-begotten Son into the world, so that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.
- Jn 3:16

ARTICLE 3

THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL

- Is 52:7 So that men may be brought to faith, God mercifully sends heralds of this most joyful message to whom He will and when He wills. By their ministry men are called to repentance and to faith in Christ crucified. *For how are they to believe in Him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher? And how can men preach unless they are sent?*
- 1 Cor 1:23,24
- Rom 10:14,15

ARTICLE 4

A TWOFOLD OUTCOME

- Jn 3:36 The wrath of God remains upon those who do not believe this gospel. But those who receive it and embrace Jesus the Saviour with a true and living faith are delivered by Him from the wrath of God and from destruction, and are given eternal life.
- Mk 16:16
- Rom 10:9

ARTICLE 5

THE CAUSE OF UNBELIEF, THE SOURCE OF FAITH

- Heb 4:6 The cause or guilt for this unbelief, as well as for all other sins, is by no means in God, but rather in man. Faith in Jesus Christ and salvation through Him, however, is the free gift of God, as it is written: *By grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God.* Similarly, *It has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should . . . believe in Him.*
- Eph 2:8
- Phil 1:29

ARTICLE 6

GOD'S ETERNAL DECREE

- Acts 13:48 That God in time confers the gift of faith on some, and not on others, proceeds from His eternal decree. For He knows all His works from eternity, and He *accomplishes all things according to the counsel of His will.* According to this decree He graciously softens the hearts of the elect, no matter how hard they may be, and inclines them to believe; those not elected, however, He leaves in their own wickedness and hardness by a just judgment. And here especially is disclosed to us the profound, merciful, and at the same time just distinction between men equally worthy of condemnation, or that decree of election and reprobation which has been revealed in God's Word. Although perverse, impure, and unstable men twist this decree to their own destruction, it provides unspeakable comfort for holy and God-fearing souls.
- Acts 13:48
- 1 Pet 2:8
- Eph 1:11

ARTICLE 7

ELECTION DEFINED

- Eph 1:4,11 Election is the unchangeable purpose of God whereby, before the foundation of the world, out of the whole human race, which had fallen by its own fault out of its original integrity into sin and perdition, He has, according to the sovereign good pleasure of His will, out of mere grace, chosen in Christ to salvation a definite number of specific persons, neither better nor more worthy than others, but involved
- Jn 17:2,12,24

together with them in a common misery. He has also from eternity appointed Christ to be the Mediator and Head of all the elect and the foundation of salvation and thus He decreed to give to Christ those who were to be saved, and effectually to call and draw them into His communion through His Word and Spirit. He decreed to give them true faith in Him, to justify them, to sanctify them, and, after having powerfully kept them in the fellowship of His Son, finally to glorify them, for the demonstration of His mercy and the praise of the riches of His glorious grace. As it is written: God chose us in Christ, *before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. He destined us in love to be His sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of His will, to the praise of His glorious grace which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.* And elsewhere, *Those whom He predestined He also called; and those whom He called He also justified; and those whom He justified He also glorified.*

Jn 6:37,44
1 Cor 1:9

Eph 1:4-6

Rom 8:30

ARTICLE 8

ONE DECREE OF ELECTION

There are not various decrees of this election, but there is one and the same decree concerning all those that are to be saved under both the Old and the New Testament. For Scripture declares that the good pleasure, purpose, and counsel of the will of God is one. According to this purpose He has chosen us from eternity both to grace and to glory, both to salvation and to the way of salvation, which He prepared for us that we should walk in it.

Deut 7:7;9:6

Eph 1:4,5

Eph 2:10

ARTICLE 9

ELECTION NOT BASED ON FORESEEN FAITH

This election is not based on foreseen faith, the obedience of faith, holiness, or any other good quality of disposition, as a cause or condition in man required for being chosen, but men are chosen to faith, the obedience of faith, holiness, and so on. Election, therefore, is the fountain of every saving good, from which flow faith, holiness, and other saving gifts, and finally eternal life itself, as its fruits and effects. This the apostle teaches when he says, *He chose us* (not because we were, but) *that we should be holy and blameless before Him.*

Rom 8:30

Eph 1:4

ARTICLE 10

ELECTION BASED ON GOD'S GOOD PLEASURE

The cause of this gracious election is solely the good pleasure of God. This good pleasure does not consist in this, that out of all possible conditions God chose certain qualities or actions of men as a condition for salvation, but in this, that out of the common mass of sinners He adopted certain persons to be His own possession. For it is written, *Though they* (the children) *were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad,* and so on, *she* (namely, Rebecca), *was told, "The elder will serve the younger."* As it is written, *"Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."* And, *as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.*

Rom 9:11-13

(Gen 25:23)

(Mal 1:2,3)

Acts 13:48

ARTICLE 11

ELECTION UNCHANGEABLE

As God Himself is most wise, unchangeable, all-knowing and almighty, so His election can neither be undone and redone, nor

Jn 6:37;

10:28

changed, revoked, or annulled; neither can the elect be cast away, nor their number be diminished.

ARTICLE 12

THE ASSURANCE OF ELECTION

The elect in due time, though in various stages and in different measure, are made certain of this their eternal and unchangeable election to salvation. They attain this assurance, however, not by inquisitively prying into the hidden and deep things of God, but by observing in themselves, with spiritual joy and holy delight, the unfailing fruits of election pointed out in the Word of God – such as a true faith in Christ, a childlike fear of God, a godly sorrow for their sins, and a hunger and thirst for righteousness.

Deut 29:29
1 Cor 2:10,11

2 Cor 13:5;
7:10
Mt 5:6

ARTICLE 13

THE VALUE OF THIS ASSURANCE

The awareness and assurance of this election provide the children of God with greater reason for daily humbling themselves before God, for adoring the depth of His mercies, for cleansing themselves, and for fervently loving Him in turn who first so greatly loved them. It is therefore not at all true that this doctrine of election and the reflection on it makes them lax in observing the commands of God or falsely secure. In the just judgment of God, this usually happens to those who rashly presume to have the grace of election, or idly and boldly chatter about it, but refuse to walk in the ways of the elect.

1 Jn 3:3;
4:19

ARTICLE 14

HOW ELECTION IS TO BE TAUGHT

This doctrine of divine election, according to the most wise counsel of God, was preached by the prophets, by Christ Himself, and by the apostles, under the Old as well as the New Testament, and was then committed to writing in the Holy Scriptures. Therefore, also today this doctrine should be taught in the Church of God, for which it was particularly intended, in its proper time and place, provided it be done with a spirit of discretion, in a reverent and holy manner, without inquisitively prying into the ways of the most High, to the glory of God's most holy Name, and for the living comfort of His people.

Acts 20:27
Job 36:23-26
Rom 11:33;
12:3
1 Cor 4:6

ARTICLE 15

REPROBATION DESCRIBED

Holy Scripture illustrates and recommends to us this eternal and undeserved grace of our election, especially when it further declares that not all men are elect but that some have not been elected, or have been passed by in the eternal election of God. Out of His most free, most just, blameless, and unchangeable good pleasure, God has decreed to leave them in the common misery into which they have by their own fault plunged themselves, and not to give them saving faith and the grace of conversion. These, having been left in their own ways and under His just judgment, God has decreed finally to condemn and punish eternally, not only on account of their unbelief but also on account of all their other sins, in order to display His justice. This is the decree of reprobation, which by no means makes God the author of sin (the very thought is blasphemous!), but rather declares Him to be its awesome, blameless, and just judge and avenger.

Rom 9:22
1 Pet 2:8

Acts 14:16

ARTICLE 16

RESPONSES TO THE DOCTRINE OF REPROBATION

James 2:26
2 Cor 1:12
Rom 5:11
Phil 3:3

Some do not yet clearly discern in themselves a living faith in Christ, an assured confidence of heart, peace of conscience, a zeal for childlike obedience, and a glorying in God through Christ; nevertheless, they use the means through which God has promised to work these things in us. They ought not to be alarmed when reprobation is mentioned, nor to count themselves among the reprobate. Rather, they must diligently continue in the use of these means, fervently desire a time of more abundant grace, and await it with reverence and humility. Others seriously desire to be converted to God, to please Him only, and to be delivered from the body of death. Yet they cannot reach that point on the way of godliness and faith which they would like. They should be even less terrified by the doctrine of reprobation, since a merciful God has promised not to quench the smoking flax nor to break the bruised reed.

Rom 7:24

Is 42:3
Mt 12:20

Mt 13:22
Heb 12:29

Still others disregard God and the Saviour Jesus Christ and have completely given themselves over to the cares of the world and the lusts of the flesh. For them this doctrine of reprobation is rightly fearsome as long as they do not seriously turn to God.

ARTICLE 17

CHILDREN OF BELIEVERS WHO DIE IN INFANCY

Gen 17:7
Is 59:21
Acts 2:39
1 Cor 7:14

We must judge concerning the will of God from His Word, which declares that the children of believers are holy, not by nature but in virtue of the covenant of grace, in which they are included with their parents. Therefore, God-fearing parents ought not to doubt the election and salvation of their children whom God calls out of this life in their infancy.

ARTICLE 18

NOT PROTEST BUT ADORATION

Job 39:34-37

Rom 9:20
Mt 20:15

Rom 11:33-36

To those who complain about this grace of undeserved election and the severity of righteous reprobation, we reply with this word of the apostle: *But who are you, a man, to answer back to God?* And with this word of our Saviour, *Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to Me?*

We, however, with reverent adoration of these mysteries, exclaim with the apostle: *O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and how inscrutable His ways! "For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been His counselor?" "Or who has given a gift to Him that he might be repaid?" For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be glory for ever. Amen.*

REJECTION OF ERRORS

Having explained the true doctrine of election and reprobation, Synod rejects the following errors:

1

Error:

The will of God to save those who would believe and persevere in faith and obedience is the whole and entire decree of election to salvation. Nothing else concerning this decree has been revealed in

God's Word.

Refutation: This error is deceptive and clearly contradicts Scripture, which declares not only that God will save those who believe but also that He has chosen specific persons from eternity. Within time He grants to these elect, above others, both faith in Christ and perseverance. *I have manifested Thy Name to the men whom Thou gavest Me out of the world, Jn 17:6. And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed, Acts 13:48. Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him, Eph 1:4.*

2

Error: There are various kinds of divine election to eternal life. One is general and indefinite, another is particular and definite. The latter in turn is either incomplete, revocable, non-decisive, and conditional, or it is complete, irrevocable, decisive, and absolute. In the same fashion there is an election to faith and another to salvation. Therefore election can be to justifying faith, without being decisive to salvation.

Refutation: All this is an invention of the human mind without any basis in the Scriptures. The doctrine of election is thus corrupted and the golden chain of our salvation broken: *And those whom He predestined He also called; and those whom He called He also justified; and those whom He justified He also glorified, Rom 8:30.*

3

Error: The good pleasure and purpose of God of which Scripture speaks in the doctrine of election is not that He chose certain specific persons and not others, but that out of all possible conditions (such as the works of the law) He chose or selected the act of faith, which in itself is without merit, as well as the imperfect obedience of faith, to be a condition of salvation. In His grace He wished to count such faith as complete obedience and worthy of the reward of eternal life.

Refutation: This offensive error deprives God's good pleasure and Christ's merits of all efficacy, and draws people away from the truth of gracious justification and from the simplicity of Scripture. It contradicts the word of the apostle, *Who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not in virtue of our works but in virtue of His own purpose and the grace which He granted us in Christ Jesus ages ago, 2 Tim 1:9.*

4

Error: Election to faith depends on the condition that man should use the light of nature properly, and that he be pious, humble, meek, and fit for eternal life.

Refutation: If this were true, election would depend on man. This smacks of the teaching of Pelagius and is in open conflict with the teaching of the apostle in Ephesians 2:3-9, *Among these we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of body and mind, and so we were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. But God, who is rich in mercy, out of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and made us sit with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the coming ages He might show the immeasurable riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by*

grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God – not because of works, lest any man should boast.

5

Error: Incomplete and non-decisive election of specific persons to salvation took place on the ground of foreseen faith, conversion, holiness, and godliness, which either began or continued for some time. Complete and decisive election, however, occurred because of foreseen perseverance in faith, conversion, holiness, and godliness till the end. This is the gracious and evangelical worthiness because of which the person who is chosen is more worthy than the one who is not chosen. Therefore faith, obedience of faith, holiness, godliness, and perseverance are not fruits of unchangeable election to glory. Instead, they are necessary conditions and causes required and foreseen as accomplished in those who are to be fully elected.

Refutation: This error militates against all of Scripture, which constantly impresses the following upon us: Election is *not because of works but because of His call*, Rom 9:11; *and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed*, Acts 13:48; *He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him*, Eph 1:4; *you did not choose Me, but I chose you*, Jn 15:16; *but if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace*, Rom 11:6; *in this is love, not that we loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son*, 1 Jn 4:10.

6

Error: Not every election to salvation is unchangeable. Some of the elect can and do indeed perish everlastingly, notwithstanding any decree of God.

Refutation: This gross error makes God changeable, destroys the comfort which the believers obtain from the firmness of their election, and contradicts Holy Scripture: The elect cannot be led astray, Mt 24:24; *this is the will of Him who sent Me, that I should lose nothing of all that He has given Me*, Jn 6:39; *those whom He predestined He also called; and those whom He called He also justified; and those whom He justified He also glorified*, Rom 8:30.

7

Error: In this life there is no fruit, consciousness, or certainty of the unchangeable election to glory, except such as is based upon a changeable and uncertain condition.

Refutation: To speak about an uncertain certainty is not only absurd but also contrary to the experience of the believers. As a result of the awareness of their election, they glory with the apostle in this favour of God, Eph 1. With the disciples of Christ they rejoice that their names are written in heaven, Lk 10:20. They put the consciousness of their election over against the flaming darts of the devil, when they exclaim: *Who shall bring any charge against God's elect?* Rom 8:33.

8

Error: God did not simply by an act of His righteous will decide to leave any person in the common state of sin and condemnation since his fall in Adam, nor did He decide to pass by any one in granting such grace as is necessary for faith and conversion.

Refutation: Scripture, however, states, *He has mercy upon whomever He wills, and He hardens the heart of whomever He wills*, Rom 9:18. It also declares, *To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given*, Mt 13:11. Likewise, *I thank Thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hidden these things from the wise and understanding, and revealed them to babes; yea, Father, for such was Thy gracious will*, Mt 11:25, 26.

9

Error: God sends the gospel to one people rather than to another not merely and solely because of the good pleasure of His will, but because one people is better and worthier than another to which the gospel is not preached.

Refutation: Moses denies this when he addresses the people of Israel as follows, *Behold, to the LORD your God belong heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth with all that is in it; yet the LORD set His heart in love upon your fathers and chose their descendants after them, you above all peoples, as at this day*, Deut 10:14, 15. And Christ says, *Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes*, Mt 11:21.

CHAPTER II

CHRIST'S DEATH AND MAN'S REDEMPTION THROUGH IT

ARTICLE 1

THE PUNISHMENT WHICH GOD'S JUSTICE REQUIRES

Ex 34:6,7
Rom 5:16
Gal 3:10

God is not only supremely merciful but also supremely just. And as He Himself has revealed in His Word, His justice requires that our sins, committed against His infinite majesty, should be punished not only in this age but also in the age to come, both in body and soul. We cannot escape these punishments unless satisfaction is made to the justice of God.

ARTICLE 2

THE SATISFACTION MADE BY CHRIST

Jn 3:16
Rom 5:8
2 Cor 5:21
Gal 3:13

We ourselves, however, cannot make this satisfaction and cannot free ourselves from God's wrath. God, therefore, in His infinite mercy has given His only-begotten Son as our Surety. For us or in our place He was made sin and a curse on the cross so that He might make satisfaction on our behalf.

ARTICLE 3

THE INFINITE VALUE OF CHRIST'S DEATH

Heb 9:26,28
10:14
1 Jn 2:2

This death of the Son of God is the only and most perfect sacrifice and satisfaction for sins, of infinite value and worth, abundantly sufficient to expiate the sins of the whole world.

ARTICLE 4

Heb 4:15
7:26
1 Jn 4:9

WHY HIS DEATH HAS INFINITE VALUE

This death is of such great value and worth because the person who submitted to it is not only a true and perfectly holy man, but also the only-begotten Son of God, of the same eternal and infinite essence with the Father and the Holy Spirit, for these qualifications were necessary for our Saviour. Further, this death is of such great value and worth because it was accompanied by a sense of the wrath and curse of God which we by our sins had deserved.

ARTICLE 5

Jn 3:16
1 Cor 1:23
Mt 28:19
Acts 2:38
16:31

THE UNIVERSAL PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

The promise of the gospel is that whoever believes in Christ crucified shall not perish but have eternal life. This promise ought to be announced and proclaimed universally and without discrimination to all peoples and to all men to whom God in His good pleasure sends the gospel, together with the command to repent and believe.

ARTICLE 6

Mt 22:14
Ps 95:11
Heb 4:6

WHY SOME DO NOT BELIEVE

That, however, many who have been called by the gospel neither repent nor believe in Christ but perish in unbelief does not happen because of any defect or insufficiency in the sacrifice of Christ offered on the cross, but through their own fault.

ARTICLE 7

2 Cor 5:18
Eph 2:8,9

WHY OTHERS DO BELIEVE

But to those who truly believe and by the death of Christ are freed from their sins and saved from perdition, this benefit comes only through God's grace, given to them from eternity in Christ. God owes this grace to no one.

ARTICLE 8

Jn 17:9
Eph 5:25-27

THE EFFICACY OF THE DEATH OF CHRIST

For this was the most free counsel of God the Father, that the life-giving and saving efficacy of the most precious death of His Son should extend to all the elect. It was His most gracious will and intent to give to them alone justifying faith and thereby to bring them unfailingly to salvation. This means: God willed that Christ through the blood of the cross (by which He confirmed the new covenant) should effectually redeem out of every people, tribe, nation, and tongue all those, and those only, who from eternity were chosen to salvation and were given to Him by the Father. God further willed that Christ should give to them faith, which, together with other saving gifts of the Holy Spirit, He acquired for them by His death; that He should cleanse them by His blood from all sins, both original and actual, both those committed after faith and before faith; and that He should guard them faithfully to the end and at last present them to Himself in splendour without any spot or wrinkle.

ARTICLE 9

Mt 16:18
Jn 11:52
1 Kings 19:18

THE FULFILMENT OF GOD'S COUNSEL

This counsel, proceeding from eternal love for the elect, has from the beginning of the world to the present time been powerfully fulfilled, and will also continue to be fulfilled, though the gates of hell vainly

Eph 5:25 try to frustrate it. In due time the elect will be gathered together into one, and there will always be a Church of believers, founded on the blood of Christ. This Church shall steadfastly love and faithfully serve Him as Her Saviour (who as bridegroom for his bride laid down His life for her on the cross) and celebrate His praises here and through all eternity.

REJECTION OF ERRORS

Having explained the true doctrine of the death of Christ and the redemption of man by this death, Synod rejects the following errors:

1

Error: God the Father has ordained His Son to the death of the cross without a specific and definite decree to save any. What Christ obtained by His death might have been necessary, profitable, and valuable, and might remain in all its parts complete, perfect, and intact, even though the redemption He acquired had actually never been applied to any person.

Refutation:

This doctrine is offensive to the wisdom of the Father and the merits of Jesus Christ and is contrary to Scripture. For our Saviour says: *I lay down My life for the sheep*, and *I know them*, Jn 10:15, 27. And the prophet Isaiah says concerning the Saviour: *When He makes Himself an offering for sin, He shall see His offspring, He shall prolong His days; the will of the Lord shall prosper in His hand*, Is 53:10. Finally, this error contradicts the article of faith concerning the catholic Christian Church.

Error:

2

Refutation: It was not the purpose of Christ's death that He should confirm the new covenant of grace by His blood, but only that He should acquire for the Father the mere right to establish once more with man such a covenant as He might please, whether of grace or of works.

This is in conflict with Scripture, which teaches that Christ has become the Surety and Mediator of a better, that is, a new covenant, and that a will takes effect only at death, Heb 7:22, 9:15, 17.

Error:

3

Refutation: By His satisfaction Christ did not really merit for anyone either salvation itself or faith by which this satisfaction of Christ to salvation is effectually made one's own. He acquired for the Father only the authority or the perfect will to deal again with man, and to prescribe new conditions as He might desire. It depends, however, on the free will of man to fulfil these conditions. Therefore it was possible that either no one or all men would fulfil them.

Those who teach this error think contemptuously of the death of Christ, do not at all acknowledge its most important fruit or benefit, and bring back out of hell the Pelagian error.

Error:

4

The new covenant of grace which God the Father, through the mediation of the death of Christ, made with man, does not consist herein that we are justified before God and saved by faith, inasmuch as it accepts the merit of Christ. It consists in the fact that God has revoked the demand of perfect obedience of the law and regards faith as such and the obedience of faith, though imperfect, as the perfect obedience of the law. He graciously deems it worthy of the

Refutation: reward of eternal life.

This doctrine contradicts Scripture: *They are justified by His grace as a gift, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as an expiation by His blood, to be received by faith,* Rom 3:24, 25. Those who teach this error proclaim, as did the ungodly Socinus, a new and strange justification of man before God, against the consensus of the whole Church.

Error: 5

All men have been accepted into the state of reconciliation and into the grace of the covenant, so that no one is liable to condemnation on account of original sin, and no one shall be condemned because of it, but all are free from the guilt of original sin.

Refutation:

This opinion is in conflict with Scripture, which teaches that we are *by nature children of wrath*, Eph 2:3.

Error: 6

As far as God is concerned, He wished to bestow equally upon all people the benefits acquired by the death of Christ; however, some obtain the pardon of sin and eternal life and others do not. This distinction depends on their own free will, which applies itself to the grace that is offered indifferently, and not on the special gift of mercy which so powerfully works in them that they rather than others apply this grace to themselves.

Refutation:

Those who teach this, misuse the difference between the acquisition and the application of salvation and confuse the minds of imprudent and inexperienced people. While they pretend to present this distinction in a sound sense, they seek to instil into the minds of people the pernicious poison of Pelagianism.

Error: 7

Christ could not die, did not need to die, and did not die for those whom God loved in the highest degree and elected to eternal life, since these do not need the death of Christ.

Refutation:

This doctrine contradicts the apostle, who declares: *The Son of God loved me and gave Himself for me*, Gal 2:20. Likewise: *Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies; who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus who died*, Rom 8:33, 34, namely, for them. And the Saviour assures us: *I lay down My life for the sheep*, Jn 10:15. And: *This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends*, Jn 15:12, 13.

CHAPTER III/IV

THE CORRUPTION OF MAN, HIS CONVERSION TO GOD, AND THE MANNER IN WHICH IT OCCURS

Gen 1:26,27

ARTICLE 1

THE EFFECT OF THE FALL

Gen 3:1-7

In the beginning man was created in the image of God. He was adorned in his mind with true and wholesome knowledge of his Creator and of all spiritual things; his will and heart were upright, all his affections pure, and therefore man was completely holy.

Eph 4:17-19

But rebelling against God through the instigation of the devil and through his own free will, he deprived himself of these excellent gifts, and instead brought upon himself blindness, horrible darkness, futility, and perverseness of judgment in his mind; wickedness, rebelliousness, and stubbornness in his will and heart; and impurity in all his affections.

Job 14:4

Ps 51:7

Rom 5:12

Heb 4:15

ARTICLE 2

THE SPREAD OF CORRUPTION

Since after the fall man became corrupt, he as a corrupt father brought forth corrupt children. Thus the corruption has spread from Adam to all his descendants, with the exception of Christ alone, not by imitation, as the Pelagians of old maintained, but by the propagation of a perverted nature, according to the righteous judgment of God.

Eph 2:1,3

Jn 8:34

Rom 6:16,17

Jn 3:3-6

Tit 3:5

ARTICLE 3

MAN'S TOTAL INABILITY

Therefore all men are conceived in sin and are born as children of wrath, incapable of any saving good, inclined to evil, dead in sins, and slaves of sin. And without the grace of the regenerating Holy Spirit they neither will nor can return to God, reform their depraved nature, or prepare themselves for its reformation.

ARTICLE 4

Rom 1:19,20

2:14,15

THE INADEQUACY OF THE LIGHT OF NATURE

To be sure, there is left in man after the fall, some light of nature, whereby he retains some notions about God, about natural things, and about the difference between what is honourable and shameful, and shows some regard for virtue and outward order. But so far is he from arriving at the saving knowledge of God and true conversion through this light of nature that he does not even use it properly in matters of nature and society. Rather, whatever this light may be, man wholly pollutes it in various ways and suppresses it by his wickedness. In doing so, he renders himself without excuse before God.

Rom 1:18,20

ARTICLE 5

Rom 3:19,20

7:10,13

8:3

2 Cor 3:6,7

THE INADEQUACY OF THE LAW

What holds for the light of nature also applies to the Ten Commandments, given by God through Moses particularly to the Jews. For though it reveals the greatness of sin, and more and more convicts man of his guilt, yet it neither points out a remedy nor gives him power to rise out of this misery. Rather, weakened by the flesh, it leaves the transgressor under the curse. Man cannot, therefore, through the law obtain saving grace.

2 Cor 5:18,19

ARTICLE 6

THE NEED FOR THE GOSPEL

1 Cor 1:21

What, therefore, neither the light of nature nor the law can do, God performs by the power of the Holy Spirit through the word or ministry of reconciliation, which is the gospel of the Messiah, by which it has pleased God to save men who believe, both under the old and under the new dispensation.

ARTICLE 7

Eph 1:9
2:14

Col 3:11
Rom 2:11
Mt 11:26

WHY THE GOSPEL IS SENT TO SOME AND NOT TO OTHERS

Under the old dispensation God revealed this mystery of His will to few. Under the new dispensation, however, He took the distinction between the peoples away and revealed it to a larger number. The cause of this very distribution of the gospel is not to be ascribed to the worthiness of one people above another, nor to the better use of the light of nature, but to the sovereign good pleasure and undeserved love of God. Therefore we to whom so great a grace is granted, beyond and contrary to all we deserve, ought to acknowledge it with a humble and grateful heart. But as regards others to whom this grace is not given, we ought with the apostle to adore the severity and righteousness of the judgments of God but by no means inquisitively to pry into them.

Rom 11:22,23
Rev 16:7
Deut 29:29

Is 55:1
Mt 22:4

Rev 22:17
Jn 6:37
Mt 11:28,29

ARTICLE 8

THE EARNEST CALL BY THE GOSPEL

But as many as are called by the gospel are earnestly called, for God earnestly and most sincerely reveals in His Word what is pleasing to Him, namely, that those who are called should come to Him. He also earnestly promises rest for their souls and eternal life to all who come to Him and believe.

ARTICLE 9

Mt 11:20-24
22:1-8
23:37

WHY SOME WHO ARE CALLED DO NOT COME

It is not the fault of the gospel, nor of the Christ offered by the gospel, nor of God, who calls through the gospel and who even confers various gifts upon them, that many who are called through the ministry of the gospel do not come and are not converted. The fault lies in themselves. Some of them do not care and do not accept the word of life. Others do indeed accept it, but they do not receive it into their hearts, and therefore, after the joy of a temporary faith has vanished, they turn away. Still others choke the seed of the word by the thorns of the cares and the pleasures of this world, and bring forth no fruit. This our Saviour teaches in the parable of the seed, Mt 13.

ARTICLE 10

Rom 9:16

WHY OTHERS WHO ARE CALLED DO COME

Col 1:13
Gal 1:4
1 Pet 2:9
1 Cor 1:31
2 Cor 10:17

Others who are called by the ministry of the gospel do come and are converted. This is not to be ascribed to man. He does not distinguish himself by his free will above others who are furnished with equal or sufficient grace for faith or conversion (as the proud heresy of Pelagius maintains). It is to be ascribed to God. He has chosen His own in Christ from eternity and calls them effectually within time. He gives them faith and repentance; He delivers them from the power of darkness and transfers them to the kingdom of His Son. All this He

Eph 2:8,9 does that they may declare the wonderful deeds of Him who called them out of darkness into His marvellous light, and may boast not of themselves but of the Lord, according to the testimony of the apostles in various places.

ARTICLE 11

Heb 6:4,5 HOW GOD BRINGS ABOUT CONVERSION

1 Cor 2:10-14

Heb 4:12

Acts 16:14

Deut 30:6

Ez 11:19

36:26

Mt 7:18

God carries out His good pleasure in the elect and works in them true conversion in the following manner. He takes care that the gospel is preached to them, and powerfully enlightens their minds by the Holy Spirit, so that they may rightly understand and discern the things of the Spirit of God. By the efficacious working of the same regenerating Spirit He also penetrates into the innermost recesses of man. He opens the closed and softens the hard heart, circumcises that which was uncircumcised, and instills new qualities into the will. He makes the will, which was dead, alive; which was bad, good; which was unwilling, willing; and which was stubborn, compliant. He moves and strengthens it so that, like a good tree, it may be able to produce the fruit of good works.

ARTICLE 12

Jn 3:3

2 Cor 4:6

5:17

Eph 5:14

REGENERATION IS THE WORK OF GOD ALONE

This conversion is the regeneration, the new creation, the raising from the dead, the making alive, so highly spoken of in the Scriptures, which God works in us without us. But this regeneration is by no means brought about only by outward teaching, by moral suasion, or by such a mode of operation that, after God has done His part, it remains in the power of man to be regenerated or not regenerated, converted or not converted. It is, however, clearly a supernatural, most powerful, and at the same time most delightful, marvellous, mysterious, and inexpressible work. According to Scripture, inspired by the Author of this work, regeneration is not inferior in power to creation or the raising of the dead. Hence all those in whose hearts God works in this amazing way are certainly, unfailingly, and effectually regenerated and do actually believe. And then the will so renewed is not only acted upon and moved by God but, acted upon by God, the will itself also acts. Therefore man himself is rightly said to believe and repent through the grace he has received.

Jn 5:25

Rom 4:17

Phil 2:13

ARTICLE 13

Jn 3:8

Rom 10:9

REGENERATION IS INCOMPREHENSIBLE

In this life believers cannot fully understand the way in which God does this work. Meanwhile, however, it is enough for them to know and experience that by this grace of God they believe with the heart and love their Saviour.

Eph 2:8

ARTICLE 14

HOW FAITH IS A GIFT OF GOD

Phil 2:13

Faith is therefore a gift of God, not because it is merely offered by God to the free will of man, but because it is actually conferred on man, instilled and infused into him. Nor is it a gift in the sense that God confers only the power to believe and then awaits from man's free will the consent to believe or the act of believing. It is, however, a gift in the sense that He who works both to will and to work, and

indeed all things in all, brings about in man both the will to believe and the act of believing.

ARTICLE 15

Rom 11:35 THE PROPER ATTITUDE WITH RESPECT
TO GOD'S UNDESERVED GRACE

This grace God owes to no one. For what could He owe to man? Who has given Him first that he might be repaid? What could God owe to one who has nothing of his own but sin and falsehood? He, therefore, who receives this grace owes and renders eternal thanks to God alone. He who does not receive this grace, however, either does not care at all for these spiritual things and is pleased with what he has, or in false security vainly boasts that he has what he does not have. Further, about those who outwardly profess their faith and amend their lives we are to judge and speak in the most favourable way, according to the example of the apostles, for the inner recesses of the heart are unknown to us. As for those who have not yet been called, we should pray for them to God, who calls into existence the things that do not exist. But we must by no means act haughtily, as if we had distinguished ourselves from them.

ARTICLE 16

Rom 8:2 MAN'S WILL NOT TAKEN
AWAY BUT MADE ALIVE

Man through his fall did not cease to be man, endowed with intellect and will; and sin, which has pervaded the whole human race, did not deprive man of his human nature, but brought upon him depravity and spiritual death. So also this divine grace of regeneration does not act upon men as if they were blocks and stones and does not take away the will and its properties, or violently coerce it, but makes the will spiritually alive, heals it, corrects it, pleasantly and at the same time powerfully bends it. As a result, where formerly the rebellion and resistance of the flesh fully dominated, now a prompt and sincere obedience of the Spirit begins to prevail, in which the true, spiritual renewal and freedom of our will consists. And if the wonderful Maker of all good did not deal with us in this way, man would have no hope of rising from his fall through this free will, by which he, when he was still standing, plunged himself into ruin.

ARTICLE 17

THE USE OF MEANS

Is 55:10,11 The almighty working of God whereby He brings forth and sustains
1 Cor 1:21 this our natural life does not exclude but requires the use of means,
Jas 1:18 by which He according to His infinite wisdom and goodness has
1 Pet 1:23,25 willed to exercise His power. So also the aforementioned supernatural
2:2 working of God whereby He regenerates us, in no way excludes
or cancels the use of the gospel, which the most wise God has
Acts 2:42 ordained to be the seed of regeneration and the food of the soul. For
2 Cor 5:11-21 this reason the apostles and the teachers who succeeded them, reverently
2 Tim 4:2 instructed the people concerning this grace of God, to His
glory and to the abasement of all pride. In the meantime, however,
Rom 10:14-17 they did not neglect to keep them, by the holy admonitions of the
gospel, under the administration of the Word, the sacraments, and
discipline. So today those who give or receive instruction in the
Church should not dare to tempt God by separating what He in His
Jude 24,25 good pleasure has willed to be closely joined together. For grace is

conferred through admonitions, and the more readily we do our duty, the more this favour of God, who works in us, usually manifests itself in its lustre, and so His work best proceeds. To God alone, both for the means and for their saving fruit and efficacy, all glory is due throughout eternity. Amen.

REJECTION OF ERRORS

Error: Having explained the true doctrine of the corruption of man and his conversion to God, Synod rejects the following errors:

1

Refutation: Properly speaking, it cannot be said that original sin as such is sufficient to condemn the whole human race or to deserve temporal and eternal punishment.

This contradicts the apostle when he declares: *Sin came into the world through one man and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all men sinned*, Rom 5:12. And in verse 16: *The judgment following one trespass brought condemnation*. Also Rom 6:23: *The wages of sin is death*.

Error:

2

Refutation: The spiritual gifts or the good qualities and virtues, such as goodness, holiness, righteousness, cannot have belonged to the will of man when he was first created, and therefore cannot have been separated from his will when he fell.

This error is contrary to the description of the image of God which the apostle gives in Eph 4:24, when he connects it with righteousness and holiness, which undoubtedly belong to the will.

Error:

3

Refutation: In spiritual death the spiritual gifts are not separate from the will of man, since the will as such has never been corrupted but only hampered by the darkness of the mind and the unruliness of the passions. If these hindrances have been removed, the will can exert its full innate power. The will is of itself able to will and to choose, or else not to will and not to choose, all manner of good which may be presented to it.

This is an innovation and an error, and tends to extol the powers of the free will, contrary to what the prophet Jeremiah states in chapter 17:9, *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately corrupt*. And the apostle Paul writes: *Among these* (the sons of disobedience) *we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of body and mind*, Eph 2:3.

Error:

4

Refutation: The unregenerate man is not really or totally dead in sins, or deprived of all powers unto spiritual good. He can yet hunger and thirst after righteousness and life, and offer the sacrifice of a contrite and broken spirit which is pleasing to God.

These things are in conflict with the clear testimonies of Scripture: *You were dead through your trespasses and sins*, Eph 2:1, 5. And *every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is only evil continually*, Gen 6:5 and 8:21. Moreover, only the regenerate and those who are called blessed hunger and thirst after deliverance from misery and after life, and offer to God the sacrifice of a broken spirit, Ps 51:19 and Mt 5:6.

Error:

5

Refutation: The corrupt and natural man can so well use the common grace (which for the Arminians is the light of nature), or the gifts still left him after the fall, that he can gradually gain by their good use a greater, that is, the evangelical or saving grace, and salvation itself. In this way God on His part shows Himself ready to reveal Christ to all men, since He administers to all sufficiently and efficaciously the means necessary for the knowledge of Christ, for faith and repentance.

Not only the experience of all ages but also Scripture testifies that this is untrue. *He declares His word to Jacob, His statutes and ordinances to Israel. He has not dealt thus with any other nation, they do not know His ordinances*, Ps 147:19, 20. *In past generations He allowed all the nations to walk in their own ways*, Acts 14:16. And Paul and his companions were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. And when they had come opposite Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them, Acts 16:6, 7.

Error:

6

Refutation: In the true conversion of man no new qualities, powers, or gifts can be infused by God into the will. Therefore faith, through which we are first converted and because of which we are called believers, is not a quality or gift infused by God but only an act of man. It cannot be called a gift except with respect to the power to attain to this faith.

This teaching contradicts the Holy Scriptures, which declare that God infuses new qualities of faith, of obedience, and of the consciousness of His love into our hearts: *I will put My law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts*, Jer 31:33. And: *I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground. And: God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us*, Rom 5:5. This also conflicts with the constant practice of the Church, which prays by the mouth of the prophet: *Bring me back that I may be restored*, Jer 31:18.

Error:

7

Refutation: The grace whereby we are converted to God is only a gentle advising. This manner of working which consists in advising is the most noble manner in the conversion of man and is most in harmony with man's nature. There is no reason why this advising grace alone should not be sufficient to make the natural man spiritual. Indeed, God does not bring about the consent of the will except through this moral suasion. The power of the divine working surpasses the working of Satan, in that God promises eternal while Satan promises only temporal goods.

This is entirely Pelagian and contrary to the whole Scripture, which teaches beyond this moral suasion yet another, far more powerful and divine manner of the working of the Holy Spirit in the conversion of man: *A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will take out of your flesh the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh*, Ezek 36:26.

Error:

8

In regenerating man God does not use the powers of His omnipotence so as to forcefully and unflinchingly bend man's will to faith and conversion. Even if all the works of grace have been accomplished which God employs to convert man and even if God intends his

Refutation: regeneration and wills to regenerate him, man may yet so resist God and the Holy Spirit, and indeed often does so resist, that he entirely prevents his regeneration. It therefore remains in man's power to be regenerated or not.

This is nothing less than the denial of all the efficacy of God's grace in our conversion, and the subjecting of the working of Almighty God to the will of man. It is contrary to the apostles, who teach that we believe *according to the working of His great might*, Eph 1:19, pray that our God *may fulfil every good resolve and work of faith by His power*, 2 Thess 1:11, and declare that *His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness*, 2 Pet 1:3.

Error:

9

Refutation: Grace and free will are partial causes which together work the beginning of conversion. In the order of these causes grace does not precede the working of the will. God does not effectually help the will of man to come to conversion until the will of man moves itself and determines to do this.

The early Church long ago condemned this doctrine of the Pelagians according to the words of the apostle: *So it depends not upon man's will or exertion, but upon God's mercy*, Rom 9:16. Also: *For who sees anything different in you? What have you that you did not receive?* 1 Cor 4:7. And: *God is at work in you both to will and to work for His good pleasure*, Phil 2:13.

CHAPTER V

THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

ARTICLE 1

THE REGENERATE NOT FREE FROM INDWELLING SIN

Jn 8:34
Rom 6:17
7:21-24

Those whom God according to His purpose calls into the fellowship of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and regenerates by His Holy Spirit, He certainly sets free from the dominion and slavery of sin, but not entirely in this life from the flesh and from the body of sin.

1 Jn 1:8

ARTICLE 2

DAILY SINS OF WEAKNESS

Col 3:5
1 Tim 4:7
Phil 3:12,14
Rev 5:6,10

Therefore daily sins of weakness spring up and defects cling to even the best works of the saints. These are for them a constant reason to humble themselves before God, to flee to the crucified Christ, to put the flesh to death more and more through the Spirit of prayer and by holy exercises of godliness, and to long and strive for the goal of perfection until at last, delivered from this body of death, they reign with the Lamb of God in heaven.

Rom 7:20

ARTICLE 3

GOD PRESERVES HIS OWN

1 Cor 10:13

1 Pet 1:5

Because of these remnants of indwelling sin and also because of the temptations of the world and of Satan, those who have been converted could not remain standing in that grace if left to their own strength. But God is faithful, who mercifully confirms them in the grace once conferred upon them and powerfully preserves them in that grace to the end.

Eph 1:19

ARTICLE 4

SAINTS MAY FALL INTO SERIOUS SINS

Although the power of God whereby He confirms and preserves true believers in grace is so great that it cannot be conquered by the flesh, yet the converted are not always so led and moved by God that they cannot in certain particular actions turn aside through their own fault from the guidance of grace and be seduced by and yield to the lusts of the flesh. They must therefore constantly watch and pray that they may not be led into temptation. When they do not watch and pray, they not only can be drawn away by the flesh, the world, and Satan into serious and atrocious sins, but with the righteous permission of God are sometimes actually drawn away. The lamentable fall of David, Peter, and other saints, described in Holy Scripture, demonstrates this.

Mt 26:41
1 Thess 5:6,17

2 Sam 11
Mt 26

2 Sam 12
Eph 4:30
Ps 32:3-5

Num 6:25

ARTICLE 5

THE EFFECTS OF SUCH SERIOUS SINS

By such gross sins, however, they greatly offend God, incur the guilt of death, grieve the Holy Spirit, suspend the exercise of faith, severely wound their consciences, and sometimes for a while lose the sense of God's favour – until they return to the right way through sincere repentance and God's fatherly face again shines upon them.

ARTICLE 6

GOD WILL NOT PERMIT HIS ELECT TO BE LOST

Eph 1:11
2:4
Ps 51:13
Gal 4:5
1 Jn 5:16-18
Mt 12:31,32

For God, who is rich in mercy, according to the unchangeable purpose of His election, does not completely withdraw His Holy Spirit from His own even in their deplorable fall. Neither does He permit them to sink so deep that they fall away from the grace of adoption and the state of justification, or commit the sin unto death or the sin against the Holy Spirit and, totally deserted by Him, plunge themselves into eternal ruin.

ARTICLE 7

GOD WILL AGAIN RENEW HIS ELECT TO REPENTANCE

1 Pet 1:23
1 Jn 3:9

2 Cor 7:10
Ps 32:5
51:19

Phil 2:12

For in the first place, in their fall, He preserves in them His imperishable seed of regeneration, so that it does not perish and is not cast out. Further, through His Word and Spirit He certainly and effectually renews them to repentance. As a result they grieve from the heart with a godly sorrow for the sins they have committed; they seek and obtain through faith with a contrite heart forgiveness in the blood of the Mediator; they again experience the favour of a reconciled God and adore His mercies and faithfulness. And from now on they more diligently work out their own salvation with fear and trembling.

ARTICLE 8

THE GRACE OF THE TRIUNE GOD PRESERVES

Ps 33:11
Heb 6:17
Rom 8:30,34
9:11
Lk 22:34
Eph 1:13

So it is not through their own merits or strength but through the undeserved mercy of God that they neither totally fall away from faith and grace nor remain in their downfall and are finally lost. With respect to themselves this could not only easily happen but would undoubtedly happen. But with respect to God this cannot possibly happen, since His counsel cannot be changed, His promise cannot fail, the calling according to His purpose cannot be revoked, the merit, intercession, and preservation of Christ cannot be nullified,

and the sealing of the Holy Spirit can neither be frustrated nor destroyed.

ARTICLE 9

Rom 8:31-39
2 Tim 4:8,18

THE ASSURANCE OF THIS PRESERVATION

Believers themselves can be certain of this preservation of the elect to salvation and the perseverance of true believers in the faith. And they are indeed certain according to the measure of their faith, by which they firmly believe that they are and always shall remain true and living members of the Church, and that they have forgiveness of sins and life eternal.

ARTICLE 10

THE SOURCE OF THIS ASSURANCE

Rom 8:16,17
1 Jn 3:1,2
Acts 24:16
Rom 8:37

This assurance is not produced by a certain private revelation besides or outside the Word, but by faith in the promises of God, which He has most abundantly revealed in His Word for our comfort; by the testimony of the Holy Spirit, witnessing with our spirit that we are children and heirs of God and, finally, by the serious and holy pursuit of a clear conscience and of good works. And if the elect of God did not have in this world the solid comfort of obtaining the victory and this unailing pledge of eternal glory, they would be of all men the most miserable.

1 Cor 15:19

ARTICLE 11

THIS ASSURANCE NOT ALWAYS FELT

2 Cor 1:3
1 Cor 10:13

Scripture meanwhile testifies that believers in this life have to struggle with various doubts of the flesh and, placed under severe temptation, do not always feel this full assurance of faith and certainty of perseverance. But God, the Father of all comfort, will not let them be tempted beyond their strength, but with the temptation will also provide the way of escape, and by the Holy Spirit will again revive in them the certainty of perseverance.

ARTICLE 12

THIS ASSURANCE IS AN INCENTIVE TO GODLINESS

Rom 12:1

Ps 56:12,13
116:12
Tit 2:11-14
1 Jn 3:3

This certainty of perseverance, however, so far from making true believers proud and complacent, is rather the true root of humility, childlike reverence, genuine godliness, endurance in every struggle, fervent prayers, constancy in suffering and in the confession of the truth, and lasting joy in God. Further, the consideration of this benefit is for them an incentive to the serious and constant practice of gratitude and good works, as is evident from the testimonies of Scripture and the examples of the saints.

ARTICLE 13

THIS ASSURANCE DOES NOT LEAD TO CARELESSNESS

2 Cor 7:10

Eph 2:10

Ps 63:4

Neither does this renewed confidence produce carelessness or neglect of godliness in those who have been restored after their fall; rather, it produces in them a much greater concern to observe carefully the ways of the Lord, which He prepared beforehand. They observe these ways in order that by walking in them they may retain the certainty of their perseverance. Then shall the face of their gracious God not turn away from them again because of their abuse of

Is 64:7
Jer 33:5

His fatherly goodness, with the result that they would fall into still greater anguish of spirit. Indeed, to those who fear God the contemplation of His face is sweeter than life, but its withdrawal is more bitter than death.

ARTICLE 14

THE USE OF MEANS IN PERSEVERANCE

Deut 6:20-25
2 Tim 3:16,17
Acts 2:42

Just as it has pleased God to begin this work of grace in us by the preaching of the gospel, so He maintains, continues, and completes it by the hearing and reading of His Word, by meditation on it, by its exhortations, threats, and promises, and by the use of the sacraments.

ARTICLE 15

Rev 14:12

THIS DOCTRINE IS HATED BY SATAN BUT LOVED BY THE CHURCH

Eph 5:32

Ps 33:10,11

1 Pet 5:10,11

This doctrine of the perseverance of true believers and saints, and of their assurance of it, God has most abundantly revealed in His Word for the glory of His Name and for the consolation of the godly, and He impresses it on the hearts of believers. It is something which the flesh does not understand, Satan hates, the world ridicules, the ignorant and the hypocrites abuse, and the heretics attack. The Bride of Christ, on the other hand, has always loved this doctrine most tenderly and defended it steadfastly as a treasure of inestimable value; and God, against whom no counsel can avail and no strength can prevail, shall see to it that she will continue to do so. To this God alone, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be honour and glory forever. Amen.

REJECTION OF ERRORS

Having explained the true doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, Synod rejects the following errors:

Error:

1

Refutation:

The perseverance of the true believers is not a fruit of election or a gift of God obtained by the death of Christ, but a condition of the new covenant, which man before his so-called decisive election and justification must fulfil through his free will.

Holy Scripture testifies that perseverance follows from election and is given to the elect by virtue of the death, resurrection, and intercession of Christ: *The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened*, Rom 11:7. Also: *He who did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all, will He not also give us all things with Him? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies; who is to condemn? Is it Christ Jesus who died, yes, who was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?* Rom 8:32-35.

Error:

2

Refutation:

God does indeed provide the believer with sufficient strength to persevere, and is ready to preserve this in him if he will do his duty. But even with all those things in place which are necessary to persevere in faith and which God will use to preserve faith, it still always depends on the decision of man's will whether he will persevere or not.

This idea contains outright Pelagianism. While it wants to make men free, it makes them robbers of God's honour. It conflicts with the con-

sistent teaching of the gospel, which takes from man all cause for boasting, and ascribes all the praise for this benefit to the grace of God alone. It is also contrary to the testimony of the apostle: *It is God who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ*, 1 Cor 1:8.

Error:

3

Refutation: True regenerate believers not only can fall completely and definitely from justifying faith and also from grace and salvation, but indeed they often do fall from them and are lost forever.

This opinion nullifies the grace of justification and regeneration and the continuous preservation by Christ, contrary to the clear words of the apostle Paul: *God shows His love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we are now justified by His blood, much more shall we be saved by Him from the wrath of God*, Rom 5:8, 9. And contrary to the apostle John: *No one born of God commits sins; for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot sin because he is born of God*, 1 Jn 3:9, and also to the words of Jesus Christ: *I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand*, Jn 10:28, 29.

Error:

4

Refutation: True regenerate believers can commit the sin that leads to death or the sin against the Holy Spirit.

The same apostle John, after speaking of those who commit the sin that leads to death and forbidding prayer for them, 1 Jn 5:16-17, immediately adds: *We know that any one born of God does not sin (namely, with that kind of sin), but He who was born of God keeps him, and the evil one does not touch him*, v. 18.

Error:

5

Refutation: Without a special revelation we can have no certainty of future perseverance in this life.

By this doctrine the sure comfort of true believers in this life is taken away, and the doubting of the followers of the pope is again introduced into the Church. The Holy Scriptures, however, always deduce this assurance, not from a special and extraordinary revelation, but from the marks peculiar to the children of God and from the very constant promises of God. So especially the apostle Paul declares that nothing in all creation *will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord*, Rom 8:39. And John writes: *All who keep His commandments abide in Him, and He in them. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us*, 1 Jn 3:24.

Error:

6

Refutation: By its very nature the doctrine of the certainty of perseverance and salvation causes false security and is harmful to godliness, good morals, prayers, and other holy exercises. On the contrary, it is praiseworthy to doubt.

This error ignores the effective power of God's grace and the working of the Holy Spirit who dwells in us. It contradicts the apostle John, who teaches the opposite with these clear words: *Beloved, we are God's children now; it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we*

know that when He appears we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who thus hopes in Him purifies himself as He is pure, 1 Jn 3:2, 3. Furthermore, it is refuted by the example of the saints in both the Old and the New Testament who, although they were certain of their perseverance and salvation, nevertheless continued in prayer and other exercises of godliness.

Error:

7

Refutation: The faith of those who believe for a time does not differ from justifying and saving faith except with respect to its duration.

In Mt 13:20-23 and Luke 8:13-15 Christ Himself clearly indicates, besides this duration, a threefold difference between those who believe only for a time and true believers. He declares that the former receive the seed on rocky ground, but the latter in good soil, or in a good heart; that the former are without root, but the latter have a firm root; and that the former are without fruit, but the latter bring forth fruit in varying measure, constantly and steadfastly.

Error:

8

Refutation: It is not absurd that one, having lost his first regeneration, is again and even often born anew.

This doctrine denies that the seed of God, by which we are born again, is imperishable, contrary to the testimony of the apostle Peter: *You have been born anew, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, 1 Pet 1:23.*

Error:

9

Refutation: Christ did not pray anywhere that believers should unfailingly continue in faith.

This contradicts Christ Himself, who says: *I have prayed for you (Simon) that your faith may not fail, Luke 22:32.* It also contradicts the apostle John, who declares that Christ did not pray only for the apostles, but also for all who would believe through their word: *Holy Father, keep them in Thy Name, and, I do not pray that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from the evil one, Jn 17:11, 15, 20.*

CONCLUSION

This is the clear, simple, and straightforward explanation of the orthodox doctrine with respect to the five articles in dispute in the Netherlands, as well as the rejection of the errors by which the Churches have for some time been disturbed. The Synod judges this explanation and rejection to be taken from the Word of God and to be in agreement with the confessions of the Reformed Churches. Hence it clearly appears that some have acted very improperly and against all truth, fairness, and love in wishing to persuade the public of the following:

- The doctrine of the Reformed Churches concerning predestination and related subjects, by its very character and tendency, turns the hearts of men away from all godliness and religion.
- It is an opiate for the flesh administered by the devil, and a stronghold of Satan, where he lies in wait for all, wounds multitudes, and mortally pierces many with the darts both of despair and false security.
- It makes God the author of sin, an unjust tyrant and hypocrite; and is nothing more than a renewed Stoicism, Manicheism, Libertinism, and Mohammedanism.

- It leads to sinful carelessness, since it makes people believe that nothing can prevent the salvation of the elect, no matter how they live, and that, therefore, they may safely commit the most atrocious crimes. On the other hand, it would not in the least contribute to the salvation of the reprobate, even if they had performed all the works of the saints.
- The same doctrine teaches that God has predestined and created the greatest part of the world for eternal damnation by a mere arbitrary act of His will, without taking into account any sin.
- In the same manner in which election is the source and cause of faith and good works, reprobation is the cause of unbelief and ungodliness.
- Many innocent children of believers are torn from their mothers' breasts and tyrannically thrown into hell, so that neither the blood of Christ nor their baptism nor the prayers of the Church at their baptism can be of any help to them.

And there are many more teachings of this kind which the Reformed Churches not only do not confess but even detest wholeheartedly.

Therefore, this Synod of Dort adjures, in the name of the Lord, all who piously call upon our Saviour Jesus Christ not to judge the faith of the Reformed Churches from the slander gathered from here and there. Neither are they to judge from personal statements of some ancient or modern teachers, often quoted in bad faith, or taken out of context and explained contrary to their meaning. But one ought to judge the faith of the Reformed Churches from the public confessions of these Churches themselves and from the present explanation of the orthodox doctrine, confirmed by the unanimous consent of the members of the entire Synod, one and all.

Moreover, the Synod warns the slanderers themselves to consider how severe a judgment of God awaits those who bear false witness against so many Churches and their confessions, disturb the consciences of the weak, and try to make many suspicious of the community of true believers.

Finally, this Synod exhorts all fellow ministers in the gospel of Christ to conduct themselves in a God-fearing and reverent manner when they deal with this doctrine in schools and Churches. In teaching it, both in speaking and writing, they ought to seek the glory of God's Name, the holiness of life, and the consolation of afflicted souls. Their thinking and speaking about this doctrine should be in agreement with Scripture according to the analogy of faith. And they must refrain from all those expressions which exceed the prescribed limits of the true meaning of the Holy Scriptures and which may provide shameless sophists with a good opportunity to scoff at the doctrine of the Reformed Churches, or even to slander it.

May Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who is seated at the Father's right hand and gives gifts to men, sanctify us in the truth, lead to the truth those who err, silence the slanderers of the sound doctrine, and equip the faithful ministers of His Word with the Spirit of wisdom and discretion, that everything they say may tend to the glory of God and the building up of those who hear them. Amen.

APPENDIX III B 1 BOOK OF PRAISE REPORT 2 (CHURCH ORDER)

To the General Synod of the Canadian Reformed Churches
to be held in Winnipeg 1989

From: Standing Committee for the *Book of Praise*

Hamilton, June 24, 1988

Esteemed brothers,

MANDATE

Synod Burlington 1986 decided:

- a. "to pass on the linguistic changes proposed by br. Wildeboer to the Standing Committee for consideration of incorporation in the next printing of the *Book of Praise*" (*Acts*, Art. 93 D);
- b. to instruct the Standing Committee for the *Book of Praise* to include amendments in the next printing of the *Book of Praise* with respect to Articles 44, 13 and 72 of the Church Order. (See *Acts*, Art. 94 D, 95 D.D. respectively.)

The same sub-committee which had prepared Report 1 (Creeds) was also charged by the Standing Committee to fulfill the above mandate of Synod Burlington 1986.

COMMITTEE PROPOSALS

In the light of the mandate, the sub-committee included the amendments mentioned in b. above in the *Book of Praise* as it was reprinted since 1987. This action did not preclude our looking at these articles again if they came up in our work of considering the suggestions of br. R. Wildeboer.

As a result of studying br. Wildeboer's submission, we propose the following changes in certain articles of the Church Order with reasons given. On occasion we will make a comment if we are convinced that further attention should be given to a certain difficulty.

Art. 1

line 2, Drop the colon.

reason: It is better English.

line 4, Eliminate.

reason: This line is unnecessary.

The revised text reads:

"For the maintenance of good order in the Church of Christ it is necessary that there be offices and supervision of doctrine; assemblies; worship, sacraments, and ceremonies; and discipline."

Art. 3

line 3, "male members" becomes "brothers."

line 4, eliminate "as."

reason: This is better English.

The revised sentence reads:

"Only those brothers shall be eligible for office who have made profession of faith and may be considered to meet the conditions set forth in Holy Scripture, e.g. in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1."

Art. 4

Eliminate all initial capitals in words immediately following the numbers 1, 2, and 3 after both A and B.

reason: This is better English.

B, line 3, read "... live, which examination ..."

B, line 6, end with semi-colon.

B, line 7, read "have served the churches . . ."

B, line 10, end with semi-colon followed by "or."
reason: This is better English.

Read "B. DECLARED ELIGIBLE" as follows:

"Only those shall be declared eligible for call within the Churches who

1. have passed a preparatory examination by the classis in which they live, which examination shall not take place unless those presenting themselves for it submit the documents necessary to prove that they are members in good standing of one of the Churches and have successfully completed a course of study as required by the Churches;
2. have served in churches with which the Canadian Reformed Churches do not maintain a sister-church relationship, and have been examined by the classis in which they live, with due observance of the general ecclesiastical regulations adopted for that purpose; or
3. have been examined according to the rule described in Article 8."

Read the rest of this article as follows:

"C. CALLING TWICE

The approval of Classis shall be required for a second call to the same minister regarding the same vacancy.

D. COUNSELLOR

When a vacant Church extends a call, the advice of the counsellor shall be sought."

reason for the changes: It is better English.

Art. 5

Eliminate the initial capitals in the words immediately following the letters a and b under A.1.

reason: Better English

For the sake of clarity, present sections B, C, and D have been restructured as B.1,2, and C and some rephrasing has been done in present sections C and D.

The present sections B, C, and D now read as follows;

"B. Regarding those who are serving in the ministry the following shall be observed:

1. They shall be installed after classis has approved the call.

For this approbation as well as for the installation the minister shall show good testimonials concerning his doctrine and conduct, together with a declaration from the consistory with the deacons and from classis that he has been honourably discharged from his service in that Church and classis, or from the Church only, in case he remains within the same classis.

2. For the approbation by classis of a call of those who are serving in one of the churches with which the Canadian Reformed Churches maintain a sister-church relationship a colloquium shall be required which will deal especially with the doctrine and polity of the Canadian Reformed Churches.
- C. Further, for the approbation by classis of a call, the calling Church shall submit a declaration that the proper announcements have been made and that the congregation has given its approval to the call."

Art. 6

end of line 1, add "either."

line 4, read "... gospel, or to be . . ."

reason: It is clearer.

This article now reads:

"No one shall serve in the ministry unless he is bound to a certain Church, either to be stationed in a certain place, or to be sent out for the gathering of the Church from among the heathen or from among those who have become estranged from the gospel, or to be charged with some other special ministerial task."

Art. 13

For the sake of clarity, this article should be further amended (cf. General Synod Burlington 1986, *Acts*, Art. 95 D) to read as follows:

"If a minister of the Word retires because he reaches retirement age or because he is rendered incapable of performing the duties of his office on account of age, illness, or disability, he shall retain the honour and title of minister of the Word. He shall also retain his official bond with the Church which he served last. This Church shall provide honourably for his support or for that of his widow or dependants.

Retirement of a minister shall take place with the approval of the consistory with the deacons and with the concurring advice of classis and of deputies of regional synod."

Act. 14

Comment: We miss the equivalent of Art. 14 of the new Dutch Church Order of our sister churches regarding dismissal. The temporary release of our present article 14 is something different. The Dutch article 14 reads as follows: "De kerkeraad mag een predikant niet ontslaan van zijn verbintenis aan de gemeente zonder voorkennis en goedkeuring van de classis en de deputaten van de particuliere synode."

Art. 16

Repunctuate and rephrase so that there are only two semi-colons and no colon.

reason: It is clearer.

The revised article reads as follows:

"The specific duties of the office of minister of the Word are thoroughly and sincerely to proclaim to the congregation the Word of the Lord, administer the sacraments and publicly call upon the Name of God in behalf of the whole congregation; also to instruct the children of the Church in the doctrine of salvation, visit the members of the congregation in their homes, and comfort the sick with the Word of God; and further, together with the elders, to keep the Church of God in good order, exercise discipline, and govern the Church in such a manner as the Lord has ordained."

Art. 19

line 2, "the professors of theology" becomes "those ministers who are set apart for this training."

reason: Art. 2 no longer includes the office of Doctor.

Art. 21

line 2, add after "edifying word," "in the public worship services."

reason: It is clearer.

line 2, replace "also others" with "students of theology."

reasons: "Also" is unnecessary. "Students of theology" is more specific.

lines 3b and 4, eliminate

reason: It is unnecessary.

The revised article reads as follows:

"Besides those who have been permitted, according to Article 8, to speak an edifying

word in the public worship services, students of theology may be given such consent in accordance with general ecclesiastical regulations."

Comment: In articles 8 and 21, the expression "to speak an edifying word" is a Dutchism and thus unclear in the English-speaking world. It could be replaced with something like "to exhort in the public worship services."

Art. 22

Repunctuate and rephrase, eliminating a colon and semi-colon.

reason: It is clearer.

The revised article reads as follows:

"The specific duties of the office of elder are, together with the ministers of the Word, to have supervision over Christ's Church, that every member may conduct himself properly in doctrine and life according to the gospel; and faithfully to visit the members of the congregation in their homes to comfort, instruct, and admonish them with the Word of God, reproving those who behave improperly. They shall exercise Christian discipline according to the command of Christ against those who show themselves unbelieving and ungodly and refuse to repent, and shall watch that the sacraments are not profaned. Being stewards of the house of God, they are further to take care that in the congregation all things are done decently and in good order, and to tend the flock of Christ which is in their charge. Finally, it is the duty of elders to assist the ministers of the Word with good counsel and advice and to supervise their doctrine and conduct."

Art. 23

Repunctuate and rephrase the first 5 lines.

reason: This is clearer.

The first five lines thus read as follows:

"The specific duties of the office of deacon are to see to the good progress of the service of charity in the congregation; to acquaint themselves with existing needs and difficulties and exhort the members of Christ's body to show mercy; and further, to gather and manage the offerings and distribute them in Christ's Name according to need."

Art. 26

line 3, "form(s)" become "form."

reason: The present formulation is unnecessary and could be confusing.

The last sentence should be split into two.

reason: It is clearer.

This last part then reads as follows:

"Anyone who, being in office, refuses to do so shall, because of that very fact, be immediately suspended from office by the consistory with the deacons, and classis shall not receive him. If he obstinately persists in his refusal, he shall be deposed from office."

Art. 27

Rephrase the last part.

reason: Greater clarity is achieved.

This last part then reads as follows:

". . . admonition, in the ministry of the Word as well as in Christian teaching and family visiting."

Art. 31

Delete "ecclesiastical" from line 2.

reason: It is unnecessary. (Cf. the preceding articles and context.)

Art. 34

Transpose the essence of paragraph 4 of Art. 44 and of paragraph 2 of Art. 47 to this article about proceedings.

reason: Since these matters pertain to more than just classis (Art. 44) or the regional synod (Art. 47), they are more properly mentioned here. It is confusing to mention other major assemblies in Art. 44 about classis and Art. 47 about regional synod.

The enlarged article reads thus:

"The proceedings of all assemblies shall begin and end with calling upon the Name of the Lord.

At the close of major assemblies, censure shall be exercised over those who in the meeting have done something worthy of reproof, or who have scorned the admonition of the minor assemblies.

Furthermore, each classis, regional synod, or general synod shall determine the time and place of the next classis, regional synod, or general synod respectively and appoint the convening church for that meeting."

Art. 35

Restructure and shorten.

reason: Such an elaborate a,b,c, and d enumeration is not used elsewhere in describing offices. Points c and d are included in point b and need not be repeated.

The revised article reads as follows:

"In all assemblies there shall be a president whose task it is to present and explain clearly the matters to be dealt with and to ensure that every one observes due order in speaking.

In major assemblies the office of president shall cease when the assembly has ended."

Art. 36

Delete the first word and capitalize the following article.

reason: "Also" is unnecessary.

Art. 42

line 6, Delete "also."

reason: "Also" is redundant.

Art. 44

Title should be "CLASSIS."

reason: This retains consistency with other headings.

The first sentence should be restructured.

reasons: This is clearer. The matter of determining the time and place of a meeting has now been dealt with in Art. 34.

The first part of this article now reads as follows:

"Neighbouring churches shall come together in a classis by delegating with proper credentials a minister and an elder or, if a church has no minister, two elders. Such

meetings shall be held at least once every three months . . ."

The third paragraph has been amended in accordance with the decision of General Synod Burlington 1986, *Acts*, Art. 94, with further changes for linguistic reasons.

The third paragraph now reads:

"The president shall ask whether the ministry of the office-bearers is being continued, whether the decisions of the major assemblies are being honoured, and whether there is any matter in which the consistories need the judgment and help of classis for the proper government of their Church."

The fourth paragraph is now abbreviated due to transferring most of it to Art. 34. This paragraph now reads as follows:

"The last classis before regional synod shall choose delegates to that synod."

In the fifth paragraph, "the classical meetings" becomes "classis."

reason: This is more accurate.

Art. 45

line 2, eliminate "it desires as such."

reason: This phrase is ambiguous.

line 3, eliminate "maintaining good order."

reason: This formulation is too broad.

The revised article reads as follows:

"Each vacant Church shall request classis to appoint a minister as counsellor, to the end that he may assist the consistory in the matter of the calling of a minister and also sign the letter of call."

Art. 46

line 7, change the semi-colon after "respect" to a comma.

reason: The semi-colon is unnecessary.

Art. 47

Paragraph 1 assumes that two classes per regional synod is normal. This situation, however, can change and it would be better to list the different possibilities clearly without assuming knowledge of the situation as it now exists.

The revised paragraph 1 now reads as follows:

"Each year some neighbouring classes shall send delegates to meet in a regional synod. If there are two classes, each classis shall delegate four ministers and four elders. If there are three classes, the number shall be three ministers and three elders. If there are four or more classes, the number shall be two ministers and two elders."

The present paragraph 2 has been eliminated since its contents are now in Art. 34.

The present paragraph 3 should have all references to general synod dropped since general synod is dealt with in Art. 49 where these matters can be included.

This paragraph now reads as follows:

"If it appears necessary to convene a regional synod before the appointed time, the convening Church shall determine the time and place with the advice of classis."

The last paragraph now reads as follows:

"The last regional synod before the general synod shall choose delegates to that general synod."

reason: The style is improved.

Art. 48

paragraph 1, repunctuate

reason: The dashes are unnecessary.

The revised paragraph 1 now reads as follows:

"Each regional synod shall appoint deputies who are to assist the classes in all cases provided for in the Church Order and, upon the request of the classes, in cases of special difficulties."

paragraph 2, line 2, eliminate "on them" after "report."

reason: These words are unnecessary.

paragraph 2 and 3, change "synod" to "regional synod."

reason: Ambiguity is removed.

The revised paragraphs 2 and 3 read as follows:

"These deputies shall keep proper record of their actions and submit a written report to regional synod, and, if so required, they shall give account of their actions.

They shall not be discharged from their task before and until regional synod itself discharges them."

Art. 55

The English of this article is awkward. The revised article reads as follows:

"The metrical Psalms adopted by general synod as well as the Hymns approved by general synod shall be sung in the worship services."

Art. 57

line 1, replace "ensure" by "see to it."

reason: "Ensure" is too strong.

line 2, insert "is" before "feasible."

reason: This is better English.

The revised article reads as follows:

"The consistory shall see to it that the covenant of God is sealed by baptism to the children of believers as soon as is feasible."

Art. 58

line 1, replace "ensure" by "see to it."

reason: "Ensure" is too strong.

line 3, make "Church" and the following words plural.

reason: This is in accordance with the rest of our Church Order.

The revised article reads as follows:

"The consistory shall see to it that the parents, to the best of their ability, have their children attend a school where the instruction given is in harmony with the Word of God as the Churches have summarized it in their confessions."

Art. 63

line 1, replace "ensure" by "see to it."

reason: "Ensure" is too strong.

lines 2 and 3, eliminate "-as authorized by the consistory-."

reason: These words are unnecessary. It is the Word of God, not the consistory, which tells the ministers to do so.

The revised first paragraph of this article reads as follows:

"The consistory shall see to it that the members of the congregation marry only in the Lord, and that the ministers solemnize only such marriages as are in accordance with the Word of God."

Art. 68

lines 3 and 4 need to be rephrased.
reason: The English will be clearer.

Revised lines 3 and 4 read as follows:

"If he continues to harden himself in sin, the consistory shall so inform the congregation by means of public announcements, in order that the congregation. . . ."

lines 9 and 10 as well as lines 19 and 20, replace the dashes with commas.

reason: The dashes are unnecessary.

Art. 69

lines 5 and 6, replace the dashes with commas.

reason: The dashes are unnecessary.

Art. 71

line 7, change "the elders and deacons" to "elders or deacons."

reason: Greater clarity is achieved.

Art. 72

3rd last line, change punctuation.

reason: This gives consistency with the punctuation elsewhere.

The revised part reads as follows:

". . . enriching oneself, and further, all such sins . . ."

CONCLUSION

We would like to request that a member of the sub-committee be given the privilege of the floor at Synod, in order to answer any questions and partake in the discussions of this report.

Yours in Christ's service,

Standing Committee for the *Book of Praise*

W. Helder (convener)
J. De Jong
M. Kampen
C. Van Dam
C. Van Halen-Faber
J. Van Huisstede
J. Faber (reporter)

APPENDIX III B 2
SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT ON THE CHURCH ORDER

To the General Synod of the Canadian Reformed Churches
to be held in Winnipeg 1989
From: Standing Committee for the *Book of Praise*
Hamilton, January 16, 1989

Esteemed brothers,

Because of reactions received to our report on the Church Order we are herewith passing on to you further changes we propose to the wording of the Church Order.

With brotherly greetings
Standing Committee for *Book of Praise*

W. Helder (convener)
J. De Jong
M. Kampen
C. Van Dam
C. Van Halen-Faber
J. Van Huisstede
J. Faber (reporter)

Art. 2

This article should be expanded to read as follows:

"The offices are those of the minister of the Word, of the elder, and of the deacon. Some ministers shall be set apart for the training for the ministry and others for the work of mission."

reason: This addition properly anticipates later discussion in the Church Order (Articles 18 and 19).

Art. 12

Change the title to "Permanent Release"

reason: This is the main element. The present title only takes a subsidiary element from this article.

Synod could consider whether the formulation of Article 12 could not be made more general in agreement with the corresponding article of the Dutch sister churches so that it covers more cases than of those ministers who enter upon another vocation.

Art. 19

Read the article as follows:

"The Churches maintain an institution for the training of the ministry and set apart some ministers for this purpose. It is their task as professors of theology to expound the Holy Scripture, to vindicate the sound doctrine against heresies and errors, and in general to instruct students in such a manner that the churches may be provided with ministers of the Word who are able to fulfil the duties of their office."

- reasons:
1. It is not necessary to specify that "the Churches *shall* maintain an institution," since a special institution as such has not always existed and may in the future also be taken away. Nevertheless, there must remain a training for the ministry.
 2. With this description of the task, the good element of Art. 18 of the old Church Order is maintained.
 3. This revision makes clear that the ministers referred to are the "special" ministers of Art. 2.

Art. 21

In the revised article, add "and candidates for the ministry" after "students of theology."
reason: They were not covered in the revised text.

The revised article now reads as follows:

"Besides those who have been permitted, according to Article 8, to speak an edifying word in the public worship services, students of theology and candidates for the ministry may be given such consent in accordance with general ecclesiastical regulations."

APPENDIX III C

BOOK OF PRAISE – REPORT 3

To General Synod 1989 of the Canadian Reformed Churches,
to be held in Winnipeg

From the Standing Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise*
January 16, 1989

Esteemed brothers,

In addition to the matters that we have already dealt with in Report 1 (Creeds), Report 2 (Church Order), and a Supplementary Report on the Church Order, we now present the following for your consideration:

I. PUBLICATION AND DISTRIBUTION

- A. 1. Synod 1986 was informed that as of December 31, 1985, there were about 700 copies left of the revised edition of the *Book of Praise*. In the meantime these were also sold and arrangements were made for a second printing of 3000 copies so that, in accordance with our mandate, our churches as well as the Australian sister-churches could be kept supplied.
2. Premier Printing Ltd. asked to be allowed to reprint the *Book of Praise* together with the RSV Bible in a one-volume edition. Permission was granted provided that the availability of the regular edition of the *Book of Praise* would not be adversely affected.
3. In both reprints all the changes adopted by Synod 1986 were included along with a few minor corrections.
- B. Early in 1988 our committee received inquiries from the Committee on Liturgy of the Free Reformed Church of North America regarding the possibility of including in their Psalter all the Anglo-Genevan Psalms as found in our *Book of Praise*. We responded by offering them our full cooperation in such a venture. Subsequently Synod 1988 of the Free Reformed Church gave its committee the mandate to present a detailed report with recommendations to the next synod.
- C. We were kept informed by the Deputies for the Church Book appointed by Synod 1987 of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia regarding the use of the *Book of Praise* in their worship services. Synod 1987 acceded to a request to permit and encourage the probationary use of the entire hymn section. Synod also dealt with the wording of the Apostles' Creed in Hymn 1A (see below).
- D. 1. The committee regularly received and answered requests for permission to reprint items from the *Book of Praise* in books and other publications.
2. The Michigan Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped in Lansing, Michigan, was given permission to transcribe the *Book of Praise* into braille.
3. In the Church of Chatham a committee led by brother J. Tillema took the laudable initiative of sending complimentary copies of the *Book of Praise* to a large number of universities and seminaries throughout Canada and received many favourable reactions.
4. Although only very few publications paid any attention to review copies that we sent them in 1985, we have received indications of interest in the *Book of Praise* from persons outside of our churches not only in Canada but also in California, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Virginia as well as in England and New Zealand.

5. Outside of our circles orders for the *Book of Praise* have been placed by congregations in Missouri and in Texas.
6. From time to time we receive inquiries concerning the availability of harmonizations of the complete Genevan Psalter. To our knowledge, these are at present published only in The Netherlands under Dutch titles and with a Dutch-language preface, etc.

II. CORPORATE STATUS AND FINANCIAL MATTERS

- A. In accordance with previous synod decisions, the committee has maintained its status as a corporation (516455 Ontario Ltd.).
- B. 1. The committee has not been involved in any financial transactions. For details regarding the manner in which financial and other aspects of publishing the *Book of Praise* have been delegated to Premier Printing Ltd., see the *Acts of Synod Cloverdale 1983*, pp. 297-99.
2. To prevent misunderstanding we should like to point out that any expenses incurred in the course of our work as synod-appointed committee are submitted in the usual fashion for reimbursement by the church in charge of the General Fund of the churches. In this respect we are no different from other committees.

III. HYMN 1A

- A. Synod 1986 decided "to instruct the Standing Committee for the *Book of Praise* to insert the word 'Christian' in the hymn version of the Apostles' Creed, if this is possible" (Art. 101, D.2.a).

In this connection, we submit the following for your consideration:

1. The word "Christian" cannot be inserted without an alteration of the melody as composed by J. Schouten.
2. Changing the existing melody would only confuse many congregations during their worship services.
3. Synod 1983 made a number of other changes in the Apostles' Creed which also do not fit the melody; these occur in four of the twelve articles, i.e., in 1, 2, 5, and 6. Adding only "Christian" would create a *third* text of the Apostles' Creed.
4. Whatever other text of the Apostles' Creed is or will be in use among us, no one has presented any reason why the churches should be deprived of the opportunity to sing this creed in the traditional formulation so widely known in the English-speaking world.
5. No other English-speaking Reformed churches have adopted the insertion of the word "Christian."

The Free Reformed Churches of Australia have decided "to adopt the text of the Ecumenical Creeds with the exception of the word 'Christian' in Art IX of the Apostles' Creed . . ." (*Acts of Synod 1987*, Art. 100,D.2). Their Deputies for the Church Book have informed us that they favour the text of Hymn 1A as it is found in the present edition of the *Book of Praise*.

On the basis of these considerations, we propose that Hymn 1A be left as it is, so that it remains within the freedom of the churches to use this text and melody.

- B. Synod 1986 also decided "to pass on [the alternate melody composed for Hymn 1A by D. Zwart, Jr.] to the Standing Committee for the *Book of Praise*, so that they may consider if it can be adapted to the 'new text' or whether a new melody can be found for this 'new text'" (Art. 189, D.1) and "to instruct the

committee to report back to the next general synod" (Art. 189, D.2).

1. The members of our music sub-committee examined the proposed melody and found it unsuitable.
2. They further reported that they have been unable to find a melody for the "new text."

IV. FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to the recommendations in section III, above, and those in Report 1 (Creeds), Report 2 (Church Order), and the Supplementary Report on the Church Order, we propose to Synod

1. that a Standing Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise* be appointed again;
2. that this committee be given the mandate
 - a. to see to it that the *Book of Praise* remains available to the churches at a reasonable price,
 - b. to make the necessary arrangements with printers and others for the production and distribution of the *Book of Praise*.
 - c. to maintain its corporate status in order to be able to protect the interests of the Canadian Reformed Churches in all matters concerning the *Book of Praise*.
 - d. to implement all synod decisions regarding the contents of the *Book of Praise*.
 - e. to foster an increased awareness of the existence of the *Book of Praise* among others,
 - f. to stimulate the publication of a book of harmonizations of the melodies in the *Book of Praise* for use in the English-speaking world.
 - g. to serve as the address to which any correspondence regarding the *Book of Praise* can be directed;
3. that the size of the committee be reduced to three or four members, while keeping in mind that continuity would be desirable;
4. that a separate committee be appointed to deal with such matters as the revision of the translation of the ecumenical creeds and the selection of proof texts for the Belgic Confession.

Yours in Christ's service,

The Standing Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise*

W. Helder (convener/reporter)

J. De Jong

J. Faber

M. Kampen

C. Van Dam

C. Van Halen-Faber

J. Van Huisstede

POSTSCRIPT

From the Ebenezer Canadian Reformed Church, Chatham, Ontario, the committee received several requests and comments with respect to the Apostles' Creed, the Canons of Dort, and the Church Order. The committee was not able to deal with these late submissions and advised the Church of Chatham to send them directly to General Synod Winnipeg 1989.

APPENDIX IV A
REPORT OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS
OF THE THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE
OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
TO THE GENERAL SYNOD OF WINNIPEG, 1989

Esteemed brethren in the Lord,

The Board of Governors of the Theological College hereby presents to your assembly its report over the academic years 1985-1986, 1986-1987, and 1987-1988. Due to the early date of the Synod 1989, it is not possible for us to cover fully the academic year 1988-1989, but we will provide you with some information on this year as well so that you are brought up to date.

General

The Board expresses its gratitude that the work at our College could continue without interruption during these past years. Professors and students were generally blessed with health and strength to do their work. We do remember, however, that the Lord took unto Himself our brother Garnet Peet, B.A., M.Div., who did successfully finish his studies at our College and accepted a call to the church at Ottawa but was not ordained in the ministry. His passing away has made a deep impression on the College community.

The Governors faithfully visited the lectures also in the past three years and reported to the Board concerning the diligence and zeal of the Faculty and the students. We may state with gratitude that the scholarly instruction at our College is given in accordance with the Word of God and is in harmony with the Reformed Confessions.

The Board considers it proper to pass on to your assembly that a special course leading to a "Diploma Theological Studies," proposed to Synod 1986 and approved by that assembly, has been finalized and put into place. This course will be properly advertised so that in time it may perhaps find positive use.

It is the purpose of our College to train young men for the ministry of the Word. During the past three years, eleven students have graduated from our College, seven of whom have received/accepted calls from our Churches. We are grateful for this good result. At present there are 5 students enrolled at our College (4 seniors and 1 freshman). The Registrar's Report 1988 shows that various promising contacts have been made for the future. Seeing the present amount of vacancies in our Churches, the great need for the work of our College continues to manifest itself.

Faculty

With respect to the Faculty, the following may be noted. The Board mentions with gratitude and pride the promotion of our professor of Old Testament, C. van Dam to *doctor theologiae* at the Theologische Hogeschool in Kampen on June 5, 1986, after defending a thesis on "The Urim and the Thummim." This was indeed an academic highlight for our College.

We also mention that Prof. J. Geertsema, appointed by the Synod of Burlington (West) 1986 has successfully begun his work at our College and has adjusted well to the rigours and demands of academic life. He has also been appointed as Dean of students.

This brings us to two important matters with respect to our Faculty. Our principal, Dr. J. Faber, has informed the Board of Governors that he wishes to avail himself of the opportunity to retire from active duty as professor of dogmatology and as principal of our College, a post which he filled since 1968 at our College. His retirement is scheduled to commence on January 1, 1990. The Board has regretfully but also posi-

tively accepted Dr. Faber's request for retirement, in deep gratitude for what Dr. Faber has meant for our College as professor and principal since it was established. Surely under his leadership, our College has been greatly blessed by the Lord and has grown during the last twenty years to be a respected and trusted centre for the training for the ministry. We expect that Synod will properly address this matter.

We also mention that Dr. K. Deddens is expected to retire on June 30, 1990. Dr. Deddens has been appointed as professor for a term of six years by Synod Cloverdale 1983, and this time will then come to an end. Dr. K. Deddens has served our College capably and well, and we are grateful for the work that he has done.

All this means that your assembly must come to the appointment of two professors, one for the department of dogmatology and one for the departments of diaconology and ecclesiology. The Board will submit to your assembly per separate letter suitable recommendations to fill these forthcoming vacancies.

Principalship

The retirement of Dr. J. Faber also means that the position of Principal at our college must be reviewed. B-law No. 1 (Sec. 8.01) requires that the Board shall seek the advice of Synod with respect to the appointment of the Principal, his power, function, and duty.

Until now this Principalship was a permanent position. This was largely due to the fact that at the time when the College was established, there was only one professor in the possession of a Doctor of Theology degree. Now this situation has changed. In most American institutions the (permanent) Principalship is almost exclusively a full-time administrative function, but at our College this is not so, for the Principal also has a full teaching load.

The Board of Governors, after consultation with the Senate, therefore proposes to General Synod that there be from now on a rotating Principalship, as is done also at the Theologische Universiteit in Kampen, the Netherlands. To allow for some fairness and continuity, we suggest that the Principal be appointed to serve for three years. The order of rotation should be determined by the beginning dates of the professorships.

We therefore propose that Dr. C. Van Dam be appointed as Principal for the period of January 1, 1990 – August 31, 1993 and that Prof. J. Geertsema be designated as Principal for the period of September 1, 1993 – August 31, 1996.

Staff and Facilities

With respect to the staff at our College we may report that since the previous Synod, Mrs. K. Marren, who moved with her husband and family to Smithers, B.C., has been replaced as librarian by Miss Marian van Til (B.A.). Catherine Mechelse is functioning well as administrative assistant and as assistant librarian. The Board is pleased with the work and efforts of the staff.

We may gratefully report that our College has made a smooth transition from the old building into the new facilities in Hamilton. This building excellently serves our college community and meets all its needs.

After Synod 1986, the Academic Committee as well as the Board of Governors met three times. The Finance and Property Committee met at many occasions to ensure that matters containing the administration of finances and property were duly considered and resolved. The annual reports of the Property and Finance Committee over this past period, approved and adopted by the Board, will be submitted to Synod as an appendix to this report.

Retirement and Appointment of Governors

It should be mentioned that many Board members are slated to retire, in accordance with the provisions in the Theological College Act.

The Rev. J. Mulder, who has been our chairman for the last nine years, will retire,

as well as the Rev. J. Visscher, our vice-chairman. The Rev. M. van Beveren, our former secretary, who served as Governor for as long as we can remember, and as secretary of the Board since 1983, has retired from active ministry and therefore cannot be reappointed as Governor. We are grateful for the great amount of extra work that these brothers have done for the well-being of our College and the Churches.

Further, the brothers C. Loopstra, our legal expert who was instrumental in drafting the College Act, and H. Kampen, who has served as able treasurer, cannot be appointed for another consecutive term. The Board has learned to appreciate the dedication and expertise of these brothers who will be sorely missed. Needless to say, this means that after Synod 1989 the staff of the College and the Board of Governors will experience quite a turnover and change in membership!

Conclusion

To cover the proper retirement process of Faculty members, the Board has adopted a By-law No. 8, being a by-law to amend section 2 of regulation No. 1. We submit this by-law to your assembly for consideration and approval. We also submit to Synod one updated version of the Act and By-laws.

The College has continued to receive the spiritual and financial support from the Churches which is needed to pursue this important effort. The Board wants to mention in this regard especially the blossoming contacts which the College has with our sister churches in Australia who have officially decided to support the Theological College in 1987. We expect the existing contacts to intensify and have gratefully solicited the further support and input of our sister churches in Australia. We are grateful to the Lord for this undeserved blessing.

The Churches have also continued to show interest in our College at the annual convocation/college evening and through the Women's Savings Action. The Board wishes to remember at this point the passing away of our sr. G. Selles who from the beginning of the existence of our College has been active in the Women's Savings Action. We are grateful for her enthusiasm and fruitful work done so faithfully for our Theological College throughout these many years. May the Lord continue to comfort our esteemed professor-emeritus, the Rev. L. Selles in his bereavement.

On the basis of the above report, we humbly submit to your assembly the following recommendations for your consideration:

1. to receive this report and all appendices.
2. to accept the resignation of C. Loopstra and H. Kampen as Governors, and pursuant to Section 5(2) of the Act and Section 3.04 of By-Law Number 1 (as amended):
 - a. to appoint C. Veldkamp (Toronto) and Dr. John Boersema (Ancaster) as governors for a term from the date of their appointment until the third General Synod held after the date of their appointment (with as alternates H. Faber – Burlington – and H. Jager – Ancaster); a brief "curriculum vitae" of these brothers is included as appendix to this report.
 - b. to reappoint H. Buijs (Burlington) and C.G. Heeringa (Dundas) as governors for a term from the date of their reappointment until the second General Synod held after the date of their reappointment;
 - c. to reappoint A.L. VanderHout (Hamilton) as governor for a term from the date of his reappointment until the first General Synod held after the date of his reappointment;
 - d. to appoint, elect or reappoint or reelect six active ministers (in accordance with section 3.04 [a] of By-Law Number 1 [as amended]) to hold office until the next General Synod and to appoint at least three substitutes from each Regional Synod area.
3. to direct the Board of Governors to appoint a new professor of dogmatology (as per detailed report to be presented to Synod).
4. to acknowledge gratefully the faithful labour of Dr. J. Faber as professor of dogma-

- tology and as principal of our College since the establishing of the College in 1968.
5. to direct the Board of Governors to appoint a new professor of diaconiology and ecclesiology (as per detailed report to be presented to Synod).
 6. to acknowledge gratefully the faithful work of Dr. K. Deddens as professor of diaconiology and ecclesiology at the College since 1983.
 7. to appoint Dr. C. Van Dam as Principal of the Theological College for the period of January 1, 1990 – August 31, 1993, and to designate Prof. J. Geertsema as Principal for the period of September 1, 1993 – August 31, 1996, the Lord willing.
 8. to consider the audited financial statements and the report of the auditor for the previous fiscal periods.
 9. to reappoint Robinson, Lott and Brohman, Chartered Accountants, as auditors until the next assembly of Synod.
 10. to ratify and confirm the acts of the Board of Governors and officers of the College for the years 1985, 1986, 1987 and 1988 and until the day of this report.

Submitted at Hamilton, Ontario, this 4th day of January, 1989, by the Board of Governors of the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

Rev. J. Mulder, chairman
Rev. J. Visscher, vice-chairman
Rev. Cl. Stam, secretary
Mr. H. Kampen, treasurer
Rev. P. Kingma
Mr. H. Buist
Mr. C.G. Heeringa
Mr. C.M. Loopstra
Rev. M. van Beveren
Mr. A.L. Vanderhout
Rev. M. VanderWel

APPENDIX IV B

FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT

(for the period June 1985 to May 1986)

by THE FINANCE AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE
to THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS of the THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE
OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES,

Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
August 1986

August 20, 1986

The Board of the Governors of the Theological College
of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

Esteemed Brothers:

The Finance and Property Committee is pleased to submit the Annual Report for the period June 1985 – May 1986.

1. ACTIVITIES GENERALLY

During this past year the committee met six times under the chairmanship of br. M. VanGrootheest and after General Synod Burlington-West 1986, under the chairmanship of br. C.M. Loopstra. The functions within the committee were occupied by br. A.J. Hordyk, Treasurer and br. A.L. Vanderhout, Secretary until General Synod Burlington-West 1986, when the brs. M. VanGrootheest and A.J. Hordyk received honourable discharge of their appointments and two new governors were appointed in their place, brs. H. Buist and C.G. Heeringa. At a subsequent meeting C.M. Loopstra was appointed our chairman and br. A.L. Vanderhout was re-appointed as secretary. The brs. H. Buist and C.G. Heeringa will alternate as acting chairman in absence of the chairman. At an earlier meeting the board of Governors had appointed br. H. Kampen as Treasurer. Minutes of all the committee meetings were sent to each governor.

Because of substantial completion of the addition and renovations of the new premises we were able to finish our agenda at a reasonable hour. With gratitude the committee did its work in brotherly harmony and we were blessed with good health. At all the meetings Dr. J. Faber attended as representative of Faculty and staff. Our administrative ass't. Mrs. Jongsma terminated her employment at the end of May due to family expansion and her moving to Smithville. In a very capable way she assisted in administration and library cataloguing. Mrs. Jongsma was succeeded by Miss Catharine Mechelse, who is rapidly gaining experience and of whom we have high expectations.

2. PHYSICAL PLANT

2.1 Building and Equipment

Upon completion of the new premises we held an "open house" for our church members and for our neighbours, whom we invited by means of a letter introducing the College and churches.

The landscaping at the College was completed by Mike's Landscaping Ltd. at cost and looks very attractive. The telephone equipment with six telephones was purchased instead of leased.

The college building is serving a very useful purpose. Faculty and students appear to be very happy with the new facilities. No maintenance problems have occurred. The regular upkeep of the grounds is being taken care of by br. H. Schutten and br. W. Wieske. The interior maintenance is under contract with Service Master after advertising this work in some bulletins in this area. Student accommodation is not available.

Another milestone in the history of the College is the fact that recently we became

proud owners of a computer. Indeed a change to be reckoned with. Again special thanks and appreciation is given to our sisters in the Women's Savings Action who donated \$22,500. Our br. Leo Kampen was instrumental in the purchase of the equipment at cost for which we are very thankful. The press covered the matter of computerization substantially.

Outside lighting and library lighting remain on the agenda for attention.

3. STAFF

As a result of the decision by General Synod Burlington-West 1986, the salaries of the professors are being fixed on an amended formula effective on the first day of each year. The Faculty was visited, according to the rule regarding salaries etc.

Effective August 31, 1986, D.V., Professor L. Selles will have retired. Arrangements for retirement benefits will be taken care of. Salary and all moving arrangements for Rev. J. Geertsema, appointed by General Synod Burlington-West 1986 to succeed Prof. Selles, have been agreed upon. The Geertsemas will reside in Ancaster, Ontario.

Mrs. M.K. Marren will be employed during the summer months to assist in organizing and where necessary reorganizing of the library, especially with the computerization of the library. Also Joanne Bartels was hired as summer help. A busy summer is ahead of us because of the anticipated arrival of some 4000 volumes of the library of the late Dr. Vander Waal from South Africa.

4. FINANCIAL

4.1 Assessments

An unaudited statement of assessments received till May 31, 1986 is attached. Regretfully you will note that this statement again shows a considerable amount of arrears by one of the churches. We are most grateful for the good cooperation and prompt payment from almost all the churches. The matter of arrears by one of the churches was referred to the Board of Governors. We gladly make mention of the constant generous support which we receive from our sister churches in Australia.

The construction deficit of the new premises in the amount of \$60,000 was financed privately with a member of one of our churches. We acknowledge this with appreciation.

4.2 Revenue Canada and Insurance

The College as an organization remains in good standing with Revenue Canada as a non-profit and charitable institution under the Income Tax Act. Professional advice is currently being obtained whether or not certain tax tree benefits could be passed on when a minister changes his status to Professor. The general and miscellaneous fire and liability insurance requirements were reviewed with our Broker and our assets are considered to be adequately protected.

4.3 Audited Financial Statements

The audited financial statements for the year ending May 31, 1986 will be sent to the Board of Governors when completed. Once they have been approved the statement will be distributed to the churches and others entitled thereto.

4.4 Tuition Fees

It was decided to review the tuition fee one year in advance to enable students to make the necessary arrangements. Because of the very late notice of the substantial increase last year, one student was granted a lower fee.

4.5 Foundation for Superannuation

The committee reviewed the investment policies of the Foundation. As a result several recommendations were made as follows:

- a. to provide more detailed information concerning its investment policies on an

annual basis.

- b. to provide more clarification as to how the accrued pension policy is calculated.

The brs. A.J. Hordyk and H. Kampen attended the tri-annual meeting of the Foundation.

4.6 Budget 1986/87

Thus far we have dealt with a provisional budget. Once it has been finalized it will be forwarded to you for final approval before being distributed to the churches. It is expected that a 10% increase per communicant member will be necessary. The budget will be sent to the churches well in advance of budget planning by the local churches. Assessments are on a calendar year basis even though the College's fiscal year starts on June 1st.

5. CONCLUSION

The foregoing represents a report of the major activities of the committee for the year 1985-1986.

We recommend that this report be included in your report sent to all churches pursuant to Section 7.2 of the Canadian Reformed Theological College Act, 1981.

All of which is respectfully submitted this 20th day of August, 1986 A.D.

With brotherly greetings,

Yours in Christ,

The Finance and Property Committee of the Board of Governors of the
Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches

C.M. Loopstra, Chairman

A.L. Vanderhout, Secretary

H. Kampen, Treasurer

H. Buist

C.G. Heeringa

FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT

(for the period June 1986 to May 1987)

by THE FINANCE AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE
to THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS of the THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE
OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES,

Hamilton, Ontario, Canada,

August 1987

August 31, 1987

The Board of Governors of the Theological College
of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

Esteemed Brothers:

The Finance and Property Committee is pleased to submit the Fifth Annual Report for the period June 1986 – May 1987.

1. ACTIVITIES GENERALLY

During this past year the committee met four times at the College facilities under the capable chairmanship of br. C.M. Loopstra. The other functions of the committee were occupied as follows: br. H. Kampen – Treasurer, and br. A.L. Vanderhout – Secretary. The brs. H. Buist and C.G. Heeringa would have taken the place of acting chairman on an alternate basis if the chairman would have been absent. However,

this was not necessary. Thankfully we report that almost all of the committee meetings were attended by all the committee members. Professor Dr. J. Faber was present as Principal. Our meetings were also attended by our administrative assistant, Miss C. Mechelse. Br. C.G. Heeringa was appointed by the committee as our delegate at the meetings of the Library Committee. To improve communications it was decided to invite once a year sister G. Selles to our meeting to discuss matters pertaining to the Women's Savings Action.

Minutes of all our meetings were sent to the members of the Board of Governors as well as to br. K. Salomons in Australia, who is the Deputy for the training for the Ministry in the Australian churches. We sent him extensive information on our College. The latter received the minutes for information because of the intentions of the Deputies of the sister churches in Australia to support the College financially on a per capita basis.

The moving of Professor Geertsema from the West was arranged in a satisfactory manner without any difficulties. He was reimbursed for reasonable relocation expenses.

2. PROPERTY

Now that we have occupied the new premises for two full courses, we may with gratitude conclude that the facilities function very well. Needless to say that there remain improvements to be done, such as library lighting and air-makeup by circulation and cooling. The interior and exterior are in good condition. Those daily involved with the College appear to be very satisfied.

The computer word processing equipment is being used extensively. During this past year the photo-copy machine was traded for a larger and quite sophisticated machine on a leasing contract.

3. STAFF

The faculty salaries are being paid on the formula basis as per Synod Burlington-West 1986 decision. The faculty was informed of the formula calculation of salaries. One professor receives retirement benefits. Much time was spent on By-Law regulation I Art. 10 which deals with retirement pensions and widow pensions. The matter has been subject to the approval of the Board of Governors.

Mrs. M.K. Marren continued her services to computerize and catalogue the library. Indeed much work was done under very capable leadership. Because of the fact that the Marren family will be leaving Hamilton after the graduation of Br. Marren, D.V., and in order to maximize the value of the remainder of the time Mrs. Marren is available, extra summer employment was hired in the persons of Miss Hilda Bruinsma and Miss Heather Marren. The processing of the 4000 volumes of the Vanderwaal library will take much time. A replacement for Mrs. Marren receives our attention. An appointment will be subject to the approval of the Board of Governors.

4. FINANCES

Although at times it is difficult to make ends meet, we are very thankful for the support the churches give in a very faithful manner. Of course also in these matters, the exception confirms the rule. One church remains in arrears. We submit the May 31, 1987 year end financial statement with much appreciation to br. H. Kampen who devotes much time to the day-to-day financial affairs of the College.

Our loan was reduced to \$50,000 as a result of a generous donation of \$10,000. The donor wishes to remain anonymous. Indeed we are very thankful for this gesture.

You will note an increase in our net equity and a healthy balance in the Women's Savings Action Fund. The churches in Australia supported the College generously for which we express our appreciation. The statements will be forwarded to the churches and others entitled thereto, after approval by the Board of Governors.

The committee did a study of the cost of insurance coverages for the Faculty. It became evident that without the insurance protection the financial consequences of

the untimely death or total disability of a Faculty member could become rather burdensome for the churches. The policies therefore remain in effect.

The College was the recipient of donations so designated by the family in memory of the late Rev. W. Loopstra who passed away on March 26, 1987. His passing was remembered in our meeting as the father of our chairman and past president of the Board of Governors.

The College is in good standing with our National Department of Revenue. We remain recognized as a non-profit and charitable institution.

The property and liability insurance protection were received and increased where necessary to protect our assets.

The tuition fees are established one year in advance. For the 1987/88 course the amounts are as follows:

| | |
|--|---------------------------|
| Canadian Reformed students | – \$900 per year |
| Non-Canadian Reformed students | – \$2,700 per year |
| Part-time Canadian Reformed students | – \$10 per unit of credit |
| Part-time non-Canadian Reformed students | – \$30 per unit of credit |
| Canadian Reformed auditors | – \$5 per unit of credit |
| Non-Canadian Reformed auditors | – \$15 per unit of credit |

The committee is to recommend to the Board of Governors the tuition fees for the course 1988/89 at its meeting in September, 1987.

5. BUDGET

The 1988 budget only needs to be increased by \$1 per communicant member to \$45, if the Australian churches decide to support the College. If they decide against supporting the College, we will require an increase of an extra \$2 per communicant member to \$47. In this provision we are allowing for extra expenses involved in hiring a librarian.

The Senate was requested to present a proposal to fund research and the publication of scholarly material.

Upon approval of the budget by the Board of Governors, the budget will be forwarded to the churches well in advance of the preparation of their own local church budgets.

Assessments are on a calendar year basis even though the College's fiscal year has a different date.

6. CONCLUSION

The foregoing represents fairly the major activities of the committee for the year 1986/87. We give thanks to our heavenly Father from Whom all blessings flow that He enabled us to perform our tasks for the benefit of the College and the churches.

We recommend that this report be included in your report sent to all the churches pursuant to Section 7.2 of the Canadian Reformed Theological College Act, 1981.

All of which is respectfully submitted this 31st day of August 1987 A.D.

With brotherly greetings,
Yours in Christ,

The Finance and Property Committee of the Board of Governors of the
Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches

C.M. Loopstra, Chairman
A.L. Vanderhout, Secretary
H. Kampen, Treasurer
H. Buist
C.G. Heeringa

SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT

(for the period June 1987 to May 1988)

by THE FINANCE AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE
to THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS of the THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE
OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES,

Hamilton, Ontario, Canada,
August 1988

August 31, 1988

The Board of Governors of the Theological College
of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

Esteemed Brothers:

The Finance and Property Committee is pleased to submit the Sixth Annual Report for the period June 1987 – May 1988.

1. ACTIVITIES GENERALLY

During this past year the committee met four times at the College facilities under the capable chairmanship of br. C.M. Loopstra. The other functions of the committee were occupied as follows: br. H. Kampen, Treasurer, and br. A.L. Vanderhout, Secretary. The brs. Buist and C.G. Heeringa would have taken the place of acting chairman on an alternate basis if the chairman would have been absent. However, this was not necessary. Thankfully we report that almost all the committee meetings were attended by all the committee members. Professor Dr. J. Faber was present as Principal of the College in an advisory capacity. Our meetings were also attended by our administrative assistant, Miss C. Mechelse. Br. C.G. Heeringa continued as our delegate to the meetings of the Library Committee. To improve communications it was decided earlier to invite once a year sister G. Selles to a meeting to discuss matters pertaining to the Women's Savings Action, however, due to her illness this did not take place thus far.

Minutes of all our meetings were sent to all the members of the Board of Governors as well as to the Deputies for the Training for the Ministry of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia.

2. PROPERTY

We have now occupied the present premises for three full courses, and may with gratitude conclude that the facilities function very well. Needless to say that there are always improvements that remain to be done.

This year the library lighting received special attention and improvement. Air make-up by circulation and cooling remain to be done. The interior and exterior are in good condition after window repairs. Those daily involved with the College appear to be very satisfied, of course regular repairs and upkeep received the necessary attention.

The computer word processing equipment is being used extensively.

The College Logo received a prominent place on the front wall of the Library. A special cabinet was built to display some special books of the College collection.

3. STAFF

The faculty salaries are being paid on the formula basis per Synod Burlington-West 1986 decision. The faculty was informed of the formula calculation of salaries. One Professor receives retirement benefits. Much time was spent on By-Law I Art. 10 which deals with retirement pensions and widow pensions. The matter has satisfactorily been resolved with the Senate.

Miss M. Van Til was appointed as successor of Mrs. M.K. Marren to computerize

and catalogue the library. Indeed much work was done. Extra summer employment was hired in the persons of Miss Hilda Bruinsma and Miss Joanne Bartels. The processing of the 4000 volumes of the Vanderwaal library will take much time. Miss C. Mechelse continued as administrative assistant and library technician.

4. FINANCES

Although at times it remains difficult to make ends meet, we are very thankful for the support the churches give in a very faithful manner. Of course also in these matters, the exception confirms the rule. One church remained in arrears and a review of its assessment was necessary to assist this church. We submit the May 31, 1988 year end financial statement with much appreciation to br. H. Kampen who devotes much time to the day-to-day financial affairs of the College. Generally speaking the College is financially in a good "state of health."

You will note an increase in our net equity and a healthy balance in the Women's Savings Action Fund. The churches in Australia now support the College by Synodical decision for which we express our appreciation. The statement will be forwarded to all the churches and others entitled thereto, after approval by the Board of Governors.

The College is in good standing with our National Department of Revenue. We remain recognized as a non-profit and charitable institution.

The property and liability insurance protection were reviewed and increased where necessary to protect our assets against inflation and increased cost.

The Women's Savings Action raised their contribution for books and magazines to \$10,000 for which we are very thankful.

The tuition fees are established one year in advance. For the 1988-1989 courses the amounts are as follows:

| | |
|--|----------------------------|
| Canadian Reformed students | – \$ 1200 per year |
| Non-Canadian Reformed students | – \$ 3600 per year |
| Part-time Canadian Reformed students | – \$ 15 per unit of credit |
| Part-time non-Canadian Reformed students | – \$ 40 per unit of credit |
| Canadian Reformed auditors | – \$ 10 per unit of credit |
| Non-Canadian Reformed auditors | – \$ 20 per unit of credit |

The committee is to recommend to the Board of Governors the tuition fees for the course 1989-1990, at its meeting in September 1988.

5. BUDGET

The 1988 budget requires no increase in contributions and can remain at \$45 per communicant member. The reason being that the Free Reformed Churches of Australia decided at Synod 1987 to support the College at \$30 per communicant member.

Upon approval of the budget by the Board of Governors, the budget will be forwarded to the churches well in advance of the preparation of their own local church budgets for 1989.

Assessments are on a calendar year basis, even though the College's fiscal year has a different date.

6. BY-LAW NUMBER 8

After due consideration and for practical reasons this By-Law was passed, amending Section 2 of Regulation No. 1 by adding the words: "Whenever possible to do so, a retiring member of the Faculty shall give written notice of his intention to retire two (2) years before the effective date of retirement."

7. CONCLUSION

The foregoing represents fairly the major activities of the committee for the year 1987-1988. We praise the Head of the Church for His manifold blessings and that He enabled us to perform our task for the school and for the churches.

All of which is respectfully submitted this 31st day of August 1988 A.D.

With brotherly greetings,
Yours in Christ,
The Finance and Property Committee of the Board of Governors of the
Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches

C.M. Loopstra, Chairman
A.L. Vanderhout, Secretary
H. Kampen, Treasurer
H. Buist
C.G. Heeringa

BY-LAW NUMBER 8
BEING A BY-LAW TO AMEND SECTION 2 OF REGULATION NO. 1

BE IT ENACTED as a by-law of the
THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
as follows:

1. Section 2 of Regulation No. 1 be and the same is hereby amended as follows:

"Retirement

Professors and lecturers shall normally retire at the end of the academic year in which they reach age 65, but they may at their option retire at the end of any academic year after they reach age 66 and before they reach age 71. Whenever possible to do so, a retiring member of the faculty shall give written notice of his intention to retire two (2) years before the effective date of retirement."

Passed at Hamilton, by the Board of Governors at a meeting held for that purpose on the 10th day of September, 1987.

CHAIRMAN

SECRETARY

**THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE
OF THE
CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MAY 31, 1986**

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AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Board of Governors

Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches
Hamilton, Ontario

We have examined the balance sheet of Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches as at May 31, 1986 and the statements of equity and revenue and expenditure for the year then ended. Our examination was made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, and accordingly included such tests and procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances, except as referred to in the following paragraph.

Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches derives part of its income from gifts and collections which are not susceptible to complete audit examination. Accordingly, our verification of this revenue was limited to accounting for the amounts recorded in the books. The College does not record depreciation on the real estate or library books as disclosed in note 1.

In our opinion, except for the effect of adjustments, if any, which we might have determined to be necessary had we been able to verify income referred to in the preceding paragraph, these financial statements present fairly the financial position of the College as at May 31, 1986 and the results of its operations for the year then ended in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

Fergus, Ontario
August 29, 1986

Chartered Accountants.

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES

STATEMENT OF EQUITY

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MAY 31, 1986

| | DESIGNATED EQUITY | 1986 | 1985 |
|---|--------------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| LIBRARY | | | |
| Balance at beginning of year | \$ | 0 | \$ 0 |
| Add – Appropriation from budget | | 2,500 | 2,500 |
| | | <u>2,500</u> | <u>2,500</u> |
| Deduct – Transfer to general equity towards cost of books .. | (| 2,500) | (2,500) |
| Balance at end of year | \$ | <u>0</u> | <u>\$ 0</u> |
| BUILDING | | | |
| Balance at beginning of year | \$ | 0 | \$ |
| Add – Appropriation from budget | | 5,000 | 114,240 |
| – Gain on sale of Queen Street property | | 0 | 18,000 |
| – Transfer from Women's Savings Action | | 32,000 | 77,570 |
| – Donations | | 6,131 | 93,000 |
| | | <u>43,131</u> | <u>75,181</u> |
| Deduct – Cost of drive for donations | | 0 | 377,991 |
| – Transfer to general equity towards cost of building .. | (| 43,131) | (1,378) |
| Balance at end of year | \$ | <u>0</u> | <u>(376,613)</u> |
| | | | <u>\$ 0</u> |
| PENSION FUND | | | |
| Balance at beginning of year | \$ | 38,567 | |
| Add – Appropriation from budget | | 3,500 | \$ 35,141 |
| – Interest allocation | | 0 | 500 |
| Balance at end of year | \$ | <u>42,067</u> | <u>2,926</u> |
| | | | <u>\$ 38,567</u> |
| WOMEN'S SAVINGS ACTION | | | |
| Balance at beginning of year | \$ | 69,834 | |
| Add – Contributions received | | 8,204 | \$ 143,527 |
| – Interest earned | | 5,897 | 7,419 |
| – U.S. Exchange | | 0 | 13,000 |
| | | <u>83,935</u> | <u>34</u> |
| Deduct – Gifts to College | (| 3,154) | 163,980 |
| – Administration | (| 56) | (1,122) |
| – Transfer to building fund | (| 32,000) | (24) |
| – Transfer to general equity towards cost of computer .. | (| 22,500) | (93,000) |
| Balance at end of year | \$ | <u>26,225</u> | <u>0</u> |
| | | | <u>\$ 69,834</u> |
| GENERAL EQUITY | | | |
| BALANCE , at beginning of year | \$ | 531,276 | |
| Add – Transfer from library fund | | 2,500 | \$ 146,429 |
| – Transfer from building fund | | 43,131 | 2,500 |
| – Transfer from Women's Savings Action re cost of computer | | 22,500 | 376,613 |
| – Excess of revenue over expenditure | | 2,638 | 0 |
| BALANCE , at end of year | \$ | <u>602,045</u> | <u>5,734</u> |
| | | | <u>\$ 531,276</u> |

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES

STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MAY 31, 1986

| | 1986 BUDGET | 1986 ACTUAL | 1985 ACTUAL |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| REVENUE | | | |
| Allotments from churches | \$ 214,500 | \$ 214,653 | \$ 188,507 |
| Gifts and collections | 9,000 | 11,496 | 13,410 |
| Student fees | 12,800 | 14,073 | 7,940 |
| Student accommodations | 700 | 0 | 700 |
| Investment income | 0 | 1,078 | 4,452 |
| | <u>237,000</u> | <u>241,300</u> | <u>215,009</u> |
| EXPENDITURE | | | |
| Faculty | 161,432 | 162,876 | 143,906 |
| Property | 34,000 | 34,196 | 12,234 |
| Administration | 25,045 | 27,159 | 22,839 |
| Library | 6,000 | 5,482 | 4,763 |
| Appropriations | 6,000 | 6,000 | 21,000 |
| Unforeseen | 4,523 | 2,949 | 4,533 |
| | <u>237,000</u> | <u>238,662</u> | <u>209,275</u> |
| EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENDITURE | <u>\$ 0</u> | <u>\$ 2,638</u> | <u>\$ 5,734</u> |

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES

EXPENDITURE DETAIL

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MAY 31, 1986

| | 1986 | 1986 | 1985 |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | BUDGET | ACTUAL | ACTUAL |
| FACULTY | | | |
| Salaries – professors | \$ 140,597 | \$ 142,066 | \$ 117,917 |
| Salaries – lecturers | 1,250 | 1,250 | 5,000 |
| Superannuation | 11,974 | 12,377 | 11,446 |
| Social insurances | 3,500 | 3,894 | 3,673 |
| Other personnel insurances | 3,111 | 2,931 | 3,237 |
| Travelling – faculty | 1,000 | 358 | 2,633 |
| | <u>161,432</u> | <u>162,876</u> | <u>143,906</u> |
| PROPERTY | | | |
| Repairs and maintenance | 2,500 | 2,270 | 1,130 |
| Caretaking and ground maintenance | 5,000 | 4,821 | 2,340 |
| Hydro and water | 1,500 | 2,361 | 1,024 |
| Fuel | 8,000 | 3,731 | 2,493 |
| Insurance | 3,500 | 2,590 | 2,489 |
| Interest on loan | 8,500 | 7,179 | 0 |
| Provision for building improvements | 5,000 | 5,000 | 0 |
| Depreciation of equipment | 0 | 6,244 | 2,758 |
| | <u>34,000</u> | <u>34,196</u> | <u>12,234</u> |
| ADMINISTRATION | | | |
| Travelling and meetings – Board of Governors and Committees | 4,000 | 3,133 | 3,472 |
| Administration and office supplies | 1,500 | 2,704 | 1,110 |
| Salary – administrator | 15,555 | 17,559 | 15,000 |
| Social insurance – administrator | 740 | 686 | 580 |
| Other personnel insurances – administrator | 350 | 331 | 447 |
| Legal and audit | 900 | 750 | 630 |
| Telephone | 1,500 | 1,076 | 1,165 |
| General | 500 | 920 | 435 |
| | <u>25,045</u> | <u>27,159</u> | <u>22,839</u> |
| LIBRARY | | | |
| Supplies | 1,000 | 942 | 942 |
| Wages including social insurances | 5,000 | 4,540 | 3,821 |
| | <u>6,000</u> | <u>5,482</u> | <u>4,763</u> |
| APPROPRIATIONS | | | |
| Pension fund | 3,500 | 3,500 | 500 |
| Building fund | 0 | 0 | 18,000 |
| Library fund | 2,500 | 2,500 | 2,500 |
| | <u>6,000</u> | <u>6,000</u> | <u>21,000</u> |
| UNFORESEEN | | | |
| Expenses – faculty appointment | 0 | 549 | 0 |
| Moving to new property | 260 | 260 | 475 |
| Utilities and insurance – new property | 0 | 0 | 4,058 |
| Handbook | 2,140 | 2,140 | 0 |
| Other | 2,123 | 0 | 0 |
| | <u>4,523</u> | <u>2,949</u> | <u>4,533</u> |
| | <u>\$ 237,000</u> | <u>\$ 238,662</u> | <u>\$ 209,275</u> |

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MAY 31, 1986

1. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

(a) FIXED ASSETS

The College does not record depreciation on the building, parking lot, landscaping and library books as these assets are considered not to physically depreciate.

Depreciation is recorded on equipment, furniture and fixtures on the straight line basis over their estimated life expectancy of ten years.

2. INVESTMENTS – WOMEN'S SAVINGS ACTION

The breakdown of the funds held is as follows:

| | 1986 | 1985 |
|--|------------------|------------------|
| Cash in bank | \$ 20,777 | \$ 5,928 |
| Guaranteed investment certificates | 5,000 | 62,000 |
| Accrued interest | 448 | 1,906 |
| | <u>\$ 26,225</u> | <u>\$ 69,834</u> |

3. NOTE PAYABLE

This loan is payable on demand after 90 days written notice. It bears interest at 10% per annum payable monthly. Minimum payments of \$5,000 may be made on interest payment dates.

**THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE
OF THE
CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED MAY 31, 1987**

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AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Board of Governors

Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches
Hamilton, Ontario

We have examined the balance sheet of Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches as at May 31, 1987 and the statements of equity and revenue and expenditure for the year then ended. Our examination was made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, and accordingly included such tests and procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances, except as referred to in the following paragraph.

Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches derives part of its income from gifts and collections which are not susceptible to complete audit examination. Accordingly, our verification of this revenue was limited to accounting for the amounts recorded in the books. The College does not record depreciation on the real estate or library books as disclosed in note 1.

In our opinion, except for the effect of adjustments, if any, which we might have determined to be necessary had we been able to verify income referred to in the preceding paragraph, these financial statements present fairly the financial position of the College as at May 31, 1987 and the results of its operations for the year then ended in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

Fergus, Ontario
August 10, 1987

Chartered Accountants.

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
(Incorporated under the laws of Ontario)

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT MAY 31, 1987

| | ASSETS | 1987 | 1986 |
|--|-------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| CURRENT | | | |
| Cash | \$ | 26,704 | \$ 25,730 |
| Allotments receivable | | 13,183 | 24,493 |
| Miscellaneous accounts receivable | | 1,916 | 48 |
| Prepaid expenses | | 7,137 | 6,988 |
| | | <u>48,940</u> | <u>57,259</u> |
| INVESTMENTS | | | |
| Savings account and guaranteed investment certificates re Women's Savings Action – note 2 | | 38,247 | 26,225 |
| | | <u>38,247</u> | <u>26,225</u> |
| FIXED | | | |
| | COST | ACCUMULATED DEPRECIATION | |
| Equipment, furniture and fixtures | \$ 81,971 | \$ 32,512 | 48,459 |
| Real estate | 512,697 | 0 | 512,697 |
| Library books | 111,802 | 0 | 111,802 |
| | <u>\$ 706,470</u> | <u>\$ 32,512</u> | <u>673,958</u> |
| | | | <u>667,283</u> |
| | | <u>\$ 761,145</u> | <u>\$ 750,767</u> |
| LIABILITIES | | | |
| CURRENT | | | |
| Note payable – note 3 | \$ | 50,000 | \$ 60,000 |
| Accounts payable | | 105 | 0 |
| Employees' payroll deductions payable | | 5,022 | 4,387 |
| Allotments received in advance | | 16,829 | 16,043 |
| | | <u>71,956</u> | <u>80,430</u> |
| EQUITY | | | |
| DESIGNATED | | | |
| Pension fund - note 4 | | 0 | 42,067 |
| Women's Savings Action | | 38,247 | 26,225 |
| | | <u>38,247</u> | <u>68,292</u> |
| | | <u>650,942</u> | <u>602,045</u> |
| GENERAL | | 689,189 | 670,337 |
| | | <u>\$ 761,145</u> | <u>\$ 750,767</u> |

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES

STATEMENT OF EQUITY

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MAY 31, 1987

| | DESIGNATED EQUITY | | 1987 | 1986 |
|---|--------------------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|
| LIBRARY | | | | |
| Balance at beginning of year | \$ | 0 | \$ | 0 |
| Add – Appropriation from budget | | 7,000 | | 2,500 |
| | | <u>7,000</u> | | <u>2,500</u> |
| Deduct – Transfer to general equity towards cost of books .. | | 7,000 | | 2,500 |
| Balance at end of year | \$ | 0 | \$ | 0 |
| BUILDING | | | | |
| Balance at beginning of year | \$ | 0 | \$ | 0 |
| Add – Appropriation from budget | | 0 | | 5,000 |
| – Transfer from Women's Savings Action | | 0 | | 32,000 |
| – Donations | | 0 | | 6,131 |
| | | <u>0</u> | | <u>43,131</u> |
| Deduct – Transfer to general equity towards cost of building .. | | 0 | | 43,131 |
| Balance at end of year | \$ | 0 | \$ | 0 |
| PENSION FUND | | | | |
| Balance at beginning of year | \$ | 42,067 | \$ | 38,567 |
| Add – Appropriation from budget | | 0 | | 3,500 |
| | | <u>42,067</u> | | <u>42,067</u> |
| Deduct | | 42,067 | | 0 |
| – Transfer to general equity - note 4 | | | | |
| Balance at end of year | \$ | 0 | \$ | 42,067 |
| WOMEN'S SAVINGS ACTION | | | | |
| Balance at beginning of year | \$ | 26,225 | \$ | 69,834 |
| Add – Contributions received | | 17,246 | | 8,204 |
| – Interest earned | | 2,232 | | 5,897 |
| | | <u>45,703</u> | | <u>83,935</u> |
| Deduct | | (7,431) | | (3,154) |
| – Administration | | (25) | | (56) |
| – Transfer to building fund | | 0 | | (32,000) |
| – Transfer to general equity towards cost of computer .. | | 0 | | (22,500) |
| Balance at end of year | \$ | 38,247 | \$ | 26,225 |
| GENERAL EQUITY | | | | |
| BALANCE , at beginning of year | \$ | 602,045 | \$ | 531,276 |
| Add – Transfer from library fund | | 7,000 | | 2,500 |
| – Transfer from pension fund | | 42,067 | | |
| – Transfer from building fund | | 0 | | 43,131 |
| – Transfer from Women's Savings Action re cost of computer | | 0 | | 22,500 |
| – Excess of revenue over expenditure | (| 170) | | 2,638 |
| BALANCE , at end of year | \$ | 650,942 | \$ | 602,045 |

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES

STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MAY 31, 1987

| | 1987 BUDGET | 1987 ACTUAL | 1986 ACTUAL |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| REVENUE | | | |
| Allotments from churches | \$ 235,600 | \$ 234,651 | \$ 214,653 |
| Gifts and collections | 11,000 | 20,000 | 9,268 |
| Gifts from sister churches | 0 | 5,802 | 2,228 |
| Student fees | 12,000 | 12,192 | 14,073 |
| Investment income | 0 | 740 | 1,078 |
| | <u>258,600</u> | <u>273,385</u> | <u>241,300</u> |
| EXPENDITURE | | | |
| Faculty | 200,100 | 201,834 | 162,876 |
| Property | 26,500 | 29,885 | 34,196 |
| Administration | 21,600 | 27,674 | 27,159 |
| Library | 6,000 | 6,274 | 5,482 |
| Appropriations | 0 | 7,000 | 6,000 |
| Unforeseen | 4,400 | 888 | 2,949 |
| | <u>258,600</u> | <u>273,555</u> | <u>238,662</u> |
| EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENDITURE | <u>\$ 0</u> | <u>(\$ 170)</u> | <u>\$ 2,638</u> |

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES

EXPENDITURE DETAIL

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MAY 31, 1987

| | 1987 | 1987 | 1986 |
|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| | BUDGET | ACTUAL | ACTUAL |
| FACULTY | | | |
| Pension - professor - net - note 5 | \$ 12,200 | \$ 12,280 | \$ 0 |
| Salaries – professors | 156,300 | 156,324 | 142,066 |
| Salaries – lecturers | 0 | 0 | 1,250 |
| Superannuation | 13,300 | 14,110 | 12,377 |
| Social insurances | 5,100 | 5,590 | 3,894 |
| Other personnel insurances | 4,200 | 4,672 | 2,931 |
| Travelling – faculty | 1,000 | 918 | 358 |
| Moving costs | 8,000 | 7,940 | 0 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| | 200,100 | 201,834 | 162,876 |
| PROPERTY | | | |
| Repairs and maintenance | 3,000 | 1,365 | 2,270 |
| Caretaking and ground maintenance | 5,000 | 6,484 | 4,821 |
| Hydro and water | 2,500 | 2,501 | 2,361 |
| Fuel | 5,000 | 3,703 | 3,731 |
| Insurance | 3,000 | 3,088 | 2,590 |
| Interest on loan | 6,000 | 5,906 | 7,179 |
| Provision for building improvements | 2,000 | 0 | 5,000 |
| Depreciation of equipment | 0 | 6,838 | 6,244 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| | 26,500 | 29,885 | 34,196 |
| ADMINISTRATION | | | |
| Travelling and meetings – Board of Governors and Committees | 4,000 | 3,669 | 3,133 |
| Administration and office supplies | 2,000 | 3,646 | 2,704 |
| Salary – administrator | 12,000 | 15,667 | 17,559 |
| Social insurances – administrator | 700 | 704 | 686 |
| Other personnel insurances – administrator | 500 | 532 | 331 |
| Legal and audit | 900 | 1,450 | 750 |
| Telephone | 1,000 | 1,246 | 1,076 |
| General | 500 | 760 | 920 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| | 21,600 | 27,674 | 27,159 |
| LIBRARY | | | |
| Supplies | 1,000 | 771 | 942 |
| Wages including social insurances | 5,000 | 5,503 | 4,540 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| | 6,000 | 6,274 | 5,482 |
| APPROPRIATIONS | | | |
| Pension fund | 0 | 0 | 3,500 |
| Library fund | 0 | 7,000 | 2,500 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| | 0 | 7,000 | 6,000 |
| UNFORESEEN | | | |
| Expenses – faculty appointment | 0 | 0 | 549 |
| Moving to new property | 0 | 0 | 260 |
| Handbook | 0 | 0 | 2,140 |
| Other | 4,400 | 888 | 0 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| | 4,400 | 888 | 2,949 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| | \$ 258,600 | \$ 273,555 | \$ 238,662 |

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MAY 31, 1987

1. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

(a) FIXED ASSETS

The College does not record depreciation on the building, parking lot, landscaping and library books as these assets are considered not to physically depreciate.

Depreciation is recorded on equipment, furniture and fixtures on the straight line basis over their estimated life expectancy of ten years.

2. INVESTMENTS – WOMEN'S SAVINGS ACTION

The breakdown of the funds held is as follows:

| | 1987 | 1986 |
|--|------------------|------------------|
| Cash in bank | \$ 38,247 | \$ 20,777 |
| Guaranteed investment certificates | 0 | 5,000 |
| Accrued interest | 0 | 448 |
| | <u>\$ 38,247</u> | <u>\$ 26,225</u> |

3. NOTE PAYABLE

This loan is payable on demand after 90 days written notice. It bears interest at 10% per annum payable monthly. Minimum payments of \$5,000 may be made on interest payment dates.

4. PENSION FUND

During the year the board of governors decided to close out the pension fund and transfer the balance of \$ 42,067 to general equity.

5. PENSION – PROFESSOR

This pension commenced during the year. The detail is as follows:

| | | |
|---|------------------|-------|
| Pension paid to retired professor | \$ 20,742 | |
| Less – Payments received from superannuation fund | | 8,462 |
| Net cost of college | <u>\$ 12,280</u> | |

**THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE
OF THE
CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
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To the Board of Governors

Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches
Hamilton, Ontario

We have examined the balance sheet of Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches as at May 31, 1988 and the statements of equity and revenue and expenditure for the year then ended. Our examination was made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, and accordingly included such tests and procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances, except as referred to in the following paragraph.

Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches derives part of its income from gifts and collections which are not susceptible to complete audit examination. Accordingly, our verification of this revenue was limited to accounting for the amounts recorded in the books. The College does not record depreciation on the real estate or library books as disclosed in note 1.

In our opinion, except for the effect of adjustments, if any, which we might have determined to be necessary had we been able to verify income referred to in the preceding paragraph, these financial statements present fairly the financial position of the College as at May 31, 1988 and the results of its operations for the year then ended in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

Fergus, Ontario
August 9, 1988

Chartered Accountants.

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
(Incorporated under the laws of Ontario)

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT MAY 31, 1988

| | ASSETS | 1988 | 1987 |
|--|-------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| CURRENT | | | |
| Cash | | \$ 35,872 | \$ 26,704 |
| Allotments receivable | | 8,348 | 13,183 |
| Miscellaneous accounts receivable | | 323 | 1,916 |
| Prepaid expenses | | 4,827 | 7,137 |
| | | <u>48,370</u> | <u>48,940</u> |
| INVESTMENTS | | | |
| Savings accounts and term deposits re Women's Savings Action – note 2 | | 51,535 | 38,247 |
| | | <u>51,535</u> | <u>38,247</u> |
| FIXED | | | |
| | COST | ACCUMULATED DEPRECIATION | |
| Equipment, furniture and fixtures | \$ 84,039 | \$ 39,494 | 44,545 |
| Real estate | 518,476 | 0 | 518,476 |
| Library books | 117,897 | 0 | 117,897 |
| | <u>\$ 720,412</u> | <u>\$ 39,494</u> | <u>680,918</u> |
| | | | <u>673,958</u> |
| | | <u>\$ 781,823</u> | <u>\$ 761,145</u> |
| LIABILITIES | | | |
| CURRENT | | | |
| Note payable – note 3 | | \$ 45,000 | \$ 50,000 |
| Accounts payable | | 116 | 105 |
| Employees' payroll deductions payable | | 0 | 5,022 |
| Allotments received in advance | | 20,182 | 16,829 |
| | | <u>65,298</u> | <u>71,956</u> |
| EQUITY | | | |
| DESIGNATED | | | |
| Moving fund | | 6,000 | 0 |
| Women's Savings Action | | 51,535 | 38,247 |
| | | <u>57,535</u> | <u>38,247</u> |
| | | <u>658,990</u> | <u>650,942</u> |
| GENERAL | | <u>716,525</u> | <u>689,189</u> |
| | | <u>\$ 781,823</u> | <u>\$ 761,145</u> |

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES

STATEMENT OF EQUITY

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MAY 31, 1988

| | DESIGNATED EQUITY | | 1988 | 1987 |
|---|--------------------------|---------|-------------|-------------|
| LIBRARY | | | | |
| Balance at beginning of year | \$ | 0 | \$ | 0 |
| Add – Appropriation from budget | | 7,712 | | 7,000 |
| | | <hr/> | | <hr/> |
| Deduct – Transfer to general equity to cover cost of books and subscriptions | | 7,712 | | 7,000 |
| | | <hr/> | | <hr/> |
| Balance at end of year | \$ | 0 | \$ | 0 |
| | | <hr/> | | <hr/> |
| PENSION FUND | | | | |
| Balance at beginning of year | \$ | 0 | \$ | 42,067 |
| Deduct – Transfer to general equity | | 0 | | 42,067 |
| | | <hr/> | | <hr/> |
| Balance at end of year | \$ | 0 | \$ | 0 |
| | | <hr/> | | <hr/> |
| MOVING FUND | | | | |
| Balance at beginning of year | | 0 | | 0 |
| Add – Appropriation from budget | | 6,000 | | 0 |
| | | <hr/> | | <hr/> |
| Balance at end of year | \$ | 6,000 | \$ | 0 |
| | | <hr/> | | <hr/> |
| WOMEN'S SAVINGS ACTION | | | | |
| Balance at beginning of year | \$ | 38,247 | \$ | 26,225 |
| Add – Contributions received | | 18,154 | | 17,246 |
| – Interest earned | | 3,460 | | 2,232 |
| | | <hr/> | | <hr/> |
| | | 59,861 | | 45,703 |
| Deduct – Gifts to College | (| 8,298) | (| 7,431) |
| – Administration | (| 28) | (| 25) |
| | | <hr/> | | <hr/> |
| Balance at end of year | \$ | 51,535 | \$ | 38,247 |
| | | <hr/> | | <hr/> |
| GENERAL EQUITY | | | | |
| BALANCE , at beginning of year | \$ | 650,942 | \$ | 602,045 |
| ADD – Transfer from library fund | | 7,712 | | 7,000 |
| – Transfer from pension fund | | 0 | | 42,067 |
| – Loan reduction in budget | | 5,000 | | 0 |
| | | <hr/> | | <hr/> |
| | | 663,654 | | 651,112 |
| DEDUCT – Excess of expenditure over revenue | | 4,664 | | 170 |
| | | <hr/> | | <hr/> |
| BALANCE , at end of year | \$ | 658,990 | \$ | 650,942 |
| | | <hr/> | | <hr/> |

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES

STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MAY 31, 1988

| | 1988 BUDGET | 1988 ACTUAL | 1987 ACTUAL |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| REVENUE | | | |
| Allotments from Churches | \$ 260,332 | \$ 260,110 | \$ 234,651 |
| Gifts and collections | 16,668 | 16,027 | 20,000 |
| Gifts from sister Churches | 6,000 | 4,463 | 5,802 |
| Student fees | 15,300 | 15,615 | 12,192 |
| Investment income | 0 | 1,521 | 740 |
| | <u>298,300</u> | <u>297,736</u> | <u>273,385</u> |
| EXPENDITURE | | | |
| Faculty | 208,110 | 207,399 | 201,834 |
| Property | 26,700 | 31,711 | 29,885 |
| Administration | 28,400 | 27,973 | 27,674 |
| Library | 16,000 | 13,826 | 6,274 |
| Appropriations | 18,500 | 18,712 | 7,000 |
| Unforeseen | 590 | 2,789 | 888 |
| | <u>298,300</u> | <u>302,400</u> | <u>273,555</u> |
| EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENDITURE | <u>\$ 0</u> | <u>(\$ 4,664)</u> | <u>(\$ 170)</u> |

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES

EXPENDITURE DETAIL

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MAY 31, 1988

| | 1988 | 1988 | 1987 |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | BUDGET | ACTUAL | ACTUAL |
| FACULTY | | | |
| Pension - professor - net - note 4 | \$ 6,300 | \$ 6,212 | \$ 12,280 |
| Salaries – professors | 175,200 | 175,350 | 156,324 |
| Superannuation | 15,250 | 15,325 | 14,110 |
| Social insurances | 5,600 | 5,672 | 5,590 |
| Other personnel insurances | 4,760 | 4,840 | 4,672 |
| Scholarly conferences | 1,000 | 0 | 918 |
| Moving costs | 0 | 0 | 7,940 |
| | <u>208,110</u> | <u>207,399</u> | <u>201,834</u> |
| PROPERTY | | | |
| Repairs and maintenance | 3,000 | 3,431 | 1,365 |
| Caretaking and ground maintenance | 7,000 | 7,393 | 6,484 |
| Hydro and water | 2,500 | 2,392 | 2,501 |
| Fuel | 4,000 | 3,461 | 3,703 |
| Insurance | 3,200 | 3,132 | 3,088 |
| Interest on loan | 5,000 | 4,921 | 5,906 |
| Provision for building improvements | 2,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Depreciation of equipment | 0 | 6,981 | 6,838 |
| | <u>26,700</u> | <u>31,711</u> | <u>29,885</u> |
| ADMINISTRATION | | | |
| Travelling and meetings – Board of Governors and Committees | | | |
| Administration and office supplies | 4,000 | 3,176 | 3,669 |
| Salary – administrator | 3,700 | 5,052 | 3,646 |
| Social insurances – administrator | 16,400 | 16,194 | 15,667 |
| Other personnel insurances – administrator | 800 | 816 | 704 |
| Legal and audit | 700 | 720 | 532 |
| Telephone | 800 | 600 | 1,450 |
| General | 1,300 | 1,097 | 1,246 |
| | 700 | 308 | 760 |
| | <u>28,400</u> | <u>27,963</u> | <u>27,674</u> |
| LIBRARY | | | |
| Supplies | 1,000 | 614 | 771 |
| Wages including social insurances | 15,000 | 11,595 | 5,503 |
| Subscriptions | 0 | 1,617 | 0 |
| | <u>16,000</u> | <u>13,826</u> | <u>6,274</u> |
| APPROPRIATIONS | | | |
| Loan reduction | 5,000 | 5,000 | 0 |
| Moving fund | 6,000 | 6,000 | 0 |
| Library fund | 7,500 | 7,712 | 7,000 |
| | <u>18,500</u> | <u>18,712</u> | <u>7,000</u> |
| UNFORESEEN | | | |
| Computer components replacement | 0 | 2,789 | 0 |
| Other | 590 | 0 | 888 |
| | <u>590</u> | <u>2,789</u> | <u>888</u> |
| | <u>\$ 298,300</u> | <u>\$ 302,400</u> | <u>\$ 273,555</u> |

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED MAY 31, 1988

1. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

(a) FIXED ASSETS

The College does not record depreciation on the building, parking lot, landscaping and library books as these assets are considered not to physically depreciate.

Depreciation is recorded on equipment, furniture and fixtures on the straight line basis over their estimated life expectancy of ten years.

2. INVESTMENTS – WOMEN'S SAVINGS ACTION

The breakdown of the funds held is as follows:

| | 1988 | 1987 |
|------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Cash in bank | \$ 16,969 | \$ 38,247 |
| Term deposit | 33,000 | 0 |
| Accrued interest | 1,566 | 0 |
| | <u>\$ 51,535</u> | <u>\$ 38,247</u> |

3. NOTE PAYABLE

This loan is payable on demand after 90 days written notice. It bears interest at 10% per annum payable monthly. Minimum payments of \$5,000 may be made on interest payment dates.

4. PENSION – PROFESSOR

The detail is as follows:

| | 1988 | 1987 |
|---|-----------------|------------------|
| Pension paid to retired professor | \$ 17,913 | \$ 20,742 |
| Less – Payments received from superannuation fund | 11,701 | 8,462 |
| Net cost to college | <u>\$ 6,212</u> | <u>\$ 12,280</u> |

APPENDIX V

REPORT ON THE ARCHIVES OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES

January 1989

Submitted to:

The Church for the General Archives, Burlington-East
The Church for the Inspection of the Archives, Burlington-West
The General Synod of Winnipeg 1989

1. DOCUMENTS OF GENERAL SYNOD

In the past months, a considerable amount of work has been done in order to make the Archives more easily accessible for future use. This was a necessary undertaking since the documents were stored in envelopes, folders, and binders of all shapes and sizes, without any index of the documents present.

Every document mentioned in the agendas has now been listed, in a consistent order for each Synod. Missing documents are marked as such in the indexes.

All documents of each synod have been bound in one or more legal-size press-binders. The Printed Acts of every Synod are stored separately. For quick reference, an extra copy of each index has been placed in a special binder.

CONTENTS

- a. 20 legal-size binders containing the documents of all Synods held since 1954
- b. Printed Acts of all 11 Synods held
- c. Copies of the *Book of Praise*, editions 1961, 1972, and 1984; Supplement 1967; Hymn Section 1979; Section Liturgical Forms 1981; The Three Forms of Unity (no date)
- d. Two copies of "Op Weg naar een Engelse Reformatorische Psalmbundel"
- e. Five extra copies of seven Synods and two extra copies of the Synods of 1965 and 1980. There are no extra copies of the Synods of 1962 and 1983
- f. Yearbooks of the years 1952, 1954, 1958, and of the years 1969-1988 with the exception of the years 1975, 1976, and 1980

MISSING DOCUMENTS

- a. Synod 1958 (Acts Art. 7, Agenda 15b)
Proposal Toronto re: Correspondence with Churches Abroad
- b. Synod 1965 (Acts Art. 7, Agenda J1)
Report Committee Synod 1962 *Book of Praise*
- c. Synod 1974 (Acts Art. 85, Agenda D4)
Letter Oosterhoff re: Draft Translation Heidelberg Catechism
- d. Synod 1974 (Acts Art. 8, Agenda C I)
Twelve documents re: Psalms and Hymn Section *Book of Praise*
- e. Synod 1977 – all copies of Outgoing Mail
- f. Synod 1980 (Acts Art. 8, Agenda 8 12)
Letter Watford re: "Apostles' Creed"
- g. Synod 1980 – all copies of Outgoing Mail
- h. Synod 1986 (Acts Art. 7, Agenda B5)
Letter D. Jansen re: Melody for Hymn 1
- i. Synod 1986 (Acts Art. 113)
Letter from the Australian Churches re: Greetings/Best Wishes

Note: Documents mentioned under (d) were forwarded to the Committee *Book of Praise* in August, 1975. An attempt was made to have them returned to the Archives.

2. "GENERAL" ARCHIVES

SYNODICAL DECISIONS

As suggested by its Advisory Committee, Synod 1958 declared that it is desirable to build up a *General Archive* containing:

- copies of the Acts of Classes East and West
- all correspondence and documents from Synodical Committees
- written specifics of the first period of our Church life in Canada
- other documents of more than local significance which are desirable for the General Archives
- all local Bulletins, Yearbooks, Pictures of Church buildings, etc.
(Translated and taken from the Acts Art. 207)

Synod 1962: "Synod feels it desirable to expand the general archives by requesting that all classes send their Acts or Minutes to the Church which attends to the archives, to which also the Churches are requested to send their bulletins once a year."

(Quoted from the Short Report Art. 13, Acts page 67)

Synod 1965: "Synod decides to express the desirability that the Churches remain co-operative, so that everything that is of importance for the history of the Churches be sent to the Church that is in charge of the Archives."

(Quoted from the Brief Report Art. 9, Acts page 59)

Synod 1974: "Synod decides to instruct the Church for the Archives to request archivists of Churches, Classes and/or Regional Synods for any documents it deems necessary to be kept in the General Archives."

(Quoted from the Acts, Art. 99)

CONTENTS

A. Acts or Minutes of:

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Classes Canada East | September 1956 |
| Classes Canada West | June 1954, June 1962, March 1963 |
| Classes Ontario North | Classis Contracta August 1959 |
| Classes Ontario South | December 1959, March 1960, June 1960, December 1960, September 1962, September 1965 |
| Classes Alberta/Manitoba | November 1963, March 1964, November 1964, March 1965, June/July 1965, September 1965 |
| Classes Pacific | April 1973, October 1976, May 1977, January 1978, October 1980, September 1981, October 1983, April 1986 |
| Regional Synods Canada East | June 1960, September 1962, June 1964, September 1966, September 1968 |
| Regional Synods Canada West | May 1964, October 1971, January 1972, May 1974, June 1982, April 1987 |

B. Documents Synodical Committees:

Committee – Contact with Churches Abroad, documents 1968-1974

Committee – Contact with the Christian Reformed Church, documents 1968-1974

Committee – *Book of Praise*, a few documents 1958-1972

Directors and Teachers for the Education to the Ministry in Eastern Canada, documents 1963-1965

C. Church Bulletins

Bulletins of some Churches covering a limited time period.

D. Some correspondence of post-war immigrants in preparation for Church Institutions.

E. Acta Generale Synode Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, Amersfoort-West 1966/1967.

F. Printed Reports to the Synod Kampen 1975

Herziening Kerkorde
Herziening Enige Gezangen
Werkwijze Synoden
Vrouwen Kiesrecht

G. Agenda Reformed Ecumenical Synod 1963

Note: A gift for the General Archives mentioned in the Acts of Synod 1962, Art. 89 has not materialized.

ANALYSIS

The results of 30 years of building up a *General* Archive are nothing to boast about; rather, the result points to a failure. The response to requests of Synods was nothing more than very poor and it is declining.

The reason for this probably lies for the most part with the Synods. The establishment of a General Archive did not come through a proposal from a Church or another Church assembly, but through more or less spontaneous suggestions made by an Advisory Committee of Synod 1958. The three Synods which have dealt with the General Archives seem to have hesitated in making firm decisions. They expressed the *desirability* of establishing such an archive for which they requested *co-operation* from all church assemblies. Generally speaking, this co-operation was never given.

With regard to maintaining "General" Archives, Acts and documents of Synods from 1977 and later reveal that only the documents pertaining to General Synod were inspected, with no attention being paid to other documents. It is remarkable that also the Synods in their replies to these reports were silent about "General" Archives. However, it seems that the idea of a "General" Archive was not completely written off, since the custom to appoint Churches to be in charge of and to inspect the "General" Archives was maintained.

The results of co-operation from all Church assemblies amounted to:

- Acts of only 25 Classical meetings and of 11 Regional Synods
- Some documents from Committees appointed by the Synod, but all from the period before 1974
- No documents at all about the first period of our Church life in Canada, and also no material of more than local significance desirable for the Archives
- Quite a number of local Church Bulletins but not from every Church and nothing of recent years, all stored together without order or system

If every Church sent their Bulletins, and if this would be useful for future reference, there should be indexes prepared of worthwhile articles and events. This would require more volunteer work.

All in all, the requested co-operation was very poor, is dwindling fast, and is at the present time near zero.

Finally, our Church Order does not require the setting up of a "General" Archive. Articles 36 and 43 speak of recording all things worthy of being recorded and of ensuring that proper care is taken of the Archives. That applies to each of the four

kinds of assemblies. But it does not include that the most major assembly should collect a second set of copies of what a minor assembly has already in its own Archives.

CONCLUSION

The establishment of a "General" Archive, as indicated by the Synods of 1958 and 1962, could not be realized due to lack of interest by all of the four kinds of Church assemblies.

Rectification of this situation is impossible since many of the required documents are not available any more.

It appears that the solution to clear up this situation is to give up the idea of establishing a "General" Archive.

In order to turn to an Archive of documents pertaining to General Synods only, I submit proposals to the General Synod of Winnipeg 1989 in addition to this report.

(T. Vandenbrink)

Archivist of Synodical Archives
for the Church of Burlington-East

PROPOSALS RE: ARCHIVES

to the General Synod Winnipeg 1989
of the Canadian Reformed Churches
January, 1989

Based on the Report on the General Archives of the Canadian Reformed Churches, I submit the following proposals:

That Synod decide:

1. to discontinue efforts to set up a General Archive as decided by the General Synod of 1958 and promoted by the Synods 1962, 1965, and 1974
2. to keep accurate records of all dealings of General Synods, and to ensure that proper care is taken of the Archives in agreement with article 36 and article 43 of the Church Order.

With regard to the documents collected for a "General" Archive, that Synod decide:

- A. to offer the four Classes and the two Regional Synods the documents pertaining to their assemblies, which are now in the "General" Archives
- B. to donate to the Library of the Theological College (or to store at the Library and in the care of the Library) what is listed in the Report under Contents of the General Archives: B, D, E, F, and G
- C. to donate the collected Church Bulletins to a paper drive for a worthwhile cause
- D. to instruct all Synodical Committees to forward their documents which are not needed anymore for their task to the Library of the Theological College
- E. to ask the Librarian of the Theological College to report to every General Synod on what has been received from Synodical Committees since their last Report to Synod.

Note: Documents of Synodical Committees fit very well with documents pertaining to General Synods. However, on the other hand, I have been assured that the staff of the Theological College would appreciate having these documents stored at the College since time and again they have a need for material that reveals preparation work done for Synodical decisions. Cataloging of the material could also be done by the Library staff in a more efficient way.

Submitted by:

(T. Vandenbrink)
3029 Briarwood Crescent
Burlington, Ontario
L7N 2J9

APPENDIX VI
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON BIBLE TRANSLATIONS
TO THE SYNOD OF THE
CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES MEETING
IN WINNIPEG, 1989

January 7, 1989

Esteemed brethren,

MANDATE

The Committee on Bible Translations that was appointed by Synod Burlington West in 1986 received "the same express mandate as decided by Synod Smithville 1980, *Acts*, Art 111, C, 4" (*Acts 1986*, Art. 60, D).

This mandate reads as follows:

- a. To continue to make recommendations to the Standard Bible Committee for changes necessary in the Revised Standard Version translation;
- b. To keep the Churches posted as to the developments in new editions of the Revised Standard Version;
- c. To report to the next Synod.

EXECUTION OF MANDATE

- a. The Committee met once, on September 10, 1987. (See enclosed minutes of this meeting.)
- b. According to information received from Dr. B.M. Metzger of the Revised Standard Version Bible Committee in a letter dated September 26, 1987 (see enclosed letter):

"our RSV Bible Committee will be very happy to receive any additional suggestions for improving the version. We are committed to the publishers to turn over to them our material by mid-1988, so that by Lent in 1990 the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible may be available to the public."
- c. In the light of this information, our Committee decided that the time schedule was too tight to make submissions to the Revised Standard Version Bible Committee before this Committee gives their work to the publishers by mid-1988. Our Committee was therefore unable to do the first part of their mandate.
- d. Since no new edition of the Revised Standard Version appeared, we were also unable to do the second part of our mandate, namely "to keep the churches posted as to the developments in new editions of the Revised Standard Version."

THE NEW REVISED STANDARD VERSION (NRSV)

Although this edition will not be made available until 1990, Dr. B.M. Metzger of the Revised Standard Version Bible Committee provided us with the following information on the NRSV.

According to his letter to our Committee (September 26, 1987), "the NRSV will involve the entire Bible in a fresh revision." However, "contrary to certain rumors, we are *not* making changes in language pertaining to the Deity; we are, however, introducing some changes with regard to eliminating masculine biased language pertaining to people, where such changes do not violate the sense of the original text."

According to additional information which Dr. Metzger provided with his letter, those charged with providing the NRSV were given the mandate "to make a revision of the RSV involving necessary (1) changes in the paragraph structure and punctuation, (2) elimination of archaisms, while retaining the flavor of the Tyndale-King James tradition, (3) changes in the interest of accuracy, clarity, and/or euphony of English expression, and (4) the elimination of masculine-oriented language so far as this can be

done without altering passages that reflect the historical situation of ancient patriarchal culture and of a masculine-oriented society."

More information can be found in the sheet entitled "Characteristics of the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible" which Dr. Metzger sent us and which is also enclosed herewith.

REPORT TO SYNOD

With this report, we have passed on to Synod an account of our activities and whatever information we have about a new forthcoming edition of the RSV. We have herewith thus also fulfilled the final part of our mandate.

Respectfully submitted by

J. De Jong
J. Geertsema
P. Kingma
J. Van Rietschoten, convener
C. Van Dam

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE ON BIBLE TRANSLATIONS HELD ON SEPTEMBER 10, 1987 AT THE THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

Art. 1 Opening

The convener, Rev. J. Van Rietschoten opens the meeting with the reading of James 1:1-12 and prayer. The brothers are welcomed. Besides the chairman, Rev. J. De Jong and Prof. C. Van Dam are present. Prof. J. Geertsema is absent with notification and Rev. P. Kingma was unaware that a meeting was scheduled.

Art. 2 Mandate

Since this is the first meeting, our synodical mandate was read (Art. 60.D of Acts General Synod 1986) which is the same as decided by General Synod 1980 (Acts, Art. 111.C.4). We have

- "a. to continue to make recommendations to the Standard Bible Committee for changes necessary in the Revised Standard Version translation;
- b. to keep the churches posted as to the developments in new editions of the Revised Standard Version;
- c. to report to the next Synod."

It is decided that Prof. C. Van Dam will act as secretary and write the Standard Bible Committee to find out if they are still receiving recommendations on the Old Testament. (A second New Testament revision has already been completed.) He will also request that the Standard Bible Committee keep us informed when new editions of the RSV appear.

Art. 3 Miscellaneous and Closing

- i. Prof. Van Dam will take care that mileage and other costs are eventually remunerated by the General Fund, c/o the Church at Carman.
- ii. Rev. J. Van Rietschoten will multiply relevant material from the previous Synodical Committee for those present members who do not have this.
- iii. There being nothing further for this meeting, Prof. Van Dam leads in closing

prayer and the chairman adjourns the meeting.

chairman

secretary

**PRINCETON
THEOLOGICAL
SEMINARY**

CN 821, Princeton,
NJ 08542 (609) 921-8300

September 26, 1987

Dear Dr. Van Dam,

Thank you for your letter of September 17th, which I received yesterday.

In reply to your query may I say that our RSV Bible Committee will be very happy to receive any additional suggestions for improving the version. We are committed to the publishers to turn over to them our material by mid-1988, so that by Lent in 1990 the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible may be available to the public.

May I say that, contrary to certain rumors, we are *not* making changes in language pertaining to the Deity; we are, however, introducing some changes with regard to eliminating masculine biased language pertaining to people, where such changes do not violate the sense of the original text. I enclose a sheet giving the characteristics of the NRSV.

With all good wishes and best regards,

Sincerely yours,

Bruce M. Metzger

P.S. A second edition of the N.T. appeared in 1971, which embodied a limited number of changes; e.g. we removed the word "men" from Luke 17:34, which got into the King James version although it was not present in any earlier version. The NRSV will involve the entire Bible in a fresh revision.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEW REVISED STANDARD VERSION OF THE BIBLE

The Revised Standard Version Bible Committee was charged by the RSV Policies Committee of the NCCC with the mandate "to make a revision of the RSV involving necessary (1) changes in the paragraph structure and punctuation, (2) elimination of archaisms, while retaining the flavor of the Tyndale–King James tradition, (3) changes in the interest of accuracy, clarity, and/or euphony of English expression, and (4) the elimination of masculine-oriented language so far as this can be done without altering passages that reflect the historical situation of ancient patriarchal culture and of a masculine-oriented society."

The revision, which is expected to be finished by mid-1988 and given to the licensed publishers, has the following characteristics.

(1) The NRSV is still more accurate than the RSV (a) because the Committee has taken into account manuscripts of the Old and New Testament that came to light since 1946-1952, and (b) because the Committee has been able to consult lexical and syntactical studies of the original languages published during the past forty years.

(2) Inasmuch as attention had been given to matters of euphony, the NRSV embodies improvements here and there that will make the version still more suitable for public reading and liturgical use than it was before.

(3) Besides greater accuracy and euphony, and partly because of them the NRSV attains a higher degree of clarity and lucidity in presenting the word of God to the reader.

(4) Within the constraints of the original texts and the mandate of the Policies Committee, the Committee has followed the maxim, "As literal as possible, as free as necessary." As a result the NRSV remains essentially a literal translation, so that readers who are not acquainted with the original languages of Scripture can know what the Biblical authors wrote. At the same time, however, the Committee has tried faithfully to give the sense of the original writers in terms of inclusive language when referring to people.

The NRSV differs from all other Bibles in English in that it has been prepared by an ecumenical Committee of men and women who, besides representing a variety of Protestant denominations, include Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, and Jewish scholars. After devoting more than fifteen years to the work of revision, it is their hope that, like the RSV, the NRSV will come to be accepted as the standard rendering of the Bible.