

ACTS

General Synod 1983

OF THE

Canadian Reformed Churches

Cloverdale, BC

1983

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Sitting l to r: Rev. J. Geertsema, Rev. W.W.J. VanOene, Rev. Cl. Stam, Rev. W. Pouwelse. Middle row l to r: elders M. VanderVeide, R.J. Oosterhoff, J. Hendricks, E. Ludwig, Rev. B.J. Berends, Rev. J. de Gelder (OPC), elder P. Jansen, Rev. M. VanderWel, Dr. K. Deddens (Fourth Professor). Top row l to r: elders A. Poppe, T. VanLaar, G. Lodder, Rev. J. Visscher, Rev. P. Kingma, Rev. J.J. Peterson (OPC)

ACTS

GENERAL SYNOD of the CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
held at CLOVERDALE, BC from November 1, - November 28, 1983

MORNING SESSION — TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 1983

ARTICLE 1

Opening

On behalf of the convening Church at Cloverdale, BC, the Rev. J. Visscher calls the meeting to order. He requests that Psalm 107:1 and 12 be sung, reads Ephesians 2, and leads in prayer.

He welcomes the delegates with the following words:

"Esteemed Brethren in the Lord Jesus Christ

On behalf of the convening Church, the Church at Cloverdale, British Columbia, I would like to extend to you all a hearty welcome. We are grateful that our prayers for your safe arrival have been answered and we count it a privilege to have you in our midst. We hope that you in turn will enjoy our hospitality, as well as that of the other Churches in the Fraser Valley. We pray that your meetings may be harmonious, your decisions Scriptural, and your work a blessing to the confederation of Canadian (American) Reformed Churches.

As some of you may know this is the Tenth General Synod in the history of our Churches. Almost thirty years ago the first one was held in Homewood-Carman, Manitoba. Incidentally, there is a delegate here today who was also present at that very first assembly. For those of you who are unable to guess the answer, it is the Rev. W.W.J. VanOene.

In any case, since that first gathering a great deal has transpired in the history and development of the Churches. Thanks to the faithfulness of the Lord, quite a number of new congregations have been planted, additional ministers and missionaries have joined the ranks of pastor and teacher, the Theological College has come into being, the Churches have divided into four classical regions, and so we can mention many more ecclesiastical highlights, not to forget also other aspects that have to do with the rise of Christian schools, a Reformed training institute for teachers, and other organizations. Truly, there has been much development over the years under the blessings of the Lord.

This is a fact that can also be recognized when one has a close look at the agenda of this Synod. A considerable amount of it is devoted to the *Book of Praise* and matters related to it. The new translations and revisions of the prayers, forms, confessions and Church Order all point to the fact that the efforts of the first generation are bearing fruit. As Churches, we are coming to our own in this land of our adoption.

At the same time you might also say that other matters on the agenda point to the same conclusion. You will have to deal with various matters relating to our relations with other Churches, with the International Conference of Reformed Churches, with the Theological College and the appointment of a fourth professor, with that much debated issue of voting rights for women, and with various appeals, overtures and requests. Quite simply said, brethren, "you have your plates full."

It all points to the fact that the immigration period in the life of our Churches is over. We are settled and we are dealing with the issues and problems that settlement carries with it.

Nevertheless, as we move more and more into the mainstream of North American life, we must not discard the heritage of the past throwing it overboard as just so much unwanted baggage. The Lord has given us much in terms of our history and in terms of understanding His Word. We must treasure all that as a gracious gift. We must always be mindful of the benefits that the Lord has bestowed upon us.

In addition, we must also be willing to let others share in the bounty that we have

received. Turning to the world of sports for our illustration, as the apostle Paul did so often, we can say that as Canadian Reformed Churches we must be both defensively and offensively minded. The gifts of the Lord we are not just to defend, but also to dispense, not just to protect, but also to promote.

Let us do this in the humble awareness that all that we have received are gifts from the hand of the Lord, gifts from a merciful God to an undeserving people. Hence let there be no boasting in what we have built, in how faithful we have been. Let there only be praise to our covenant God who has seen fit to lavish His promises upon us, to use us as His instruments, and to give us the greatest gift of all — His Son Jesus Christ, as the Prophet who reveals His will fully, as the Priest who sacrifices Himself totally, as the King who defends His Church eternally.

Brothers, this great Prophet, Priest and King has called you to serve Him in the offices of minister and elder. He has called you to deal with matters that pertain to the life and well-being of all the Churches. In all of these things He expects from you ready obedience, true humility and thankful service. As for the gifts of wisdom and guidance and proper speech, we shall pray daily that He will send you them from above.

May your decisions be a great blessing in the Churches.

May you be filled with the Spirit and led by His Word.

May the Lord be with you all and with all His people.

With these words, I now declare the Tenth General Synod of the Canadian (American) Reformed Churches, opened."

ARTICLE 2

Greetings from Abroad

The Rev. J. Visscher reads letters with greetings and best wishes from the Free Reformed Churches of Australia and from Die Vrije Gereformeerde Kerke van Suid-Afrika. He also informs Synod that Dr. K. Deddens and the Rev. J. de Gelder hope to represent De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland at Synod during a two week period. The Orthodox Presbyterian Church has sent as delegate the Rev. J. Peterson from Texas, USA who hopes to attend Synod for one week.

ARTICLE 3

Examination of Credentials

After examination of the attendance record and the credentials, the Rev. J. Visscher reports that the following delegates are present with the proper credentials:

From Regional Synod East:

Ministers: P. Kingma, W. Pouwelse, Cl. Stam, and W.W.J. VanOene.

Elders: G. Lodder, E. Ludwig, R.J. Oosterhoff, and M. VanderVelde.

Br. G. Lodder is an alternate for J. Medemblik.

From Regional Synod West:

Ministers: B.J. Berends, J. Geertsema, M. VanderWel, and J. Visscher.

Rev. J. Visscher is an alternate for the Rev. J. Wielenga.

Elders: J. Hendricks, P. Jansen, A. Poppe, and T. VanLaar.

Since both Regional Synods are duly represented, General Synod can be constituted.

ARTICLE 4

Election of Officers

The following officers are elected:

Chairman: Rev. W.W.J. VanOene

Vice-Chairman: Rev. J. Geertsema

First Clerk: Rev. Cl. Stam

Second Clerk: Rev. W. Pouwelse.

ARTICLE 5

Constitution of Synod

The elected officers take their place as executive of Synod. The chairman, Rev. W.W.J. VanOene addresses Synod with words of gratitude for the confidence placed in the moderamen. He also expresses gratitude to the Rev. D. VanderBoom for conducting the prayer service and to the convening Church at Cloverdale for the preparation of Synod.

The meeting is then adjourned so that the definitive agenda and various procedures can be prepared and arranged.

ARTICLE 6

Time Schedule and Procedures

Synod adopts the following arrangements:

- a. Final date for incoming material for Synod is set for Wednesday, November 2, at 12:00 p.m.
- b. The following time schedule is adopted:
Monday-Friday: 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
 2:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.
 7:00 p.m.-9:30 p.m.
Saturday: 9:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
- c. Synod shall begin and close each day with prayer and thanksgiving in plenary session.
- d. Press Release will not be published until after Synod has been closed.
- e. Advisory Committees shall provide each member with a copy of their report, plus three copies for the first clerk, before it is dealt with in plenary session.
- f. Copies of documents are available only to members of Synod.
- g. Synod will not meet on Saturday, November 12, 1983, in order to make room for the meeting of the Foundation for Superannuation.

ARTICLE 7

Adoption of the Agenda

The following agenda is adopted:

The Final Agenda

- I Opening on behalf of the Convening Church at Cloverdale.
- II Examination of the 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 Procedure and Time Schedule; Consideration of the Proposed Regulations drafted by the Convening Church.
 - B. Letter from the Church at Brampton.
 - C. Letter from the Church at Chatham.
 - D. Letter from the Church at Chilliwack.
 - E. Letter from the Church at Cloverdale.
 - F. Letter from the Church at Smithville.
- VIII Incoming Mail:
 - A. THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE
 1. Nominations for the Board of Governors
 - a. Regional Synod East.
 - b. Regional Synod West.

2. Board of Governors

- a. Report to General Synod 1983.
- b. Proposal re Fourth Professor.
- c. Act, By-Laws and Regulations.
- d. Letter from the Church at Hamilton re Academic standards.
- e. Finance and Property Committee (formerly the Board of Trustees)
 - 12th (1980), 13th (1981) Annual Reports.
 - Financial Statements — 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983.
 - First Annual Report.
- f. Letter from Professor L. Selles.

B. BOOK OF PRAISE

1. Report of the Standing Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise*.
2. Letter from br. M. DeGroot re Publication of the *Book of Praise*.
3. Letter from the Church at London re Hymns.
4. Letter from br. J. DeRaadt re Hymns.
5. Letter from br. L. VanZandwijk re Hymns.
6. Report of the Committee on Translation and Revision of the Prayers and Forms.
7. Letter from the Church at Abbotsford re Prayers.
8. Letter from the Church at Brampton re Prayers.
9. Letter from the Church at Burlington-South re Prayers (see also C, 6 and D, 5)
10. Letter from the Church at Chatham re Prayers.
11. Letter from the Church at Chilliwack re Prayers (see also B, 19).
12. Letter from the Church at Cloverdale re Prayers.
13. Letter from the Church at Coaldale re Prayers (see also B, 20).
14. Letter from the Church at Langley re Prayers.
15. Letter from the Church at Surrey (Maranatha) re Prayers.
16. Letter from the Free Reformed Churches in Australia re Forms.
17. Letter from the Church at Abbotsford re Forms.
18. Letter from the Church at Burlington-East re Forms.
19. Letter from the Church at Chilliwack re Forms (see also B, 11).
20. Letter from the Church at Coaldale re Forms (see B, 13).
21. Letter from the Church at Langley re Forms (see B, 14).
22. Letter from the Church at London re Forms.
23. Letter from the Church at Ottawa (Men's Society) re Forms.
24. Letter from Rev. D. DeJong re Forms.
25. Letter (Gravamen) from Rev. J. DeJong re Marriage Form.
26. Letter from br. W. VanderKamp re Forms.
27. Letter from br. L. VanZandwijk re Forms.
28. Letter from the Church at Cloverdale re delay adoption until General Synod 1986.

C. TRANSLATION AND REVISION — BELGIC CONFESSION

1. Report from the Committee on the Belgic Confession.
2. Letter from the Church at Abbotsford re Belgic Confession.
3. Letter from the Church at Abbotsford re not to accept this new translation (see also D, 3).
4. Letter from the Church at Brampton.
5. Letter from the Church at Burlington (Ebenezer).
6. Letter from the Church at Burlington-South (see also B, 9).
7. Letter from the Church at Chatham.
8. Letter from the Church at Cloverdale (see also D, 8, E, 8).
9. Letter from the Church at Langley.
10. Letter from the Church at Smithers (see also E, 9).

- D. TRANSLATION AND REVISION — CANONS OF DORT
1. Report from the Committee on the Canons of Dort.
 2. Letter from the Church at Abbotsford re Canons of Dort.
 3. Letter from the Church at Abbotsford re not to accept this new translation (see also C, 3).
 4. Letter from the Church at Burlington (Ebenezer).
 5. Letter from the Church at Burlington-South (see also B, 9).
 6. Letter from the Church at Carman.
 7. Letter from the Church at Chilliwack.
 8. Letter from the Church at Cloverdale (see C, 8).
 9. Letter from the Church at Langley.
- E. TRANSLATION AND REVISION — HEIDELBERG CATECHISM
1. Report from the Committee on the Heidelberg Catechism (plus covering letter).
 2. Letter from the Church at Brampton.
 3. Letter from the Church at Burlington (Ebenezer).
 4. Letter from the Church at Burlington-South.
 5. Letter from the Church at Carman.
 6. Letter from the Church at Chatham.
 7. Letter from the Church at Chilliwack.
 8. Letter from the Church at Cloverdale (see C, 8).
 9. Letter from the Church at Smithers (see C, 10).
- F. REVISION — CHURCH ORDER
1. Report from the Committee on the Church Order.
 2. Letter from the Church at Burlington (Ebenezer).
 3. Letter from the Church at Burlington-South.
 4. Letter from the Church at Carman.
 5. Letter from the Church at Cloverdale re use of the term "consistory"; Article 65, 69.
 6. Letter from the Church at Hamilton.
 7. Letter from the Church at Orangeville.
 8. Letter from the Church at Smithville.
 9. Letter from br. J. Gelderman.
 10. Letter from br. C. Groenewegen.
 11. Letter from br. J. Hendricks re Article 67.
 12. Letter from br. L. VanZandwijk re Article 35.
 13. Letter from Rev. M. Werkman.
 14. Letter from br. E. Witten re Article 35.
- G. CONTACT — ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
1. Report from the Committee on Contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (plus additional report).
 2. A copy of the invitation sent to the OPC to be represented at the General Synod.
 3. Letter from the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations of the OPC.
 4. Letter from the Church at Burlington-South.
 5. Letter from the Church at Chatham.
 6. Letter from the Church at Smithville.
 7. Letter from Rev. B.R. Hofford re the secession of the Tri-County Reformed Church from the OPC.
 8. Letter from br. J. Gelderman.
- H. CORRESPONDENCE WITH CHURCHES ABROAD
1. Report from the Committee for Correspondence With Churches Abroad (plus additional report).

2. Letter from the Free Reformed Churches of Australia.
 3. Letter from the Church at Smithville.
- I. WOMEN'S VOTING RIGHTS
1. Report from the Committee on Women's Voting Rights.
 2. Letter from the Church at Abbotsford.
 3. Letter from the Church at Burlington-South.
 4. Letter from the Church at Carman.
 5. Letter from the Church at Chilliwack.
 6. Letter from the Church at Cloverdale.
 7. Letter from the Church at Fergus.
 8. Letter from the Church at Hamilton.
 9. Letter from the Church at Smithers.
 10. Letter from the Church at Smithville.
 11. Letter from br. and sr. J. Tillema.
 12. Letter from br. T. Vandenbrink.
 13. Letter from br. B. VanHuistede.
 14. Letter from br. A. VanRaalte.
 15. Letter from br. Cl. VanRaalte.
- J. PROTESTS AND APPEALS
1. Appeal from the Church at Burlington-South re deletion of "begotten" from the Apostles' Creed.
 2. Appeal from the Church at Burlington-West re deletion of "begotten" from the Apostles' Creed.
 3. Appeal from the Church at Chilliwack re "begotten" and "Christian."
 4. Appeal from the Church at Lincoln re "begotten"
 5. Appeal from the Church at Smithers re "begotten" and "Christian."
 6. Appeal from br. L. VanZandwijk re: deletion of the words "begotten" and "Christian" from the Creed.
 7. Appeal from br. J. Nauta re: descent into hell.
 8. Appeal from br. H. deJong against the decision of Regional Synod West, September 1983.
 9. Appeal from br. H.J. Noot against the decision of Regional Synod West, September 1983.
 10. Appeal from br. J. Werkman against the decision of Regional Synod West, September 1983.
 11. Appeal from the Church at London re *Acts* 1980, Art. 143.
 12. Appeal from the Church at Neerlandia re *Acts* 1980, Art. 143.
 13. Appeal from the Church at Lincoln re *Acts* 1977, Art. 91; *Acts* 1980, Art. 97 on the OPC.
 14. Appeal from br. W. Slomp re standards at the Theological College.
- K. REQUESTS
1. The Council of the Christian Reformed Church in Canada re appoint a contact committee.
 2. The Foundation for Superannuation re a meeting on Saturday, November 12, 1983.
 3. The Reformatorische Politieke Federatie re seal hunt.
- L. OVERTURES
1. The Church at Ottawa re Reformed Presbyterian Church, North America.
- M. REPORTS
1. The Church at Smithville re finances of Synod 1980.
 2. The Church at Lincoln re an audit of finances for Synod 1980.
 3. The Church at Carman re General Fund.
 4. The Church at Brampton re Audit of the books of the Standing Committee on the *Book of Praise*.
 5. The Church at Burlington-West re Archives.

- 6. The Church at Burlington (Ebenezer) re Address Church.
- 7. The Committee on Bible Translations.
- IX Appointments.
- X Question Period ad Article 43, Church Order.
- 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 1983.

ARTICLE 8

Advisory Committees

The following Advisory Committees are appointed:

- COMMITTEE 1 — Rev. J. Geertsema, convener; Rev. W.W.J. VanOene; Elder P. Jansen; Elder R.J. Oosterhoff
Material: Agenda VII, VIII B, J, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.
- COMMITTEE 2 — Rev. M. VanderWel, convener; Rev. W. Pouwelse; Elder J. Hendricks; Elder M. VanderVelde.
Material: Agenda VIII C, E, G, J, 1-6, 12.
- COMMITTEE 3 — Rev. J. Visscher, convener; Rev. Cl. Stam; Elder G. Lodder; Elder T. VanLaar.
Material: Agenda VIII A, F, J, 13, K, L.
- COMMITTEE 4 — Rev. P. Kingma, convener; Rev. B.J. Berends; Elder E. Ludwig; Elder A. Poppe.
Material: Agenda VIII D, H, I, M.

ARTICLE 9

Adjournment

After the various committees have been assigned their respective meeting rooms, the chairman adjourns the meeting and the Advisory Committees meet.

EVENING SESSION — TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 1983

ARTICLE 10

Adjournment

The chairman requests the members to sing Psalm 87:1, 2, and 5, leads in thanksgiving prayer and adjourns the meeting.

MORNING SESSION — WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 1983

ARTICLE 11

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Psalm 36:2. He reads Isaiah 12, and leads in prayer.

The vice-chairman, Rev. J. Geertsema, takes the floor to congratulate the Rev. and Mrs. VanOene with the fact that they may this day commemorate and celebrate their fortieth wedding anniversary. He expresses the joy of Synod and gratitude to the Lord

that such a day may be experienced. He wishes Rev. and Mrs. VanOene the Lord's blessing for the future.

The Rev. VanOene responds gratefully, also on behalf of his wife who is present at Synod, for the best wishes expressed.

ARTICLE 12

Acts

The Acts, Articles 1-10, are read and after some emendation are adopted.

ARTICLE 13

Adjournment

Synod is adjourned until the afternoon. The Advisory Committees meet.

AFTERNOON SESSION — WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 1983

ARTICLE 14

Reopening

The chairman announces that some incoming mail has yet arrived before the set deadline:

- a. letter from The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, under Agenda VIII G, 3;
- b. letter from the Church at Chilliwack re Proposed Guidelines, under Agenda VII F;
- c. letter from the Church at Chilliwack re Apostles' Creed, under Agenda VIII J, 3.

ARTICLE 15

Theological College Appointments

Synod enters into closed-restricted session.

Committee III presents:

- A. **MATERIAL** — Agenda VIII,
- A. 1. Nominations for the Theological College
 - a. Regional Synod East;
 - b. Regional Synod West.
 - A. 2. Board of Governors
 - a. Report to General Synod 1983;
 - b. Proposal re Fourth Professor.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. a. The Board of Governors recommends that Synod "appoint, elect, reappoint or reelect six (6) active ministers as Governors (in accordance with Section 3.04 (a) of By-Law 1 (as amended) to hold office until the next General Synod and to appoint at least three (3) substitutes from each Regional Synod area."
- b. Regional Synod Ontario of November 10, 1982, nominated as Governors (Academic Committee) the Revs. P. Kingma, J. Mulder and Cl. Stam, and, as substitutes, the Revs. J. DeJong, M. Werkman and J. VanRietschoten, in that order.
- c. Regional Synod West of September 20, 1983, nominated as Governors (Academic Committee) the Revs. J. Geertsema, M. VanBeveren and J. Visscher, and, as substitutes, the Revs. M. VanderWel, B.J. Berends and C. VanSpronsen, in that order.

2. The Board of Governors presents the following proposals regarding the Governors (Finance and Property Committee):
 - a. "To accept the resignations of Mr. Hessel Dantuma and Mr. John Medemblik 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 Anton L. VanderHout, Esq. (Hamilton) as Governor for a term from the date of his appointment until the third General Synod held after the date of his appointment;
 - c. to appoint Henk Kampen, Esq. (Toronto) and to reappoint C.M. Loopstra, LL.B. (Toronto) as Governors for a term from the date of their appointment or reappointment until the second General Synod held after the date of their appointment or reappointment;
 - d. to reappoint Maas VanGrootheest, Esq. (Fergus) and Arie Hordijk, Esq. (Burlington) as Governors for a term from the date of their reappointment until the next General Synod held after the date of their reappointment."
3. The Board of Governors presents the following recommendations regarding the Faculty of the Theological College:
 - a. to direct the granting of tenure to Professor C. VanDam, M.Th. and the Rev. W.W.J. VanOene, M.Th. (both appointed by General Synod, 1980);
 - b. to direct the Board of Governors to appoint a new Professor of Diaconiology;
 - c. to direct the Board to appoint as Professor of Diaconiology for the period of six years, namely, from May 1, 1984 until June 30, 1990, Dr. K. Deddens of Groningen, The Netherlands, authorizing the Board to make the appointment on the stipulated financial conditions and relocation arrangements;
 - d. to express appreciation for the faithful service of the Rev. G. VanDooren, M.Th., as lecturer in Diaconiology from the date the College was established until his retirement age and for the fact that after his retirement Rev. G. VanDooren has made himself available to continue his teaching as temporary instructor until December 31, 1983.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. In accordance with By-Law 1 (Section 3.04) of the Theological College, the General Synod shall appoint or reappoint six active ministers to the Board of Governors.
2. a. In accordance with By-Law 1 (Section 3.04) of the Theological College, the General Synod shall appoint or reappoint five brothers who are not ministers.
 - b. The retirement proposal submitted to Synod by the Board of Governors (Finance and Property Committee) is in accordance with the decision of Synod 1980, *Acts*, Art. 44, III, C, 4, which reads "to take note of the fact that no retirement schedule exists for the members of the Board of Trustees and to ask the Board of Trustees to consider such a schedule and to come with proposals to the next General Synod."
3. a. The proposal to grant tenure to Professor C. VanDam and the Rev. W.W.J. VanOene is based on the recommendation of the Board of Governors, who also state that "it is clear that the instruction is not only on a scholarly level, but also faithful to the Scriptures and confessionally sound."
 - b. Synod Smithville 1980 decided "to charge the Board of Governors to approach the next Synod with a recommendation regarding a fourth full-time professor, preferably a Professor of Diaconiology." *Acts*, Art. 12, D, 7.
 - c.
 - i The Board of Governors on the advice of the Senate have come to General Synod 1983 with a recommendation to direct the Board to appoint the Rev. Dr. K. Deddens of Groningen, The Netherlands.

- ii From the material presented by the Board of Governors it appears that Dr. K. Deddens is well-qualified in the field of Diaconiology and may be expected to maintain the scholarly level of training at the Theological College.
- iii Although in the event of his appointment and acceptance "Dr. K. Deddens would remain a minister of Groningen-Zuid," the arrangements proposed by the Board of Governors give sufficient guarantees as to his position, salary and superannuation benefits.
- iv In view of his qualifications and length of service in the Reformed Churches of The Netherlands, the Board of Governors is correct in proposing that he be paid a salary equivalent to a professor with tenure at the Theological College.
- v The proposed appointment of six years is in keeping with Dr. Deddens' own expressed desire to return to The Netherlands after his years of service at our College and also guarantees the Churches a reasonable number of years of service.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decides:

1. to appoint as Governors of the Theological College the following active ministers and their substitutes:
 From *Eastern Canada*: Rev. P. Kingma, Rev. Cl. Stam, Rev. J. Mulder. (Substitutes: Rev. J. DeJong, Rev. M. Werkman, Rev. J. VanRietschoten, in that order);
 From *Western Canada*: Rev. J. Geertsema, Rev. M. VanBeveren, Rev. J. Vischer. (Substitutes: Rev. M. VanderWel, Rev. B.J. Berends, Rev. C. VanSpronsen, in that order).
2. to appoint as Governors of the Theological College the following brothers who are not ministers according to the retirement schedule as stipulated by the Board of Governors:
 A.L. VanderHout (9 years); H. Kampen (6 years); C.M. Loopstra (6 years); M. VanGrootheest (3 years); A. Hordijk (3 years);
3. to express our sincere gratitude to the brothers H. Dantuma and J. Medemblik for their many years of faithful service as Trustees/Governors of the Theological College;
4. to direct the Board of Governors to grant tenure to Professor C. VanDam and the Rev. W.W.J. VanOene;
5. to thank the Rev. G. VanDooren for his many years of faithful and fruitful work done as lecturer and temporary instructor at the College;
6. to direct the Board of Governors to appoint the Rev. Dr. K. Deddens of Groningen, The Netherlands, as professor of Diaconiology for a period of six years (May 1, 1984 to June 30, 1990) in accordance with the financial arrangements submitted by the Board of Governors.

A motion duly seconded, that the Committee's recommendation D. 6 (to appoint Dr. K. Deddens as professor of Diaconiology) be adopted by Synod is ADOPTED.

It is decided that the chairman will inform Dr. K. Deddens by telephone concerning his appointment.

Closed-restricted session is terminated.

Session is closed.

The Advisory Committees meet.

EVENING SESSION — WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 1983

ARTICLE 16

Adjournment

The Rev. B.J. Berends requests the members to sing Psalm 103:1, 2, 6, 7, and leads in thanksgiving prayer. The chairman adjourns the meeting.

MORNING SESSION — THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1983

ARTICLE 17

Reopening

The chairman calls the meeting to order. He requests to sing Psalm 111:1, 4, 5, reads Job 28, and leads in prayer.

The roll call shows that the Rev. Cl. Stam is absent.

The chairman informs Synod that Dr. K. Deddens has been notified of his appointment. Dr. Deddens expresses gratitude for the confidence placed in him by Synod.

ARTICLE 18

Acts

The Acts Articles 11-16 are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 19

Synod enters into closed-restricted session

Theological College Appointments

The Report of Committee III re Appointments Theological College is further discussed (see Art. 15 Acts).

The Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 are ADOPTED.

ARTICLE 20

Closing of session. Closed-restricted session is terminated.

Session is closed. The Advisory Committees meet.

EVENING SESSION — THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1983

ARTICLE 21

Adjournment

The chairman informs Synod that Rev. J. Visscher had to leave Synod early because of the passing away of a member of the congregation at Cloverdale.

There will be plenary session Friday evening, November 4.

The Rev. J. Geertsema requests the members to sing Psalm 43:3, 4, and 5, and leads in thanksgiving. Synod is adjourned.

MORNING SESSION — FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1983

ARTICLE 22

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Psalm 146:3, 4, 5, reads Psalm 146, and leads in prayer.

ARTICLE 23

Acts

The Acts, Articles 17-21, are amended and adopted.

ARTICLE 24

Closing of Session

Session is closed and the Advisory Committees meet.

EVENING SESSION — FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1983

ARTICLE 25

Reopening

The chairman requests the members to sing Psalm 62:4 and 7. He notes the various Advisory Reports that have come in.

ARTICLE 26

Theological College

Committee III presents:

- I Theological College, Act, By-laws, Regulations
- II Theological College, Academic Committee
- III Theological College, Finances and Property.

Section I is discussed

Regarding By-Law No. 3 (Election and Term) the following proposal, duly seconded, is discussed,

to add to the By-Law the following under b): "which may be nominated by the consistories in the province where the Theological College is situated, which nominations must be presented by the Board of Governors for approval to the nearest Regional Synodical meeting before passing these nominations on to the next General Synod for confirmation and appointment, pending legal advice." This proposal is REJECTED.

The Recommendations I D, 1, 2, and 3 are ADOPTED.

Section II is read.

The Recommendations II C, 1, 2, and 3 are ADOPTED.

ARTICLE 27

Adjournment

Br. J. Hendricks requests to sing from Psalm 138:1 and 3, and leads in thanksgiving. Synod is adjourned.

MORNING SESSION — SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 1983

ARTICLE 28

Reopening

The Chairman requests the members to sing Psalm 96:1 and 2, reads II Timothy 2:1-19, and leads in prayer.

ARTICLE 29

Acts

The Acts, Articles 22-27, are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 30

Theological College

Section III of the Advisory Report of Committee III re the Theological College (Finance and Property) is read and discussed. After some emendations, the Recommendations D, 1, 2, 3, a and b, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 are ADOPTED.

ARTICLE 31

DECISIONS re THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE — ACT, BY-LAWS, REGULATIONS

Committee III presents:

- I A. **MATERIAL** — Agenda VIII, A. 2 a. Report to General Synod 1983.
2 c. Act, By-Laws, and Regulations.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. "The Canadian Reformed Theological College Act, 1981 necessitated some changes in the organization of the College."
2. These changes, among others, include the following:

Section 5(2):

"Within three years from the coming into force of this Act, the Board shall be reconstituted to consist of eleven Governors to be elected or appointed by Synod in such manner as may be prescribed by the by-laws of the College, for a term of three years."

Section 5(5):

"The Board may by by-law,

- a. reduce the size of the Board to consist of not fewer than seven Governors or increase the size of the Board; and
 - b. provide for the election and retirement of Governors in rotation,
- but no such by-law shall come into effect until it has been confirmed by Synod."

Section 5(11)

"The government, conduct, management and control of the College and of its property, revenues, expenditures, business and affairs are vested in the Board and the Board has all powers necessary or convenient to perform its duties and achieve the object and purpose of the College including, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the power . . .

- c. to appoint, in accordance with the policies established by Synod, members of the faculty who are in full accord with the basis of the College as set out in section 4;
- d. to promote, suspend and remove and to grant tenure and leave of absence to members of the faculty in accordance with the policies established by Synod, but any action resulting in suspension or removal of a faculty member shall be in accordance with the by-laws of the College and is subject to an appeal to Synod;"

Section 6(1):

"Synod shall assemble not less than every three years to do, in addition to any other business that may be transacted, the following:

- a. Receive the report of the Board as to the operation of the College.
- b. Elect or appoint the Governors in accordance with sub-section 5(2) to (6).
- c. Consider the audited financial statements and the report of the auditor for the previous fiscal periods.
- d. Appoint the auditors until the next assembly of Synod.
- e. Confirm or reject any by-laws passed by the Board that under this Act require confirmation by Synod."

3. The Board of Governors recommends that Synod confirm the adoption of:

By-Law Number 1 being a by-law relating generally to the affairs of the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches (with Regulation No. 1 being a part thereof);

By-Law Number 2 being a by-law respecting the borrowing of money and the issue of securities; and

By-Law Number 3 being a by-law to amend Section 3.04 of By-Law Number 1 pertaining to the election and term of Governors, including the election or appointment and retirement in rotation of five Governors.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. General Synod 1980 approved the action taken by the Board of Governors, Board of Trustees and Faculty with regard to the incorporation of the College by means of a Private Bill in the Ontario Legislature in accordance with the draft Private Bill added to the additional Report of Board of Governors and to charge the joint Boards to pursue this matter. *Acts 1980, Art. 44, III, C, 8.*
2. General Synod 1980 requested "the Board of Governors and the Board of Trustees to serve the next General Synod with proposals as to the emendation of the present Constitution, if the Private Bill becomes an official law of the Province of Ontario."
3. According to the Act, 1981, passed by the Ontario Legislature, the Synod shall "confirm or reject any by-laws passed by the Board that under this Act require confirmation by the Synod." [see 6(1)e].
4. The Board of Governors has fulfilled its mandate and has presented Synod 1983 with proposals for the emendation of the Constitution, which proposals are in keeping with the basic structure and setup of the College.
5. For the purpose of the proper functioning of the College and in keeping with its new status as a recognized degree-granting institution, the Synod needs to confirm the adoption of By-Law 1, 2, 3.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

General Synod decides:

1. to acknowledge with gratitude the work done by the Board of Governors on the Act, By-Laws and Regulations, and to express its appreciation especially to Mr. C.M. Loopstra, LL.B. for his efforts in drawing up the Act, By-Laws and Regulations; ADOPTED
2. to confirm the adoption of By-Law 1, 2, 3; ADOPTED
3. to place the Act, By-Laws and Regulations in the Appendices of the Acts. ADOPTED

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE — ACADEMIC COMMITTEE

Committee III presents:

II A. MATERIAL — Agenda VIII, A. 2 a. Report Board of Governors.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. The work at the Theological College could continue unhindered in every way, while the instruction has been faithful to the Scriptures and the Confession, and on a scholarly level.
2. While three students completed their studies, the present total enrolment stands at fifteen.
3. Pursuant to section 10 of the Canadian Reformed Theological College Act 1981, the Board of Governors authorized the Senate to confer degrees as follows: "the Master of Divinity degree on students who entered the College with a Bachelor's degree (or equivalent), and the Bachelor of Divinity degree on those who had been admitted on the basis of an admission exam (without an undergraduate degree)."
4. Upon advice of the Senate and in order to maintain an academic level of instruction, the Board decided that a student needs to attain a weighted average of 65% to continue his studies at the College or to graduate.
5. The Rev. H. Scholten M.Th. passed away in January, 1982. Prof. H.M. Ohmann left to assume his professorial position at the Theological College at Kampen, The Netherlands. The Rev. C. VanDam M.Th. was properly installed on September 4, 1981 and has since fulfilled his teaching duties. The Rev. G. VanDooren was appointed as "temporary instructor" until such time that a fourth professor can assume his duties.
6. On December 11, 1981, the Theological College became an incorporated institution by the enactment of the Canadian Reformed Theological College Act 1981, in the Ontario Legislature. This gives the College the authority to grant the degrees of Bachelor of Theology, Bachelor of Divinity, Master of Divinity, and Master of Theology. The Board expresses its appreciation to Mr. C.M. Loopstra, LL.B., who spent much time and effort to prepare the Private Bill, and to the Honourable Mr. George A. Kerr, Member of Provincial Parliament, who sponsored the Bill in the Ontario Legislature.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decides:

1. to express gratitude that the work at the Theological College could continue unhindered and that all instruction could be given properly according to the Word of God; ADOPTED

2. to express gratitude that because of the adoption and execution of the Canadian Reformed Theological College Act, 1981, the academic stature of the College could be recognized and promoted; ADOPTED
3. to express gratitude in writing to both Mr. C.M. Loopstra for preparing the Private Member's Bill and to the Hon. Mr. George A. Kerr M.P.P., who sponsored the Bill in the Ontario Legislature. ADOPTED

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE — FINANCES AND PROPERTY

Committee III presents:

- III A. **MATERIAL** — Agenda A, 2 a. Report to General Synod (Board of Governors)
 - e. Finance and Property Committee (formerly Board of Trustees)
 - 12th (1980), 13th (1981) Annual Reports
 - Financial Statements, 1980-1983
 - First Annual Report.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. Property and Finance Committee Activities Generally

- a. The Finance and Property Committee report thankfully that "with the cooperation of the Churches, Academic Committee, Faculty and Students they have been able to perform the task assigned to them in brotherly harmony and in good health."
- b. The Board of Trustees functioned as a Committee of the Board of Governors after the incorporation of the College by means of the Canadian Reformed Theological College Act 1981, and became officially known as the Property and Finance Committee of the Board of Governors after the passing of the By-laws, April 21, 1982.

2. Physical Plant

- a. The Board of Governors reports "that in spite of the efforts of the Finance and Property Committee, a more suitable building for our College has not yet been found." The decision to increase the building reserve from \$5,000 to \$25,000 annually is considered to be a step in the right direction. The Board hopes that better facilities can be obtained in the very near future.
- b. Various necessary repairs and renovations were made in order to keep the physical plant operational.
- c. Br. G. Meyer was able to perform the necessary janitorial duties, as per contract, to everyone's satisfaction. The students were faithful in doing their share of the maintenance work in and around the building.

3. General Insurance Coverage

The insurance on the building and contents has been updated.

4. Salaries

The professors and lecturers were remunerated in accordance with the salary schedule as approved by Synod Smithville 1980, the professors with an annual cost of living allowance (1982: 5.7%; 1982/83: 9.6%; 1983/84: 5.26%).

5. Organizational

a. Administrative Assistant

After more than five years as administrative assistant, Miss Anne VanSydenborgh has left the College. Appreciation is expressed for the excellent work she has done since her appointment in 1976.

The Board expresses satisfaction for the work of her replacement, Miss Teresa G. Bouwman.

- b. The yearly contract of the caretaker, br. G. Meyer, has remained unchanged at \$152.00 monthly. Additional services were provided at the rate of \$5.00 per hour.

6. Financial

a. Contributions

Thankfulness is expressed to the Churches which have cooperated by properly paying their contributions, and the hope is expressed that all Churches will do so in the future.

b. Tuition Fees

Tuition fees have been increased to \$200.00 per semester for students, and to \$600.00 per semester for students who are not members of one of the Churches or sister Churches.

c. Audited Financial Statements

Audited financial statements were sent to the Churches and Synod as appendices to the Reports for the years 1981, 1982 and 1983. A comprehensive statement for the period January 1, 1980-May 31, 1983 has been sent to Synod. The Board recommends to appoint Robinson, Lott and Brohman, Chartered Accountants, as auditors until the next assembly of Synod.

d. Investments

No changes of significance were made in the investment policy, while all interest earned and yield received was added to the respective funds.

e. Budget

The budget 1981 did not need any increase. The budget 1982 needed an increase from \$29.00-\$31.00 per communicant member. The 1983/84 budget needed an increase from \$31.00-\$33.00. The Board reports that the proposed appointment of Dr. K. Deddens will not affect the budget 1983/84, while with regard to the budget 1984/85, it is to be noted that as per 1980 a special reserve has been created to meet initial expenses related to the appointment of a fourth full-time professor.

f. Special provisions

Prof. C. VanDam has been provided with a low-interest loan in order to purchase a home and with a forgivable loan to cover the extra costs of his studies in The Netherlands.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. Although General Synods since 1974 have urged the Board to pursue the acquiring of other suitable facilities, it again appears that efforts were made in this respect, but without result.
2. The Board of Governors themselves report that the present facilities are inadequate.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide:

1. Gratefully to acknowledge the work done by the Board of Governors and to approve of their actions as mentioned in the reports. ADOPTED
2. Gratefully to acknowledge the faithful work done by Miss Anne VanSydenborgh (now Mrs. S.P.C. VanderMolen) during the five years as administrative assistant at the College. ADOPTED

3. a. To express the disappointment of Synod that after nine years, no concrete results can be seen with respect to acquiring other facilities;
- b. To direct the Board of Governors to give the matter of acquiring other facilities for the Theological College full attention, and to have this matter finished before the next General Synod. The Board shall present Synod with a detailed report on their activities in this regard. ADOPTED
4. To take note of the fact that the Board of Governors has not presented to Synod any proposals regarding salaries of Faculty members (as decided by Synod Smithville 1980, Acts, Art. 44, C, 7, and stipulated in the Regulation No. 1 sub 3) and that Synod therefore cannot approve any such proposals. ADOPTED
5. To express gratitude to the Churches for their faithful financial support of the Theological College and to urge the Churches to remain diligent in remitting their contributions in advance, as requested by the Board of Governors. ADOPTED
6. Gratefully to acknowledge the annual donations of the Women's Saving Action. ADOPTED
7. To take note of the audited financial statements and the report of the auditors for the fiscal periods January 1980-May 1983, 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 periods indicated. ADOPTED
8. To appoint Robinson, Lott and Brohman, Chartered Accountants, as auditors until the next General Synod. ADOPTED
9. To approve the Budget 1984. ADOPTED
10. To express thankfulness to the Lord that the Theological College was able to function under His blessing with the necessary funds from the Churches. ADOPTED

ARTICLE 32

Letter Prof. L. Selles

Committee III presents:

A. **MATERIAL** — Agenda VIII, A f: letter Prof. L. Selles.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. a. Prof. L. Selles writes that the time of his compulsory retirement arrives in 1986 and that the next General Synod will have to appoint a successor in the New Testament Department at the Theological College.
- b. Prof. Selles is concerned that if the next General Synod convenes, as is customary, in the late fall, it will mean an overextension of his teaching beyond retirement age. He wonders whether the General Synod 1986 could not be convened in the spring of 1986, so that his successor could start his work at the beginning of the academic year 1986-1987.
2. a. The Canadian Reformed Theological College Act 1981 specifies that "the Board may petition the Churches at any time for a special assembly of Synod to deal with matters pertaining to the college" [Act, Art. 6 (2)].
- b. The Board of Governors in their report to Synod 1983 request Synod "to authorize the convening Church for the next General Synod to convene a special assembly of Synod at the request of the Board of Governors for urgent reasons."

C. CONSIDERATION

Already the previous Constitution of the Theological College specified that the Board of Governors may request the convening Church to convene a Synod with a view to the matters of the Theological College. This line is continued in the Theological College Act 1981, where also the provision is made for "temporary instructors," if necessary.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide:

- a. To confirm the adoption of the recommendation of the Board of Governors that Synod authorize the convening Church for the next General Synod to convene a Synod at the request of the Board of Governors for urgent reasons. ADOPTED
- b. Not to decide on an earlier date for the convening of Synod since suitable provisions have already been made. ADOPTED

ARTICLE 33

Proposed Guidelines for Synod

Committee I presents the Report on the Proposed Guidelines for Synod. The report is read and the discussion is begun.

ARTICLE 34

Adjournment

Br. P. Jansen requests to sing Psalm 72:1 and 9, and leads in thanksgiving prayer. Synod is adjourned.

MORNING SESSION — MONDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 1983

ARTICLE 35

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Psalm 126, reads Isaiah 62:6-12, and leads in prayer. Roll call shows that all members are present.

ARTICLE 36

Acts

The Acts, Articles 28-34, are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 37

Congratulations Rev. W.W.J. VanOene

The vice-chairman, the Rev. J. Geertsema, congratulates the Rev. W.W.J. VanOene that he may this day commemorate his 40th anniversary as minister of the Word. He notes gratefully that more than half of this period could be spent in the midst of the Canadian Reformed Churches and that the Rev. VanOene's place has been significant from

the early years on, having been enabled by the Lord to contribute to the upbuilding of the Churches in this country. On behalf of Synod he offers the Rev. VanOene an instrument designed especially for the temporary use of the chairman.

The Rev. VanOene expresses gratitude for the words spoken. He is thankful for the grace of having been allowed to serve the Lord during the past 40 years.

ARTICLE 38

Adjournment

Session is closed, and the Advisory Committees meet.

EVENING SESSION — MONDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 1983

ARTICLE 39

Adjournment

The chairman informs Synod that plenary session will be held Tuesday evening.

The Rev. P. Kingma requests to sing Psalm 106:1, 2, and 24, and leads in thanksgiving.

Synod is adjourned.

MORNING SESSION — TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 1983

ARTICLE 40

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Psalm 103:5 and 6, reads Psalm 103 and leads in prayer.

ARTICLE 41

Acts

The Acts, Articles 35-39, are amended and adopted.

ARTICLE 42

Adjournment

Session is closed. The Advisory Committees meet.

EVENING SESSION — TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 1983

ARTICLE 43

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Psalm 90:1 and 8. After the roll call is held, he welcomes all the guests present. He especially addresses the delegates from the Dutch sister Churches, Dr. K. Deddens and the Rev. J. de Gelder, and the representative from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, the Rev. J.J. Peterson of San Antonio, Texas, with the following words:

"According to the Synodical Guidelines which will be discussed further this evening, it is the task of the chairman to welcome any guests that may merit special mention. As far as this is concerned, we do have some here who deserve this.

There are here, from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church the Rev. Jack J. Peterson, and from the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland the Rev. Dr. K. Deddens and the Rev. J. de Gelder. These brethren are here, having been invited to represent the communities that sent them. We are thankful for the fact that we are deemed worthy to be honoured with their presence. They are accustomed to far larger broadest assemblies than the one they are visiting right now. Although they are not *members* of this assembly, they are here, they are most welcome, and will attend our sessions for the time they are here in such a manner that we may benefit from their wisdom and insight.

Their arrival has boosted our number by almost twenty per cent.

What is a group of sixteen or nineteen men in the eyes of the world?

What impact on the life, on the well and woe of country and nation can this group have, representing a mere 10,000 people, half of whom are in the age bracket of children, of babes and sucklings, and therefore do not rate?

When we realize that we are only a very small segment of the population, we appreciate it the more when there are others who do not think it to be below their standing to send some to bring greetings from afar. The only reason why they are doing this must be that they see something in us that others don't see. It is the grace bestowed upon us by our faithful God and Father, the grace by which we are allowed to be His people, the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ. If this had not been the case, why would their communities have sent them, and why would the brethren have made the sacrifice of coming here?

We thank our God for His grace upon us in your presence, brethren, and thank you for coming.

The relationship with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church is not the same as that with the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands. Our bonds with the latter are those of full sister Churches, whereas the relation with the former is of a temporary nature. When the Synod of Coaldale 1977 dealt with the matter of contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, it decided to "offer the Orthodox Presbyterian Church a temporary relationship called 'ecclesiastical contact.'" It is the intention of a "temporary relationship" that it becomes permanent or, if there are urgent reasons for doing so, is broken off.

We cannot deny that there are grave concerns on our part as far as this becoming permanent is concerned, and the Rev. Peterson will be even more aware of those points than we are. It will be of great interest to him to attend the discussion of the report of Committee II regarding the continuation of our contact. It is our sincere wish that it may become very evident from all we say and decide that the purity of doctrine and the sanctity of life are our main concern. If the marks of the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ can no longer be found with our communities, we have lost our reason for existing.

As for the brethren from The Netherlands, we have a special reason to welcome them. This reason is not in the first place a financial matter, although there is a financial aspect to it. We would have invited Dr. Deddens anyway to come over and meet us; now our Dutch sister Churches were so kind as to foot the bill. It goes without saying that originally this was not their intention.

I do not know whether Dr. Deddens has already been appointed as our fourth full-time professor. I do know that we have instructed the Board of Governors to make this appointment. I do not know for sure whether Dr. Deddens, having received the appointment, has already accepted it. We would like to have your decision by November 25.

What I do know is that personally I am looking forward to working with Dr. Deddens at our College. I did not know him personally before he came out here, but I may say that the contact we have had so far was most pleasant.

Dr. Deddens, it will not be taken ill of me when I say that we are happy for your willingness to consider the appointment. There was — as everyone knows — some contact between you and the Faculty as well as between you and the Board of Governors prior to the proposal made to General Synod to appoint you at our College.

This institution has the love of our heart, it is borne by the dedication and prayers of God's people, and it is as much an honour for you to be considered for a professorate as it is for the College to have you teach at it.

What we were looking for was someone who is academically qualified and who is absolutely faithful to the King of the Church, adhering to the truth of God's Word, leaning neither to the left nor to the right, but going the straight path which our God has pointed out. We are convinced to have found such a man in you, and it is our sincere wish and heartfelt prayer that the Lord our God may strengthen and encourage you to take up the task at our College once you have made your decision known to us.

I consider it a great honour that I may welcome you as our fourth professor-designate. In 1968, at the Synod of Orangeville, it was my equally great privilege to welcome and greet the first appointees at the College-to-be-established. We can only marvel at the goodness and mercy of our God who caused this College to become and remain a blessing to Christ's Churches. Him we praise.

May your work be a factor in the continuation of this institution and the Lord's blessing upon it."

ARTICLE 44

Dr. K. Deddens accepts Appointment

After Dr. K. Deddens has conveyed the best wishes of br. and sr. J. Bol (currently of Groningen, The Netherlands), he addresses Synod as follows:

"Mr. Chairman, dear brethren!

I want to express my thankfulness for the confidence that Synod has placed in me.

As for me, it is not only a great honour, but also a great challenge to undertake to do the task of teaching in Diaconiology at the Theological College in Hamilton.

I cannot but admire and have respect for the courage and the faith of the Canadian Reformed Churches to establish four full-time chairs in this College, and to have a lecturer as well.

We cannot hide the fact that the consequences for me and my family are not so slight. We have to leave so many relations in The Netherlands! We are connected with very many ties over there.

One can ask: 'Who, then, is capable for such a task as in the present case?' But my help is in the Name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth!

With this help I will follow this call, and I am very glad to inform you that I will accept this appointment. That is my answer to the official appointment of the Board of Governors.

I promise to do my work depending upon the grace of God and in faithfulness to His Word.

May our Lord give us all we need, and may He bless His Churches here and in The Netherlands!

For the blessing of the Lord makes rich!"

ARTICLE 45

Proposed Guidelines for Synod

The discussion on the Proposed Guidelines for Synod is continued. The guidelines are adopted as amended.

PROPOSED GUIDELINES FOR SYNOD

I MATERIAL — Agenda VII, A, B, C, D, E, F

- A. Proposed Guidelines for Synod
- B. Letter from the Church at Brampton
- C. Letter from the Church at Chatham
- D. Letter from the Church at Chilliwack
- E. Letter from the Church at Cloverdale
- F. Letter from the Church at Smithville

II OBSERVATIONS

1. The convening Church at Cloverdale proposes to Synod to adopt Guidelines for General Synod Meetings.
2. The Church at Chatham proposes "that each Synod adopt Guidelines for its own use," on the ground that otherwise "one Synod would be lording it over future Synods."
3. The Church at Smithville proposes that
 - a. Synod make some guidelines for
 1. Deputies, and
 2. Local pastor(s) of the convening Church, who might be requested to advise Synod, namely, that they advise Synod "only when requested." or speak only once in plenary session on a certain issue, in order to prevent that they "begin to function as 'delegates.' "
 3. Letter from the Church at Chilliwack with a similar proposal.
 - b. Synod delete the guideline about "closed-restricted session" (IV, A, 2) on the ground that all office-bearers "are bound to preserve confidentiality" and that the term "extremely delicate situations" is open to subjective interpretation.
 - c. Synod also delete the rule that "voting about delicate matters," etc. shall be by ballot on the ground that also this is open to "subjective interpretation."
4. The Church at Brampton requests Synod to keep open the possibility of having more than one motion under discussion at the same time for a possible better way of dealing with a certain matter.
It proposes to read sub IV, B, 2: "A main motion is not acceptable if it conflicts with any decision already made by Synod."
5. In reply to the letter of the Church at Chatham, the Consistory of the Church at Cloverdale stated that Chatham's objection "was covered in the last article."

III CONSIDERATIONS

1. The Church at Cloverdale is correct when it states as ground for the adoption of "a few general rules" that they "may serve a fruitful purpose."
2. The reply of the Church at Cloverdale to the objection of the Church at Chatham is correct.
3. a. Deputies and local ministers are not delegated and should not "begin to function as such."
b. Especially in cases of delicate personal matters it is better to have as few people know about it as possible. Smithville bases its objection on the incorrect assumption that every office-bearer by virtue of his office has the inherent right to attend sessions of any broader assembly, whether it is closed, closed-restricted, or not.
4. Although the Church at Brampton is correct in its desire that the way be kept open for "an extensive discussion," it will be better for the correct order that there is only one main motion on the table to be voted on. Brampton's objection can be met by a guideline about notice of motion.

IV RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod adopt the PROPOSED GUIDELINES FOR SYNOD with the following changes.

- I, A. Change "arrange" to "set."
- B. Change "four" to "six."
- C. Delete the word "primi," as well as the words "first two."
- D. Add to the first sentence the words " in thirty copies."
Delete second sentence.

- E. Replace "pro tempore" by "until Synod has been constituted."
- E, 2 Delete "call to."
- II, C, 1. Add the words "Every morning" at the beginning of sentence.
- 2, b. Delete the word "main."
- 3. Delete "the following," as well as point a.
- III, A, 6. Add "on" after "elaborate."
- 9. Add sentence as follows: "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."
- IV, A, 2. Add after "mean" the words "a session where" and at the end of this sentence the words "may be present."
- B. Add point 3: "A notice of motion may be given during the discussion."
- I. 1. Delete the word "main."

The PROPOSED GUIDELINES FOR SYNOD be adopted in the following redaction.

I Convening and Constitution of Synod

- A. The convening Church shall set the date on which Synod shall meet, (cf. Art. 50 C.O.).
- B. The convening Church shall send the first Provisional Agenda to all the Churches at least six months prior to convocation.
- C. All material submitted to the convening Church shall be sent to all delegates as well as to the alternate delegates.
- D. All appeals should ordinarily be at the convening Church at least one month before Synod convenes, in thirty copies.
- E. The minister of the convening Church or its counsellor shall act as chairman until Synod has been constituted.
 - 1. He shall call the meeting to order in an ecclesiastical manner, (cf. Art. 32 C.O.).
 - 2. He shall have the credentials examined as to whether General Synod can be constituted.
- F. Officers of Synod shall be chosen by ballot in this order: chairman, vice-chairman, first clerk, and second clerk. Election to office is to be by majority of valid votes cast.

II Duties of the Officers

A. The Chairman

- 1. The chairman shall see to it that business is transacted in the proper order and is expedited as much as possible, and that members observe the rules of order and decorum. (cf. Art. 35, Art. 43, C.O.).
- 2. He shall call the meeting to order at the appointed time, call the roll and shall see to it that each session is properly opened and closed.
- 3. He shall welcome fraternal delegates or other guests and respond to greetings received or appoint other members for this purpose.
- 4. He shall place before Synod every motion that is made and seconded, in accord with the accepted order; and he shall clearly state every question before a vote is taken, so that every member may know on what he is voting.
- 5. If the chairman feels the need to speak on a pending question, he shall relinquish the chair to the vice-chairman for that period of time. While holding the chair, he may speak to state matters of fact or to inform Synod regarding points of order.
- 6. He shall have, and duly exercise, the prerogative of declaring a motion or person out of order. If his ruling is challenged, it shall be submitted to Synod for decision by majority vote.
- 7. The chairman shall retain his right to vote on any question.
- 8. In case of a point of order, the chairman must make a ruling at once. This

ruling may be reversed by a majority of Synod, if any member is dissatisfied with the ruling of the chair and appeals to the floor.

9. The chairman shall close the Synod with appropriate remarks and with prayer. (Art. 32 C.O.).

B. The Vice-Chairman

1. The vice-chairman shall, in the absence of the chairman, assume all his duties and privileges.
2. The vice-chairman shall render all possible assistance to the chairman as circumstances require.
3. He shall prepare the Press Release.

C. The First Clerk

1. Every morning, after the roll call, he shall read the Acts of the previous day.
2. He shall keep a proper record of the business of Synod.
This record should ordinarily contain:
 - a. The opening and closing of sessions and roll call.
 - b. All motions whether carried or defeated.
 - c. All final reports of committees and all decisions of Synod.
 - d. Any document or part of debate or address that Synod by a majority vote has decided to insert in the Acts.
3. He shall not include in the Acts any motion that was withdrawn.

D. The Second Clerk

1. The second clerk shall serve in the absence of the first clerk.
2. He shall render assistance to the first clerk as circumstance requires.
3. He shall handle outgoing mail on behalf of Synod.

III Synodical Committees

A. Advisory Committees of Synod

1. The officers of Synod shall propose advisory committees, with a convener, to serve for the duration of Synod.
2. The officers of Synod shall propose an arrangement of matters on the agenda to the appropriate committees.
3. All reports shall be distributed in ample time before they are presented for discussion.
4. The committee reporter shall present the reports.
5. If there is a minority report as well as a majority report, both reports shall be given into discussion, but the majority report shall be voted upon first.
6. During the discussion, the task of defending the report shall rest primarily with the reporter of the committee. Other committee members shall receive the privilege of the floor to elaborate on or clarify any point.
7. In order to facilitate the discussion on a pending issue, the chair shall ordinarily call for the discussion in two parts (rounds) — in the first part opportunity is given to members to express remarks related to the issue in question. In the second or following parts, members may react to the discussion or the issue in question.
8. The discussion may be extended by discretion of the chairman or by a decision of Synod.
9. 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.

IV Rules of Order

A. Closed Sessions of Synod

1. A closed session shall ordinarily mean a session where members of Synod

and office-bearers may be present. This shall be used in delicate or unusual situations.

2. 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 the Churches in extremely delicate situations.

B. Main Motions

A main motion is one which presents a certain subject for consideration or action.

1. A main motion is acceptable under the following conditions:
 - a. The mover has been recognized by the chair.
 - b. The motion has been seconded.
 - c. The motion is also presented in writing.
2. A main motion is not acceptable if another main motion is before Synod or if it conflicts with any decision already made by Synod.
3. A notice of motion may be given during the discussion.

C. A Motion to Amend

This is a proposal to alter a main motion in language or in meaning before final action is taken on the motion.

1. A motion to amend may propose any of the following: to strike out, to insert, or to substitute certain words, phrases, sentences or paragraphs.
2. A motion to amend is not a proper amendment if it nullifies the main motion or is not germane to it.
3. A motion to amend an amendment is permissible and is called a secondary motion.

D. Call for a Division of the Question

At the request of one or more members of Synod, a motion consisting of more than one part must be divided and voted upon separately, unless Synod decides that this is not necessary.

E. Objection to Consideration of a Question

If any member is not satisfied with the ruling of the chair, the matter is referred to Synod for a decision.

F. Right of Protest

It is the right of any member to protest against any decision of Synod. Protest should be registered immediately, or during the session in which the matter concerned was acted upon. Protests must be registered individually and not in groups. Members may, if they feel the need, ask to have their negative vote recorded. Such requests must be made immediately after the vote is taken.

G. Motion to Bring Matters Once Decided Again Before Synod

Any member of Synod, for weighty reasons, may move to have a matter reconsidered, which was previously decided. The purpose of this motion is to propose a new discussion and a new vote.

H. Discussion

1. To obtain the floor, a speaker must be recognized by the chair.
2. If any member has spoken twice on a pending issue, others who have not yet spoken twice shall, as a rule, be given priority by the chair.
3. When the chairman believes that a motion under consideration has been debated sufficiently, he may propose cessation of debate. If a majority of Synod sustains his proposal, discussion shall cease and the vote shall be taken.
4. Any member of Synod, when he deems a matter to have been debated sufficiently, may move to close the discussion. Should a majority be in favour, the vote shall be taken, but only after those who have already requested the floor have been recognized.

I. Voting

1. The chair shall call the roll (in any order) when a vote is taken.
2. Voting about persons shall be by ballot.
3. Voting about delicate matters and other matters of a critical nature shall also be by ballot.

J. Revision

These Synodical Guidelines may be suspended, amended, revised or abrogated by a majority vote of Synod.

ARTICLE 46

Orthodox Presbyterian Church

Committee II presents the Report on the Committee for Contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

The report is read and discussed. Because of expiry of time, the discussion is terminated for the evening.

ARTICLE 47

Adjournment

Br. G. Lodder requests to sing Psalm 47:1, 2, and 3, and leads in thanksgiving. Synod is adjourned.

MORNING SESSION — WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 9, 1983

ARTICLE 48

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Psalm 19:3, 4, and 5, reads Proverbs 14:1-18, and leads in prayer.

Synod decides to meet this morning in closed session.

ARTICLE 49

Acts

The Acts, Articles 40-47, are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 50

Theological College-Academic Standards

Synod enters into closed session to deal with a letter from the Church at Hamilton re Academic Standards, and the appeal of br. W.B. Slomp re Standards at the Theological College.

Committee III presents:

A. MATERIAL — Agenda VIII, A, 2, d, and J, 14.

- a. Letter of the Church at Hamilton re Academic Standards.
- b. Appeal of br. W.B. Slomp re Standards at the Theological College.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. a. The Church at Hamilton appeals the decision of the Board of Governors of the Theological College regarding "the implementation of a new academic standard for our Theological College."
 - b. The Consistory at Hamilton has appealed to the Board of Governors in September, 1982, "not to implement the new standards for students who were already admitted and studying at the Theological College." The Board of Governors did not adopt the recommendation, but only postponed its implementation for one year.
 - c. The Consistory at Hamilton does not oppose the new academic standard of a weighted average, but strongly disapproves of *the way* in which this new standard was applied. Hamilton feels that "truth and justice" demand that students who are admitted on a certain basis, be allowed to finish their studies on that basis. The Consistory considers the implementation of this new standard for existing students to have been done in "an unfair and unethical manner." The Consistory considers the application of the new rule to be a sign of "crisis diplomacy" which is not fair and consistent.
 - d. The Consistory appeals to Synod "to correct the injustice done thus far by charging the Board of Governors and the Senate of our Theological College: "to implement the new academic standard of a weighted 65% average in a consistent and just manner, that is, to apply it only to new students entering the College and not to change the standards in midstream for those who were admitted under previous standards, and to make this correction retroactive to the 1982-1983 academic year, when the new standard went into effect." "Ground: Truth and justice require that one keep his word and if the Theological College admits a student to a program of theological studies on a certain basis, that basis must apply for the complete program of studies."
2. a. On the basis of Articles 21 and 25 of the Constitution of the Theological College, br. W.B. Slomp appeals the decision of the Senate and the Board of Governors to terminate his studies at the College after three years because he "did not attain the newly required 65% average."
 - b. Br. Slomp considers the above mentioned decision to have been made unfairly and on the basis of incomplete and incorrect information.
 - c. Br. Slomp offers the following information/comments on the letter of the Board of Governors (September 12, 1983) in which the decision not to grant him permission to proceed further in his studies is maintained:
 - i He did not respond earlier to the Board's maintaining of the 65% weighted average, not because he approved of that regulation, but because he did not consider it possible to appeal to the Governors until their meeting the following year. He also feared that another appeal would lead to deterioration in his relationship with the Faculty.
 - ii He was not really given "a fighting chance" to upgrade his marks, because (with the unfinished assignments of the previous year and the demands of the new academic year) the workload was too heavy for him.
 - iii The Faculty claims that br. Slomp ignored previous communications with him on various occasions regarding certain deficiencies, but br. Slomp feels that the Faculty "must be mistaken" on this point and that the question of his suitability for the ministry became an issue only after the policy was enacted "that the 65% be strictly maintained." Br. Slomp complains that in this respect there was a terrible "lack of communication" between the Faculty and himself.
 - iv The Faculty did not consider his 82% average at the university to be of significance, because it was obtained while not carrying a full academic workload, to which br. Slomp agrees, but he points also to the difficulty

- factor of the courses involved and to an extra course taken outside of the university, as well as to a present A- average on a 120% course load at the university, to show that his average elsewhere is quite acceptable.
- v The Faculty rejects br. Slomp's reference to the practice in other universities (re established academic standards) by referring to the calling of the Board of Governors to consider only the well-being of the Canadian Reformed Churches, but br. Slomp feels that at a Christian College, where Christian principles prevail, a change of standards in midstream is certainly unethical. He feels that he should have been given another year to raise his average, if the 65% would be maintained, as was done in the case of another student.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1.
 - a. When the Church at Hamilton states that students who are admitted "on a certain basis be allowed to finish their studies on that basis." it should be noted that such an approach would mean that for a period of four years no changes in academic matters and requirement could be made respecting that particular class, no matter how desirable and necessary.
 - b. The Church at Hamilton does not prove that students were admitted to the College on the basis of a predetermined and unchangeable average, hence there is no substance to the ground of the Church at Hamilton.
 - c. The Faculty has made certain accommodations in the past to the students with respect to the academic standards (e.g. waived the rule that students can not write exams in a new academic year without having completed the work of the previous academic year) and these are not appealed; however, it is surprising that an appeal is sent when academic standards are upgraded out of necessity and for the benefit of the Churches.
 - d. It is apparent that the Board of Governors and Faculty realizing that the academic standard was raised in the middle of an academic year, decided to postpone the implementation of their decision to the following academic year, and thereby gave the students ample opportunity to raise their marks and to adjust themselves to the upgraded standard. Therefore, the new standard was introduced in a fair and considerate manner.
2.
 - a. Br. W.B. Slomp bases his appeal to Synod on Article XXI, XXV of the Constitution of the Theological College. It should be stated, however, that with the passing of the Canadian Reformed Theological College Act, 1981, the Constitution has been superseded and no longer has any ecclesiastical or legal standing. Even if the Constitution was still in force, it does not grant br. Slomp a right of appeal on academic matters to the General Synod based on Article XXI which refers to "disciplinary action" and not to academic appeal. Article XXV of the Constitution is, in this respect, open to a broader interpretation, and can be considered to leave the way clear to an appeal in academic issues.
 - b. Considering the fact that the College is in a transition period with respect to the Act, By-Laws and Regulations vis-a-vis the Constitution, it would be improper to dismiss this appeal on technical grounds.
 - c. With respect to the information offered by br. Slomp, the following should be considered:
 - i A student need not wait one year to appeal to the Board of Governors, since he should be aware that the Board of Governors is a continuing, decision-making body. With respect to br. Slomp's fear that another appeal would lead to a deterioration of his relationship with the Faculty, it should be noted that the Faculty had previously assured him, as he stated in his letter of September 7, 1982, that "an appeal would not be held

against him personally" and further, that in principal matters one should not be guided by fear but by conviction.

- ii When br. Slomp was given the opportunity by the Board of Governors to continue his studies, despite the existing regulation that all course work of a previous year had to be finished before one can write exams in the next year. This does not mean that the Faculty acted unjustly by asking him in the new year to complete all the assignments of the previous and the current year. That thereby the workload became too heavy for br. Slomp can not be blamed on the Faculty.
- iii Br. Slomp states that the Faculty has not spoken to him on various occasions regarding his deficiencies; however, the Board of Governors is convinced that the Faculty has sufficiently refuted this charge and made many attempts to communicate with him regarding his academic deficiencies before and after the implementation of the new standard. Br. Slomp himself records one such attempt in his letter of September 1982.
- iv Whatever grades a student may receive at a university or other institution has absolutely no bearing on the grades received at another institution.
- v While a change of standards in midstream is certainly not desirable, this does not make it illegal or unethical (cf. Considerations 1). It should be noted that when br. Slomp cites the case of another student receiving an extra year in order to raise his average, he neglects to mention that he himself has already received such a privilege in the year 1982-1983, but failed to improve his academic performance sufficiently.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decides:

1. not to accede to the appeal of the Church at Hamilton;
2. not to accede to the appeal of br. W.B. Slomp.

The Recommendations D, 1 and 2 are ADOPTED.

ARTICLE 51

Adjournment

Synod is adjourned until the evening. The Advisory Committees meet.

EVENING SESSION — WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 1983

ARTICLE 52

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Psalm 119:22 and 24. Roll call is held.

ARTICLE 53

Address Dr. K. Deddens

On behalf of the Dutch sister Churches, de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, Dr. K. Deddens addresses Synod with the following words:

Beloved Brothers in the Lord. Delegates to this Synod!

It is a great pleasure to me, Mr. Chairman, that you gave me the floor to address the Synod on behalf of your sister Churches, "De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland."

It is in the name of my fellow delegate, the Rev. J. de Gelder, as well that I convey to you the regards of the Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad.

In this connection I have to add that we feel sorry for not having delegates in 1977 and 1980, your Synod years, neither for Synod Coaldale, nor for Synod Smithville. So there is, unfortunately, an interval of nine years, because our first representation was that of the Rev. S.S. Clossen at Synod Toronto 1974. There were several reasons for not sending delegates in the meantime, so all in all it was impossible to send anyone. We hope you will not follow this bad example! We highly appreciated your sending Prof. Dr. J. Faber as a delegate of your Churches to Synod Kampen 1975 and to have met the Rev. M. VanBeveren as well at Synod Groningen-Zuid 1978. Please, do not return evil for evil and feel free to send one or more delegates to Synod Heemse 1984! Maybe it is "cold comfort," but we hope we have made it up again a little bit this time by sending two delegates, namely, the chairman and the secretary of the Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad.

What do we bring along with us, besides greetings and excuses? We come from The Netherlands with credentials. Our basis is just the same as yours: the infallible, trustworthy Word of God, the confessions of the Church and the Reformed Church Order. We say this with great thankfulness and with deliberate intention. In this position and conviction we hope to participate in this Synod for some weeks. May the Churches which sent us maintain this basis. That is not something natural, nor a matter of course, but it is only possible through the grace of the Lord Himself.

Looking around today it is apostasy that meets the eye everywhere. Satan is sly in his temptations. You can hear the cry, the slogan, in so-called Reformed Churches: The truth should be looked upon as "relational." The development in the RES, the "Reformed Ecumenical Synod," is very disquieting and alarming, let alone the situation in the WCC, the "World Council of Churches."! In spite of all the commending words and all the praises sung of the assembly just held in this area (Vancouver, 1983), we see the continuation of the theology of liberation and revolution, in fact nothing less than horizontalism! We wonder what is left of the adage *sola Scriptura*, the confession of the Reformation in the 16th century.

But praise the Lord! There are still Churches whose strength is in the Lord, who persevere in listening to the Word of God and who defend it against the attacks of the father of all lies. We know that the Church "sometimes for a while appears very small and in the eyes of men to be reduced to nothing." Nevertheless, we are thankful that the Lord has left us in The Netherlands 104,000 Church members, 264 congregations and 216 ministers.

We are thankful for the Theological Seminary in Kampen with more than 100 students who are preparing for service in the Church. We are thankful that you gave us one of the professors in Kampen, namely, Prof. H.M. Ohmann, which vacancy in Hamilton was filled again rather soon. The appointment of your own Synod Cloverdale looks like service in return, but I do not want to dwell upon that now!

We are thankful that we live in a free country, where we established our own schools, our own social league, our own political party, where we can give testimony in municipal councils, provincial states, even in the States General, and where we still have our Reformed daily newspaper. In spite of all that, we are a small minority and the spirit of the times threatens us as well. Therefore, we are very grateful that all over the world there are Churches that have the same struggle and the same purpose: to contend for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.

After the internal struggle of the sixties for the strict adherence to the Confession of the Church and the Church Order, we could spread our wings in the seventies: several contacts and relations came within our range of vision on all continents.

And now, in the eighties, casting a glance at the Churches we represent, we may mention the revision of our Church Book. General Synod Heemse 1984 hopefully can offer to the congregations a complete new Church Book, many parts of which have already been established in the last few years. I think we can draw a parallel between your Churches and ours. Maybe we can learn from you in the matter of your *Book of Praise*, and we can tell something about our experience as the opportunity arises when the matter comes up for discussion during this Synod.

It is a remarkable thing that several of the items you have to deal with were also on the agenda of our Synods! Very important is the matter of the International Conference of Reformed Churches, the ICRC. We enjoyed meeting your delegates and many other Reformed and Presbyterian delegates at the constituent assembly of the ICRC in Groningen-Zuid last year. The Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad proposes a motion to General Synod Heemse 1984 to join the ICRC and to send delegates to the first meeting of the ICRC in Edinburgh 1985. We are very pleased to hear that your Committee of Correspondence with Churches Abroad proposed a similar motion to your Synod. If you agree to this proposal, you can be proud that you will precede us and we will come after you! We are very thankful that our heavenly Father still gives us such opportunities to come together from all continents.

Our future is in His hands. When we look ahead to the future, we know: time is short. But we know too: our Lord Jesus Christ walks among the seven golden candlesticks. He gathers His Church all over the world. In our apocalyptic times, many people join peace movements. The whole world seems to be dreaming of a paradise on earth. There is a peace-song today which tells us:

*Tell it all over the world,
there is no doubt at all;
our sweet living earth
will never, never die!*

We know better. It has been predicted by our Lord Jesus Christ Himself: "You shall hear of wars and rumours of wars, for nation shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom. The love of many shall grow cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."

In these very days, we are commemorating the five hundredth birthday of Martin Luther and the beginning of the Reformation as well. I remind your Synod of the four final theses of Luther:

- "Out of the way with all the prophets who say to the people of Christ: Peace, peace, and there is no peace!
- Blessed all the prophets, who say to the people of Christ: The cross, the cross, and there is no cross.
- The Christians are to be exhorted to follow Christ, their Head, dedicated in penitence, in mortifications and in tortures;
- and better trust to enter the Kingdom of heaven by many oppressions, than by security of peace."

Let us subscribe these words, all of us together and agree with one of the oldest confession songs, in its oldest form dating even from the end of the second century, called *Te Deum*:

*Martyrs and prophets shall in all eternity
Together with Thy church of every tongue and nation
Bring Thine immortal Name their boundless admiration.
Safeguard Thine heritage, while still the battle rages,
Till Thou shalt call Thy flock, the faithful of all ages.*

ARTICLE 54

Address Rev. Jack J. Peterson

On behalf of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, the Rev. Jack J. Peterson of San Antonio, Texas, addresses Synod with the following words:

Mr. Chairman, and brothers in the Lord Jesus Christ,

My words will be supplementary to the letter that was read last night from the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations.

It is a joy for me to be with you at this Synod of Cloverdale 1983. I have met many of you on the pages of *Clarion*. I have met other of your men in the meetings of the Con-

tact Committees in the past. I was privileged to attend the convocation of the Theological School at which Professor Faber was installed in his present position. And I enjoyed the fellowship with brothers Faber and Huizinga at recent meetings of our general assembly.

I have come to you as a fraternal delegate of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. The Orthodox Presbyterian Church is made up of about 170 congregations which total about 16,000 members. Our history as a separate Church goes back almost 50 years — a short history compared to yours. And the first 35 years of this century in the old Church were spent in the battle against growing liberalism. In that battle many united against the spirit of antichrist. When separation came in 1936 the number was far smaller. And when the separated Church settled down to do the full work of the Church, they found that unity in opposition to liberalism does not necessarily mean unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God. So a year later a group left the Church over the issues of Christian liberty, independentism, and premillennialism to form the Bible Presbyterian Synod. In the 1940s a controversy arose regarding the incomprehensibility of God, which basically was a clash in the area of apologetics between the presuppositionalism of Professor Cornelius Van Til and the rationalism of Dr. Gordon Clark. That controversy culminated in 1947 with many of the Clark supporters leaving the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Several of them, by the way, are now in the Presbyterian Church of America. In the 1950s there was a controversy over the doctrine of guidance — how does the Lord lead His people in their living their Christian lives. That controversy has been resolved with the conviction that the Lord leads His people by His Spirit by means of His Word alone instead of mystical experiences.

I say this to show that we have struggled with doctrinal issues in our midst. But in our dealing with doctrinal issues, the agenda has been set by the controversies at hand. Although we had been instructed at "old" Westminster Seminary by Van Til and Murray and Stonehouse in the historical-redemptive approach to Scripture, the issues involved in that approach had not had the quiet reflection needed for us to fully appreciate and adopt that approach as our own. Many of us, and I include myself among them, had unconsciously adopted a more scholastic approach to Scripture which was satisfied, more or less, with citing proof texts to answer the errors in the midst of controversy.

Beginning in the 1960s a period of a less controversial nature was upon us. We were given time to reflect a little more on broader issues such as our approach to Scripture. Some in our midst began to appreciate the historical-redemptive approach to Scripture, the centrality of the covenant as expressing the relationship between God and His people with His promised presence among His people, and the reality of the promises and demands of Scripture. Contributing to this appreciation were the writings of Professor Schilder, Sidney Greijdanus on the controversy in The Netherlands over preaching, the two volumes of Ridderbos, the newly translated volumes of S.G. DeGraaf — plus the instruction of Professors Norman Shepherd and Richard Gaffin.

Some in our midst did not and do not appreciate this emphasis. You would call them scholastics.

But that is where we are. That is the background of the Shepherd case; a case complicated by the fact that Westminster Seminary is independent of Church control. Some of us are in full agreement with Professor Shepherd. Others strongly disagree with his position. Professor Shepherd, for reasons good or bad, has left the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and is now a pastor in the Christian Reformed Church. And some of you have said he has jumped from the frying pan into the fire. For reasons that I have not yet been able to figure out, the antagonism against him and his teaching has not yet fallen on those of us who agree with him — rather, in some cases, a listening ear. I pray that this will grow into a deeper understanding of and appreciation for the historical-redemptive reading of the Scripture, a more thorough Christocentric, covenantal understanding of the Word of Our Lord.

Let me address one area which to me is significant, and which, to date, has not entered significantly into our discussions. That area is the distinction between the true and false church of Belgic Confession 29, and the distinction of our Confession of Faith

which speaks of more and less pure Churches, some of which have so degenerated as to become synagogues of Satan, that is, the false Church. The approach of the Belgic Confession is much simpler, but does it adequately deal with the context in which we find ourselves? The approach of our Confession sees the Church-world around us in its sinfully fractured condition. Yes, there are the true and there are the false. But within the scope of the true, there is also variety. The marks of the true Church are seen in varying degrees — some pure, some less pure, some even on the border of the false, ready to capitulate totally to the evil one. And we have a duty to all these, to bear witness to them of the full truth of the Word of God so that the Spirit of God may bring true reformation. We recognize them as Churches of Christ, less pure, not in the pluriformistic way, but as existing in a sort of de facto relationship of discipline; recognizing God's covenant grace among them, but urging them on to greater faithfulness to the Lord and His Word so that we may come into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God. And in that way we are willing to risk recognizing their membership in the covenant by recognizing the validity of their baptism, and even on occasion inviting them to the Lord's table if they happen to be in our midst.

Brothers, it is good to be in your midst. I bring greetings from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Thank you for your strong stand for the Reformed faith. Many of us regularly read *Clarion* and know what you are.

I have tried to show you a little bit more of who this Orthodox Presbyterian Church is, and how history has brought us to what we are and where we are. My prayer is that we may continue to walk together in those paths of righteousness for the sake of His name, that the name of the Lord who is our God according to His promise, whose people we are, and who dwells in our midst — "surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age."

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

ARTICLE 55

Orthodox Presbyterian Church

The discussion on the Report of Advisory Committee II re Contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church is continued.

The recommendations of the Committee are adopted as amended.

A. MATERIAL — Agenda VIII, G. 1-8 and J. 13.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. DIVERGENCIES

- a. Synod 1980, Acts Art. 97, II. C, 3 decided to give the Committee for contact with the OPC the mandate to publish, for the benefit of our Churches, a detailed evaluation of the confessional and church-political divergencies.
- b. The Committee however has some objections to this part of the mandate, namely. (III Re "b, 1. 2):
 - i this detailed evaluation should not be issued by a synodical committee but, if necessary, by the General Synod which took the decision to recognize the OPC as a true Church, or by the following General Synod which upheld the decision;
 - ii the Churches have received an evaluation of the so-called divergencies in the Committee report of 1971 (Acts, 1971, Supplement V, pp. 64 ff.), in the letter of the CEIR of the OPC in April 14, 1976 and in our Committee's letter of October 13, 1978. That these explanations did not satisfy everyone is evident, but we should not endlessly pursue the matter, since it has been decided already in 1977 that these divergencies, having been

discussed in the letter of April 14, 1976 (from CEIR), do not form an impediment to recognize the OPC as Churches of our Lord Jesus Christ (Acts, 1977, Art. 91, II, Consideration H).

- c. The Committee would therefore like to see this part of its mandate eliminated.
- d. In a supplementary report the Committee mentions that an official reply from the CEIR of the OPC concerning the apparent divergencies in Confession and church-polity is forthcoming. Unfortunately, the Committee will not be able to complete its study of this reply before General Synod 1983 meets. They hope that Synod will renew this part of the mandate. (In the meantime the Synod received a copy of this official reply.)
- e. The Churches of Burlington-South and Lincoln have requested to further evaluate and discuss the divergencies and to prove that they do not form an impediment for unity.

2. NEW DEVELOPMENTS

- a. The Consistory of Lincoln brings to the attention of Synod the so-called "Shepherd case" and requests Synod to charge the Committee with the mandate:
 - i to ask definite information why Professor Shepherd was deposed as a professor of the seminary at Philadelphia;
 - ii to ask what stand the OPC takes concerning this dismissal of Professor Shepherd, who at the same time was a minister in good standing of the OPC;
 - iii to ask which standpoint the OPC takes in view of the teachings of Professor Shepherd, since Professor Shepherd has made it quite clear what his views were.
- b. The Rev. B.R. Hofford sent a letter to Synod on behalf of the Tri-County Reformed Church of Maryland (Washington, D.C.) in which he expressed the desire to seek ecclesiastical contact and possible affiliation with our Churches, because the question of our recognition of the OPC bears directly on their relationship with us. This Tri-County Reformed Church has recently seceded from the OPC because of a dispute over "fencing" of the Lord's Supper.
- c. The Church at Chatham considers this a matter to be looked into by the General Synod, since:
 - i the matter of "fencing" the Lord's Supper has been dealt with at the Fiftieth General Assembly of the OPC. The secession took place because of decisions taken at that Assembly, that is in the broadest assembly. Therefore our Churches should also look at this matter in the broadest assembly;
 - ii the matter of admission to the Lord's Supper is one of the "divergencies" to be studied by deputies of Synod;
 - iii the admission to the Lord's Supper concerns Church discipline as well as the doctrine of the Church (e.g. invisible and/or visible Church).
- d. The Church at Chatham requests Synod, to instruct the deputies which are to be appointed by this Synod for contact with the OPC, to inquire diligently into the actions of the Fiftieth Assembly in this matter.

3. PROSPECTS

- a. The Committee sees the relationship between the OPC and the Christian Reformed Church "as 'cool and cooling' and as understandable in the light of history," whereas the Churches at Smithville and Lincoln are pointing to the fact that the OPC and the CRC maintain still a close relationship, including exchange of pulpit and accepting each other's members at the Lord's Supper.
- b. We learned from the Committee report that "there are no proposals from either the OPC or the PCA to come to an eventual union. The dismissal of Professor N. Shepherd from Westminster Theological Seminary, and his de-

parture from the OPC was seen as a removal of an obstacle for the PCA to invite the OPC to join them. However, no invitations to join or requests for union have thus far been entertained by either side. This should make the OPC more inclined to intensify its contacts and relationship with the American/Canadian Reformed Churches.”

The Church at Smithville lists the following concerns: “despite contrary indication in the present Committee Report, the OPC is again entertaining merger proposals with the PCA, and the consequences of this have not been adequately investigated by our Committee.”

- c. The Report of the Committee recommends that, if the Canadian Reformed Churches decide to participate in the 1985 ICRC, they propose that the OPC be invited to the meeting of the ICRC also, whereas the Church of Smithville requests Synod 1983 “not to decide that the Canadian Reformed Churches invite the OPC to the 1985 ICRC, since the OPC itself should request such participation and the ICRC must decide on that matter on its own.”

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. DIVERGENCIES

- a. In respect to the fulfilment of its mandate to give a detailed evaluation of the confessional and church-political divergencies (see B Observations, 1, a) the Committee shows a certain inconsistency. According to its report (II Re “b. 1) the Committee was first of the opinion that it was not in its province to evaluate the divergencies concerned (see B Observations 1, b, i); it also questioned the necessity thereof (see B Observations 1, b, ii) and liked to see this part of the mandate eliminated (see B Observations 1, c). However, in its latest communication to Synod (October 26, 1983), in which it informs Synod of the receipt of an official reply concerning the apparent divergencies, it requests Synod to renew this part of the mandate.
- b. Although we are of the opinion that an evaluation of the divergencies should have been given before Synod 1977 decided to recognize the OPC as a true Church of Jesus Christ according to Art. 29 Belgic Confession, the Committee should nevertheless have carried out its mandate, given by Synod 1980, to publish, for the benefit of our Churches, a detailed evaluation of the confessional and church-political divergencies.
- c. The Churches at Burlington-South and Lincoln rightly request (see B Observations 1, e) to further evaluate and discuss the divergencies and to prove that they do not form an impediment for unity.

2. NEW DEVELOPMENTS

- a. With a view to the new developments (see B Observations 2, a and b) there is even more reason to evaluate the divergencies.
- b. The Committee should also consider the implications of the so-called “Shepherd case,” as mentioned in B Observations 2, a, i, ii, iii).
- c. Because the “Hofford case” has already been dealt with in the Classis Ontario-South, the Committee should also include this development in its evaluation.
- d. The Church at Chatham rightly states that the matter of “fencing” the Lord’s Supper and the admission to the Lord’s Supper concerns the Church discipline as well as the doctrine of the Church and should be looked into by the General Synod (see B Observations 2, c, i, ii, iii).
- e. The Committee should therefore be instructed to inquire diligently into the actions of the Fiftieth Assembly in this matter (B Observations 2, d).

3. PROSPECTS

- a. We do not agree with the Committee that the relation between the OPC and the CRC is "cool and cooling," because they still maintain a close relationship, including exchange of pulpit and accepting each other's members at the Lord's Supper.
- b. We do not agree with the assessment of the Committee that the recent development (see B Observations 3, b) should make the OPC more inclined to intensify its contacts and relationship with the American/Canadian Reformed Churches.
The Church at Smithville rightly mentions that, despite contrary indications in the present Committee Report, the OPC again entertains merger proposals with the PCA, which statement is confirmed by the recent letter of the OPC (dated October 25, 1983, first paragraph).
- c. We are of the opinion that, pending the above evaluation, it would not be wise to propose that the OPC be invited to the meeting of the ICRC.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Synod decide:

1. Not to grant the request of the Churches of Lincoln and Smithville, to terminate or suspend temporarily the relationship with the OPC. ADOPTED
2. On the basis of the decisions of the General Synod 1980 (*Acts Art. 97, II, C, 1, 2, 3*) and the mandate of the Committee (*Acts Art. 152, II, D*) to continue the Committee for Contact with the OPC with the mandate:
 - a. to continue contact with the OPC, while taking into account the rules for "Ecclesiastical Contact";
 - b. to publish, for the benefit of our Churches, a detailed evaluation of the confessional and church-political divergencies, showing proof that these divergencies do not form an impediment in recognizing the OPC as a true Church of the Lord Jesus Christ;
 - c. to evaluate the reaction of the CEIR of the OPC regarding the divergencies, and to come to the next Synod with recommendations cf. C Considerations 1, a);
 - d. to complete the discussion and evaluation of the relationships which the OPC has with other parties, especially the RES, the CRC and the PCA (see C Considerations 3, b);
 - e. to pay special attention to the new developments in the OPC, with respect to the so-called Shepherd case (see B Observations 2, a, i, ii, iii), the Hoford case (see B Observations 2, b) and the "fencing" of the Lord's Supper (see B Observations 2, c, i, ii, iii, and d), and to come to the next Synod with recommendations in this respect;
 - f. to inform the Churches about the progress made by means of Press Releases;
 - g. to report on its activities and findings to the next General Synod.ADOPTED
3. If the Canadian Reformed Churches decide to participate in the 1985 ICRC, not to propose that the OPC be invited to the meeting of the ICRC, pending the above mentioned evaluations. ADOPTED

ARTICLE 56

Adjournment

Br. E. Ludwig requests to sing Psalm 85:1, 3, and 4, and leads in thanksgiving. Synod is adjourned.

MORNING SESSION — THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1983

ARTICLE 57

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Hymn 41, reads Psalm 46, and leads in prayer. He mentions that this day is the 500th anniversary of the birthday of Martin Luther. He speaks the following words:

"Today is the five-hundredth anniversary of the birth of Martin Luther. We, too, wish to remember gratefully the gift which God gave to His Church in this man.

It is a strange thing that almost the whole world celebrates this anniversary. Various countries have issued stamps, honouring the Reformer. In East Germany even the communist authorities are involved and busy themselves with this event. They turn and twist to fit him into their pattern of social and economic theories and actions. Of course, they will never succeed, for they cannot understand the life and the striving of this great man of God.

Luther was brought to what he said and did not by a spirit of revolution and of turning things upside down, but by the Spirit of God. This Spirit guided him.

He was overcome by the Word of God, and thus he became a victor. He was conquered by the truth and thus he became more than a conqueror in the Lord Jesus Christ.

He went obediently there where the Lord pointed the way. In this respect the pattern which the LORD set in the father of all believers, in Abraham, was continued in this child of the covenant. It is the pattern of unconditional obedience, an obedience which does not ask what the consequences will be and what the outcome will be of the road that is followed. It is the pattern of proceeding in faith, for the righteous one shall live by his faith.

The Lord provided Luther with powerful protectors, for He had a task for His servant. And the blessing which resulted from Luther's work is immeasurable.

Certainly, this brother had his faults, and his understanding of the Holy Scriptures was not without shortcomings or mistakes. Many of his followers capitalized on his mistakes and worked out the points which gradually led to a weakening of this line of the Reformation. With many of those who still call themselves after Luther not much of Luther himself is left in our days.

To us, however, he still speaks after he has died.

The Holy Scriptures exhort us to listen to those who preceded us and to follow their faith.

Thus we, too, obey the command of the Lord and follow His ways, not knowing where we shall end up, not having been told what the outcome will be.

Following in Luther's line, we, pupils of Calvin, thank God for His mercies in the Reformation of His Church and count on the promise — the truth of which we have experienced in our own lifetime — that whoever forsakes all for the sake of Christ and for the sake of the gospel, shall receive a hundredfold in this life, and in the life to come everlasting happiness, undisturbed joy, blessedness which knows no end."

ARTICLE 58

Acts

The *Acts*, Articles 48-56, are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 59

Adjournment

Synod decides to meet in plenary session in the evening. Session is closed for the day, and the Advisory Committees meet.

EVENING SESSION — THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1983

ARTICLE 60

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Hymn 40:1, 2, and 3. Roll call is held.

ARTICLE 61

Response Rev. J. Visscher to Dutch delegates

On behalf of Synod the Rev. J. Visscher responds to the words spoken by Dr. K. Deddens (who addressed Synod the day before on behalf of the Dutch sister Churches) as follows:

"Mr. Chairman, you have asked me to say a few words in response to the address given yesterday evening by the Rev. Dr. K. Deddens, one of the representatives of De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, the other being the Rev. J. de Gelder. Now, to this request I will gladly comply.

I say "gladly" for a number of reasons. The first is that the relationship between the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland and the Canadian Reformed Churches is in many ways a unique one. By and large our Churches and their members trace their origin back to the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland. Some would say that we are really a daughter Church of the GKN. I, however, being somewhat of an ecclesiastical nationalist would say that if we are a daughter, then at least it should be remarked that we consider ourselves a full-grown daughter who has severed the apron strings, but not the bond of love, respect, and a common faith.

In addition, I may also remark that the relationship between our Churches is influenced not only by matters of origin, but also by constantly rendering assistance to each other. Now it is true that this has for years been a rather one-sided affair. We have received from you many members, ministers (witness the fact that six of the ministers sitting here as members of Synod were trained in The Netherlands) as well as professors (Dr. J. Faber, Drs. H.M. Ohmann, and now you as well, Dr. K. Deddens). With all of this we are truly grateful, for this influx has made our existence possible in a sense and has enriched us immensely. For our part we have given you less in the way of concrete assistance, although we are so bold as to consider one of your professors, Drs. H.M. Ohmann, as almost one of our own and hence a Canadian export. Perhaps in the future, if our Theological College continues to supply graduates in numbers greater than we can assimilate, it may be possible to return the favour more fully.

Still, as Churches we have more in common than just origin and assistance. We also seem to be concerned with many of the same issues. You are busy revising your Church Book and so are we. You have adopted a revised Church Order, and hopefully, we will be able to do the same. You have had to deal with the issue of women's voting rights, and we are called upon to deal with it as well. You have shown great interest in spreading the Reformed witness abroad and in making contacts with other Churches around the world that share the Reformed faith, and we share much of that same interest — although it should be pointed out that our interest is on a lesser scale and that we do not involve ourselves in quite so many international Reformed "fishing expeditions" (some would add here, "alas").

In connection with this subject, the International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC) was mentioned last night as well. We were made aware of the fact that your Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad has recommended to Synod Heemse 1984 that the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland should send delegates to the First Assembly of the ICRC that will meet, the Lord willing, in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1985. You express the hope that our Churches will precede yours in terms of membership in the ICRC. Now, it is too early to say what this General Synod will decide with respect to the ICRC, although the fact that no local Church in our federation has written this Synod to object to the recommendation of the Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad

to join will hopefully count for something. On a personal note, also on behalf of the Rev. M. VanBeveren, I would like as yet to thank your Churches officially for the hospitality that you extended to us as delegates to the Constituent Assembly of the ICRC held in Groningen, The Netherlands. We would also like to express our appreciation here for the fact that your Churches were so kind as to host that Assembly, with all the preparations and the expenses that this entailed.

Finally, you have remarked that your Churches constitute only a small minority in your land. Well, our situation in this regard is that we are an even smaller minority here in Canada. In addition, we have a church life that is in several respects not nearly as developed and mature as yours. Nevertheless, with you we are convinced that numbers are of little consequence if the Lord is on our side. Our respective calling as Churches is to live faithfully, fully and humbly according to the will of God as expressed in the Scriptures and in the subordinate standards of our Churches, namely, the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dort. If we do that then truly our Churches will receive His blessing, for He is faithful.

May the Lord be with your Churches. May He work in you continually with His Word and Spirit. And may we always be a hand and a foot to each other, Churches united together in the bond of the true faith and under the only Lord and Sovereign, Jesus Christ, the King of the Church. To Him be all praise and glory."

ARTICLE 62

Response Rev. M. VanderWel to the representative of the OPC

On behalf of Synod the Rev. M. VanderWel responds to the words spoken by the Rev. Jack J. Peterson, representative of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church as follows:

"Reverend Brother Jack J. Peterson,

The chairman of this General Synod has given me the privilege to address you for a moment as one of our esteemed guests in the past days. If this address was only meant to be a reflection on your presence among us as a person, I certainly would not have any difficulty with expressing our sincere appreciation for the way we could converse with you. We can simply say, that our meetings with you in the committee rooms as well as at the meals were most pleasant. We got the impression that you felt right at home among us, and once in a while you could even help us out in finding the right words in the formulation of our reports. (Although it may be needless to say: the latter did *not* go for the composition of the Advisory Report on the matters concerning the OPC, for *that* report was already completed by the time you made your first entrance into the room of Committee II.)

However, we realize that you were not only in our midst as an interested friend and brother, but also as a representative who had been delegated to our Synod by the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. In this quality you have then also addressed our Synod last night. It is in response to this address, that on behalf of this Synod I now may speak a few words to you.

First of all, we like to thank you for the fraternal greetings which you have brought us from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. We also appreciate your assurance that our aim, namely to stand for the Reformed faith, is known to many of you. Please, convey in return our Christian greetings to the Brotherhood of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

In your address to us you have more or less followed up on the letter you wrote to our Contact Committee, of which letter this Synod has received a copy. What has struck us in this letter, was the humble and honest way in which you have tried to answer several questions from our Contact Committee. We deem this to be promising for the continuation of the fraternal relationship which we may have at the present, and also for a further discussion and evaluation of the confessional and church-political divergencies which are existing between us. It does not belong to my task to elaborate on these divergencies at this moment. I'm sure that by listening to the discussion of the Advisory

Report last night, you must have received a vivid impression of the concerns which are living among us with regard to several points on which we differ in opinion. With a view to this I should like to say the following:

From your address we have learned, that in the course of 50 years the Orthodox Presbyterian Church has gone through many a struggle. To mention just a few of them: battles had to be fought against liberalism, independentism, and mysticism. It must be known to you that we as Reformed Churches, having originated from The Netherlands, have had our struggles as well. If I am not mistaken, certain important elements which we both had in common in our battles have even formed a motive to look for each other as Churches on this wide continent. Issues like the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ over His Church, the reliability of God's covenant promises, and the faithful adherence to the Reformed Confessions have, so to speak, shaped our attitude as Canadian Reformed Churches. If therefore a certain hesitance can be observed among us in our relation to other denominations today, such a hesitance must then be explained from our concern not to lose what we have gained by God's grace in the history of our Churches.

I trust, Rev. Peterson, that we both love our Churches, and that is the way it should be. However, they are not *our* Churches. The Church is *Christ's*. In our communication we must therefore not let ourselves be guided by reasons of traditionalism, favoritism, or even chauvinism, but by a mutual concern for the holiness of the House of God and for the preservation of the true principles of the Reformation. If such a concern is found on both sides, I am convinced, that this will bring us to a better understanding, and also to a clearer recognition of each other. It is our prayer, that for this purpose, the Lord may lead us further in all truth by His Word and Spirit, to the glory of His Name.

As it is your intention, Rev. Peterson, to depart from us tomorrow, we bid you farewell, wishing you thereby the Lord's strength in the ongoing battle for the unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God in which you are involved in your Church. I may conclude this address with a quotation from the New Westminster Confession. In Chapter VIII, Article 1, it says: "It pleased God, in His eternal purpose, to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus, His only begotten Son, to be the Mediator between God and man, the Prophet, Priest, and King, the Head and Saviour of His Church, the Heir of all things, and Judge of the world; unto whom He did from all eternity give a people, to be His seed, and to be by Him in time redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified."

Since we then both are called by this Mediator, given by God, and since He gathers, defends and preserves His people by His Word and Spirit, in the unity of true faith, so let us then go on in obedience to His holy Word, serving and edifying each other in the relationship which has been established.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman."

ARTICLE 63

Appeals re Apostles' Creed

Committee II presents its report on the appeals re the Apostles' Creed.
After discussion, Recommendation I D is adopted.
The discussion on Section II is suspended due to the late hour.

ARTICLE 64

Adjournment

Br. R. J. Oosterhoff requests to sing Psalm 46:1, 3 and 4, and leads in thanksgiving. Synod is adjourned.

MORNING SESSION — FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 1983

ARTICLE 65

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Psalm 76:1, 2, 3, reads Revelation 16 and leads in prayer.

At the occasion of Remembrance Day, he addresses Synod as follows:

"Today is the eleventh of November, the day on which we remember those who gave their lives in the course of the wars that were fought in this century. These wars are numerous, and we are appalled at their number when we recall at least some of them.

There is the First World War, there is the Second World War. We could mention the civil war in China, resulting in the withdrawal of the nationalist forces from the mainland and establishing themselves on Formosa, now Taiwan; the misery in Nigeria and Biafra, the strife in Rhodesia which became Zimbabwe; add Korea, Afghanistan, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Granada, Nicaragua, and so on. Was there ever a year in which the guns fell silent and in which the horse and its rider were still?

Remembering those who fell, we ask at the same time the question, "What was the fruit of their wounds, their pain, their sacrifices, their death?"

Yes, we ourselves are the beneficiaries: would we have been here if not the men and the boys from this side of the Atlantic Ocean had come and had given their all for the liberation of Europe, of the Lowlands by the sea?

We thank our God for the mercy bestowed upon us by giving us our freedom back. When looking at the Eastern part of Europe, we are reminded of other possibilities as well: We, too, could have been sighing under the Russian boot and have exchanged the one oppression for the other. Our gracious God has kindly spared us such an ordeal. Let us use the opportunities given, and remember our brotherhood in the world.

It is to be feared that further punishment will come down upon the human race, seeing that the sins grow and the iniquity increases. This has been foretold, for as it was in the days of Noah, so it shall be in the days of the Son of man.

We know, however, that all this will happen as a prelude to the appearing of our blessed God and Saviour. Let us, while looking back and remembering, at the same time look forward with great longing, as we say it in our Belgic Confession:

"Therefore we expect that great day with a most ardent desire, to the end that we may fully enjoy the promises of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

The chairman requests Synod to rise and sing the National Anthem. "O Canada" is sung.

Roll call is held.

ARTICLE 66

Acts

The Acts, Articles 57-64, are amended and adopted.

ARTICLE 67

Farewell Rev. J.J. Peterson and Adjournment

Since the Rev. Jack J. Peterson, representative of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church is leaving Synod this day, he receives the floor and speaks a few words of gratitude for the warm hospitality received. He has appreciated being in the midst of Synod for a few days, and bids Synod farewell under the grace of the Lord.

The chairman speaks the following words of farewell to Rev. Peterson:

"Dear Brother Peterson,

Last night our brother VanderWel replied to the address which you gave. It is not

my intention to add anything to his very capable handling of the matter and his Christian reply. However, this is the day you are going to leave us, and it is the duty of the chairman to welcome delegates and to bid them farewell.

You have conversed among us for some three-and-a-half days. You have seen us, you have heard us, you have tasted us, so to speak. You have seen many of our weaknesses, you must also be aware of our strength, a strength which is not the fruit of practice or exercise, but of grace and mercy bestowed upon us.

During these three-and-a-half days you will have learned to know us a little, to understand us a little better, we hope. One of the first words you said to me after your arrival was: "I know who you are, for I read the News Medley." I am certain that you will be even better able to grasp this phenomenon within the Canadian Reformed Churches from now on.

Now our ways part. May it be temporarily. And may both you and we continue to travel together, though separated by distance. You know what I mean.

From what you said to us in your address it has become very clear where you stand: on the basis which has been laid by prophets and apostles. This will not make things easier for you. The concerns which you found with us must also live with you, concerns about the course which many in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church appear to take. The struggle to remain faithful to our Lord and Saviour will be hard and long and, at times, perhaps seem to be fruitless and hopeless.

Know that also here, in this country, there are men and women who desire to remain obedient to their Lord and King. Let me conclude with these words:

*Go forth in His service,
Be strong in His might
To conquer all evil
And stand for the right.
For this is His word:
His saints shall not fail,
But over the earth
Their power shall prevail.*

May the Lord be with you."

Session is closed. The Advisory Committees meet.

EVENING SESSION — FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 1983

ARTICLE 68

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Psalm 76:4 and 5. Roll call is held.

ARTICLE 69

Apostles' Creed (continued)

The discussion on Section II of the Report of Committee II re Apostles' Creed (the deletion of the word "Christian") is continued. A revised version of this section is presented and discussed. Recommendation II C is adopted.

Section III of the Report re Apostles' Creed (letter br. Nauta) is read and discussed. Recommendation D is adopted.

ARTICLE 70

Decisions re Apostles' Creed

Committee II presents:

I A. MATERIAL — Agenda VIII, J, 1-6.

Appeals concerning Article 107, Acts Syond 1980.

Deletion of the word "begotten" from the Apostles' Creed.

Agenda VIII, J, 1 Appeal from the Church at Burlington-South.

J, 2 Appeal from the Church at Burlington-West.

J, 3 Appeal from the Church at Chilliwack.

J, 4 Appeal from the Church at Lincoln.

J, 5 Appeal from the Church at Smithers.

J, 6 Appeal from br. L. VanZandwijk.

B. OBSERVATIONS re "only begotten"

1. a. Synod 1980 dropped the word "begotten" from the Apostles' Creed, considering that this change:

i would be in accordance with the original Latin text (*unicus*);

ii would be in accordance with various Scripture passages, (e.g. John 1:14);

iii does not alter but gives even more emphasis to the explanation of Lord's Day 13. Question 33 "Why is He called God's only Son, since we are also children of God?"

b. With regard to B. 1, a, i the Churches at Burlington-South, Burlington-West, Smithers and br. VanZandwijk adduce the following objections (summarized):

i although it has to be granted that the Latin word (*unicus*) can be translated by "only" as well as by "only begotten," no conclusive evidence is given that "only Son" is a much better translation than "only begotten Son";

ii an older text of the Apostles' Creed (*Symbolum Romanum*) shows the word "*unigenitus*";

iii not the meaning of the Latin word, but the Word of God is decisive for our confession of faith;

c. Regarding B. 1, a, ii the above-mentioned appellants and the Church at Lincoln formulate their objections as follows: Synod 1980 wrote about "various Scripture passages" but mentioned only John 1:14. Apparently they considered this to be the most important one. However, in John 1:14 the word "*monogenes*" is used in the Greek text and not "*monos*." Prof. Dr. J. van Bruggen comments on this text in his book *The future of the Bible* (pp. 34, 35) as follows:

"While it is true that the Greek term *monogenes* can be used for an only child, it is used in this way only when such is actually the case (see Luke 7:12, 8:42, 9:38). The Bible speaks, however, of other children of God: believers in Christ are all the sons and daughters of God (II Cor. 6:18). Thus, when applied to Christ, the term *monogenes* emphasizes a relationship not shared by other children of God. In a comparable way, Isaac is called an only begotten son in Hebrew 11:17. Among the children of Abraham only Isaac had full birth rights as the natural son of Abraham and Sarah. When the Bible calls Jesus the *monogenes* Son of God, it means that he alone is the *natural* Son of God. He is distinguished from believers as natural children are distinguished from adopted ones. The phrase "only begotten Son of God" is really a summary of Psalm 2:7 where God the Father says to Christ: "... Thou art my Son; this day I have begotten thee." This Psalm is quoted and applied to Christ in Acts 13:33 and in Hebrews 1:5, 5:5. On the basis of Psalm 2, the ancient Church saw the unique character of Christ's Sonship in His divine nature.

The translation *only* weakens the spiritual insight into the unique Sonship of Christ and threatens the spiritual understanding of the unity of the Father and the Son. Modern theologians may find in this translation ammunition for their theory that Christ is unique as Son, but that He is not Himself God." Moreover, the RSV translates: "the only Son from the Father."

the KJB has: "the only begotten of the Father,"

the NASB translates the same as the KJV.

the NIV renders: "the one and only Son, who came from the Father."

- d. With reference to B. 1. a. iii above mentioned appellants point out that while Synod 1980 claims that the version "only Son" gives more emphasis to the explanation of Lord's Day 13, they fail to see the logic in Synod's reasoning. On the contrary, when the word "begotten" is dropped, the answer, which compares the eternal, natural Son of God with children of God by adoption, loses its sense.
- e. Other arguments against deletion of the word "begotten" are the following points:
 - i there is inconsistency in the decisions of Synod: the arguments which Synod uses against deletion of the word "descended into hell" can be used against "begotten" as well;
 - ii the unity of our Confessional Standards is violated;
 - iii we have to be aware of our responsibility in respect to an increasing liberalism;
 - iv the quoted text of John 1:14 was one of the weak points of the RSV translation;
 - v Synod 1980 did not provide sufficient grounds for its decision.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. a. The reference, made to the original Latin text, to prove that the word "begotten" should be deleted from the Apostles' Creed cannot be considered conclusive. Since the original Latin text is difficult to ascertain, the Word of God should be decisive in determining whether "only begotten" should be replaced by "only."
- b. The reference made to John 1:14 is based upon a rather weak or even wrong translation of the word "monogenes" in the RSV.
- c. The deletion of the word "begotten" does not emphasize the explanation of Lord's Day 13 but rather takes away the crux of the matter, because the crucial point in the explanation is the difference between the "natural" Son and the "adopted" children. This main point is expressed in the word "begotten." Deletion of this word makes another formulation of Answer 33 of the Heidelberg Catechism necessary.
- d. The word "begotten" in the Heidelberg Catechism enhances the unity in word usage among the Ecumenical Creeds, since the word "begotten" is used in both the Nicene and the Athanasian Creed. This unity is more relevant than a possible concurrence with the confessions, used by Churches of other denomination.
- e. Synod 1980 considered that "the change from the version 'descended into hell' to 'descended into the realm of death' is a major change, which also affects the text of the Heidelberg Catechism, and should be adopted only if the reasons given prove fully sufficient." The same reasoning can be used with respect to the deletion of the word "begotten" (see B. 1. a. i).

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide:

to insert the word "begotten" in the text of the Apostles' Creed, and to read Article II of the Apostles' Creed (again) as follows:

"I believe in Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, our Lord;"

II A. MATERIAL — Agenda VIII, J. 3, 5, 6.

Appeal concerning Art. 159, I, 4, b Acts Synod 1974.

Deletion of the word "Christian" from the Apostles' Creed.

Agenda VIII, J. 3 Appeal from the Church at Chilliwack.

J. 5 Appeal from the Church at Smithers.

J. 6 Appeal from br. L. VanZandwijk.

B. OBSERVATIONS re "Christian"

1. General Synod 1958 (Acts Art. 190)

a. decided: "de C-tekst van deze Belijdenisgeschriften bij de Kerken aan te bevelen, waarbij ze de verwachting uitspreekt, dat de Kerken, indien zij, bij gebruik, de noodzaak tot wijziging constateren, daarover met voorstellen tot de meeste vergadering komen." (To recommend the Christian Reformed text of these Confessions [Heidelberg Catechism and Canons of Dort] to the Churches, expressing thereby the expectation, that, if in using them they find that changes are to be made, they will come with proposals in this respect to the major assembly.)

b. and pronounced: "dat voorlopig alleen de Nederlandse tekst van de Heidelbergse Catechismus en de Dordtse Leerregels authentiek is." (That for the time being only the Dutch text of the Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons of Dort is the authentic one.)

2. The following Synods did not change this policy. (see Synod 1965 Acts Art. 70, a, b). General Synod 1971 (Acts Art. 83) appointed a committee with the mandate to revise the text of the Heidelberg Catechism in close adherence to the original German text.

3. General Synod 1971 (Acts Art. 28, Recommendation 3, b) appointed a separate Committee for the second half of the Church Book with the mandate, among others: "to scrutinize the text of the Creeds (and introductions) as to correctness of translation."

4. Synod 1974 decided "to remove the word 'Christian' from the Apostles' Creed (Art. IX)" without giving any grounds for this change and Synod 1980 approved this removal by just printing a revised text of the Apostles' Creed from which the word "Christian" was deleted. (Acts Synod 1980 Art. 107, D, 2)

The appellants object to this removal on the following grounds:

a. The fact that the word "Christian" in the Apostles' Creed has no historical root in English, should not be determinative in itself to exclude the word.

b. It is proper to retain the word "Christian," otherwise we deny that Jesus Christ is the head of the Church.

c. Our Churches adopted the Dutch version (see Acts Art. 159, I, 3, 1).

d. In the Canons of Dort, Chapter III, Rejection of Errors, Paragraph 1, we find the expression "the Catholic Christian Church." We find the same in the title of Art. 29 of the Belgic Confession.

e. The change violates the pledge, made by Synod Orangeville 1968, that changes in the Confessions would be made only after consultation with the corresponding Churches. (Acts, Art. 70, 6, b)

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. Synod 1974 (*Acts* Art. 159. I, 4, b) decided to remove the word "Christian" from the Apostles' Creed without mentioning any grounds, except the Consideration (*Acts* Art. 159. I, 4) where only is stated that the Committee on the Church Book should not have inserted the word "Christian" in the text of the Apostles' Creed.
2. Although it may not have been in the province of the Committee for the Church Book to insert the word "Christian" in Art. IX of the Apostles' Creed, this insert was understandable since the word "Christian" was found in the Dutch text of the Apostles' Creed and of Lord's Day 7 of the Heidelberg Catechism, which text by previous Synods had been declared to be the authentic text for the time being (see Observation 1, b).
Moreover, the word "Christian" also appears in the original German text of the Heidelberg Catechism to which text the Committee was referred to by Synod 1971.
3. When Synod 1974, on the recommendation of the Committee for the Second Half of the Church Book, decided to remove the word "Christian," it was therefore a change in policy, which should not have been taken without weighty grounds.
4. It is an overstatement to say that the mere removal of the word "Christian" from the text of the Apostles' Creed is a denial of Jesus Christ being the head of the Church.
However, we do agree that the deletion of this word is an impoverishment of the expression of our Catholic and undoubted Christian faith. (In Canons of Dort III. Rejection of Errors, Paragraph 1 the word "Christian" can hardly be missed in view of the contents of this paragraph) (see Observations B, 3, d).
5. From the Acts of Synod 1974 it does not appear that the deletion of the word "Christian" has taken place in consultation with the sister Churches abroad.

C. RECOMMENDATION

Synod decide:

To reinsert the word "Christian" in Section III of the Apostles' Creed, because no weighty reasons for the removal of this word have been brought forward.

Committee II presents:

III A. MATERIAL — Agenda VIII, J, 7.

. Letter from br. John Nauta with regard to the expression "descended into hell" in the Apostles' Creed.

B. OBSERVATIONS

In his letter of October 27, 1983 br. J. Nauta points out that in his opinion the words "descended into hell" in Art. IV of the Apostles' Creed are:

1. a dishonour to God;
2. a reason for confusion to the believer.

He therefore asks Synod to remove this whole expression from the Apostles' Creed.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. As this request intends to have removed from the Apostles' Creed an expression which has not been changed by any of our Synods, this request cannot be considered to be an appeal against a synodical decision (see *Acts* 1980, Art. 107, C, 1, a).

2. When br. Nauta wants to have an expression removed from one of our Reformed Standards, he should bring this sentiment first to the attention of the Consistory of the Church to which he belongs and he should follow the ecclesiastical way in having this sentiment examined.

D. RECOMMENDATION

Synod decide:

Not to deal with this request.

ARTICLE 71

CANONS OF DORT

Committee IV presents:

I A. MATERIAL — Agenda D, 1-9

1. Report from the Committee on the Canons of Dort.
2. Letter from the Church at Abbotsford re Canons of Dort.
3. Letter from the Church at Abbotsford re not to accept this new translation (see also C, 3).
4. Letter from the Church at Burlington (Ebenezer).
5. Letter from the Church at Burlington-South (see also B. 9).
6. Letter from the Church at Carman.
7. Letter from the Church at Chilliwack.
8. Letter from the Church at Cloverdale (see C, 8).
9. Letter from the Church at Langley.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. The Committee on Translation and Revision of the Confessional and Liturgical Forms received the following mandate from Smithville 1980:
 - a. "To pass on the remarks of the Advisory Committee regarding the newly translated text of the Chapters I-V to the Committee for consideration or incorporation into the final draft.
 - b. To charge the Committee to complete the revision of the Rejection of Errors and to present the whole, corrected by a subcommittee of linguistic experts, to the Churches nine months prior to the next General Synod for final adoption for use in the Churches." (Acts, Smithville 1980, Art. 123, II, D, 2, 3).
2. The Committee reports:
 - a. That it did not receive the remarks of the Advisory Committee of Synod Smithville 1980 regarding the newly translated text of the Canons. They were not passed on to the Committee as adopted by Synod according to Article 123, II, D, 2 of the Acts. These remarks could for that reason not be considered by the Committee.
 - b. That the brothers Rev. R. Aasman, W. Horsman and N. VanDooren were appointed as a language subcommittee with the mandate to examine the Creeds with regard to vocabulary, style, punctuation and readability.
 - c. That due to the time limitation the Refutation was not submitted to the language subcommittee.
 - d. That it received "a request of the deputies Church Book of the Free Reformed Churches in Australia to remain informed as to the progress of the work of the Committee. This request was granted by passing on the completed material."

3. The Committee recommends:
 - a. To appoint Dr. W. Helder of Hamilton as language scrutineer of the Refutation of Errors, added to the Canons of Dort.
4. The Churches at Abbotsford, Burlington-East, Burlington-South, Carman, Chilliwack, Cloverdale and Langley have provided Synod with a long list of linguistic emendations and/or objections to the proposed version on doctrinal grounds.
5. The Church at Abbotsford recommends not to adopt the new translation of the Canons of Dort in its present form because:
 - a. The Committee on Translation and Revision of the Confessional and Liturgical forms did not complete its mandate in time (see Acts General Synod 1980 Art. 123, I, D. 2. b re Belgic Confession; Art. 123, II, D. 3 re Canons of Dort).
 - b. Partly as a result of the above mentioned ground the material for General Synod 1983, received by the consistories in the last six months, was just too much to be dealt with justly.
 - c. Some of the proposed revisions and translations showed that we still suffer from lack of expertise in the English language.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. The Committee could not fulfill its mandate since the remarks of the Advisory Committee of Synod Smithville 1980 regarding the newly translated text of the Canons were not passed on to it as decided by Synod.
2. The revision of the Rejection of Errors was not submitted to the language sub-committee.
3. Some of the doctrinal and/or linguistic notations are:
 - a. Chap. III, IV, Art. 4: In this article "glimmerings of natural light" has been replaced with "some light of nature" — an expression which adds more "light" than Dort allowed, but only darkens the issue. Also, "some knowledge of God" has been changed to "some notions of God." Why? Also, the original article stresses man's *incapability* of using the natural light correctly, a point completely lost in the revision.
 - b. Chap. III/IV, Art. 5: "the strength to extricate" has been replaced with "the power to free himself," a weaker expression while the former is clear English.
 - c. Chap. V, Art. 1: "from the infirmities of the flesh" now becomes "from the flesh," which hopefully is an error of some kind or another. Otherwise, the new rendering is plainly heretical.
 - d. Chap. V, Art. 13: "torment of conscience" has been replaced with "torment of the soul," which hardly comes over as improvement.
 - e. Chap. I, paragraph 1: "It" (second sentence) is incorrect pronoun reference.
 - f. Chap. II, paragraph 6: "As far as God is concerned" sounds wordy, colloquial.
 - g. Chap. III/IV, paragraph 1: "to deserve" lacks a subject.
 - h. Chap. V, paragraph 2: "evangelical" should be "Biblical."

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide:

1. To thank the Committee on Revision and Translation of the Confessional and Liturgical Forms for the work done thus far on the Canons of Dort.
2. To pass on the doctrinal and/or linguistic critical notations from the various Churches, as well as the remarks of the Smithville Advisory Committee to the Committee for consideration or incorporation into the final draft.

3. To charge the Committee to complete the revision of both the Canons of Dort and the Rejection of Errors, and to present this revision to the Churches one year prior to the next General Synod.
4. To appoint Dr. W. Helder of Hamilton as language scrutineer.
5. To charge the Committee to pass on the final draft to the Deputies of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia.

ADOPTED

The Recommendations D. 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 are ADOPTED.

ARTICLE 72

Adjournment

Br. A. Poppe requests the members to sing Psalm 121: 1 and 4, and leads in thanksgiving. Synod is adjourned until Monday, November 14, 9:00 a.m.

MORNING SESSION — MONDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1983

ARTICLE 73

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Psalm 118: 1, 4, and 8, reads Ephesians 1, and leads in prayer.

He commemorates that on November 13, it was 365 years ago that the Synod of Dordrecht (1618-19) was opened. He briefly outlines the great historical significance of this Synod and thankfully remembers how the Lord has fulfilled His promises and is still with His Church.

Roll call is held.

ARTICLE 74

Acts

The Acts, Articles 65-72, are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 75

Adjournment

Session is closed. The Advisory Committees meet.

EVENING SESSION — MONDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1983

ARTICLE 76

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Psalm 101. Roll call is held.

ARTICLE 77

Revision Church Order

Committee III presents its Advisory Report on the proposed revision of the Church Order.

Also a Minority Report (br. T. VanLaar) is read re the Articles 38 and 39.

The discussion on these reports is started.

ARTICLE 78

Adjournment

Rev. W. Pouwelse requests to sing Psalm 138:1 and 3, and leads in thanksgiving. Synod is adjourned.

MORNING SESSION — TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1983

ARTICLE 79

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Psalm 1:1 and 2, reads Psalm 1, and leads in prayer. Roll call is held.

ARTICLE 80

Acts

The Acts, Articles 73-78, are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 81

Adjournment

Session is closed. The Advisory Committees meet.

EVENING SESSION — TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1983

ARTICLE 82

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Psalm 48:1 and 4. Roll call is held.

ARTICLE 83

Revision Church Order

The discussion on the revision of the Church Order is continued.

ARTICLE 84

Canons of Dort

Since it appears that new documents may be available in the file of Synod re Canons of Dort. Synod agrees to request Committee III to look into this matter.

ARTICLE 85

Adjournment

Rev. Cl. Stam requests Synod to sing Psalm 122: 1 and 2, and leads in thanksgiving. Synod is adjourned.

MORNING SESSION — WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 1983

ARTICLE 86

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Psalm 84:1, 2, and 6, reads Psalm 84, and leads in prayer. Roll call is held.

ARTICLE 87

Acts

The Acts, Articles 79-85, are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 88

Adjournment

Session is closed. The Advisory Committees meet.

EVENING SESSION — WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 1983

ARTICLE 89

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Psalm 106:1, 23 and 24. Roll call is held.

ARTICLE 90

Revision Church Order (continued)

The recommendations of the Advisory Committee are dealt with and voted on (see Article 91).

A motion to delete the last sentence of proposed Article 11 Church Order is duly seconded and ADOPTED.

A motion to adopt the entire revised Church Order as amended by Synod is carried.

ARTICLE 91

Decisions re Revision Church Order

- A. MATERIAL — Agenda VIII, F.**
1. Report from the Committee on the Church Order (plus addition).
 2. Letter from the Church at Burlington (Ebenezer).
 3. Letter from the Church at Burlington-South.
 4. Letter from the Church at Carman.
 5. Letter from the Church at Cloverdale.
 6. Letter from the Church at Hamilton.
 7. Letter from the Church at Orangeville.
 8. Letter from the Church at Smithville.
 9. Letter from br. J. Gelderman.
 10. Letter from br. C. Groenewegen.
 11. Letter from br. J. Hendricks.
 12. Letter from br. L. VanZandwijk.
 13. Letter from br. M. Werkman.
 14. Letter from br. E. Witten.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. Synod 1980 gave the Committee the following mandate:
"to send a complete definite draft of the Revised Church Order to the Churches before January 1, 1982, soliciting remarks from the Churches to be sent to the Committee before January 1, 1983, and to present the result of its work to General Synod 1983. (Acts, Art. 19. D. 3)."
2. Synod 1980 also decided to pass on to the Committee the proposals of br. C. Groenewegen and the Church at Burlington-East (Acts. Art. 34, D).
3. The Committee has submitted its report to the Churches and comes to Synod 1983 with a definite draft, which was also linguistically corrected.
4. Synod 1983 has received the following submissions from Churches and individual members:
 - Art. 1 the Church at Hamilton proposes that the wording "there should be" be changed to "that there be."
 - Art. 3 the Church at Burlington (Ebenezer) proposes to distinguish between consistory with or without the deacons by using the terms "consistory" and "council."
the Church at Smithville recommends to retain the expression "after preceding prayers" with respect to the election of office-bearers (Grounds: Acts 1:24; Belgic Confession, Art. 31).
 - Art. 4 the Church at Burlington (Ebenezer) suggests to add Art. 4 A. 3. the words "Have been declared eligible or" and the words "or intend to live" to Art. 4, B. 2.
the Church at Hamilton recommends that the words "or by the Church with which the American/Canadian Reformed Churches maintain a sister Church relationship" be added.
 - Art. 5 the Church at Burlington (Ebenezer) suggests to add under Article 5 B. "from the Church only, in case he remains within the same classis."
the Church at Hamilton recommends to change the phrase "cooperation of deputies" to the "concurring advice of the deputies."
 - Art. 6 the Church at Burlington (Ebenezer) suggests that "service" be changed to "serve."
 - Art. 8 the Church at Burlington (Ebenezer) suggests to change this to read "unless there is assurance of their godliness, humility and modesty, and of exceptional gifts of good intellect and discretion, and also of the gift of public speech."
 - Art. 9 the Church at Burlington (Ebenezer) suggests to add the same words as in Art. 5, B.
 - Art. 11 the Church at Burlington (Ebenezer) suggests to change "from his ministry" to "from his service within the congregation" and to change the time period from two to three years.
the Church at Orangeville recommends that the specific time period be deleted and replaced with "eventually, if no call is forthcoming."
Rev. M. Werkman proposes to change "unfit and incapable" to "unfit or incapable."
 - Art. 13 the Church at Hamilton recommends to add "for physical or psychical reasons."
 - Art. 15 the Church at Smithville recommends to add "and that only in the Federation of Churches."
br. J. Gelderman requests that old Art. 15 be retained.
 - Art. 16 the Church at Hamilton recommends to change "doctrine of salvation" to "doctrine of the Scriptures."

- Art. 17 br. J. Gelderman asks why the phrase concerning the equality among elders and deacons has been deleted.
- Art. 18 the Church at Hamilton recommends to change "their faith" to "the faith."
- Art. 19 the Church at Hamilton recommends to add "and they shall appoint professors of theology and governors for the Theological College." the Church at Smithville proposes to retain part of the old redaction "to expound the Holy Scriptures and to vindicate the sound doctrine against heresies and errors."
- Art. 23 the Church at Burlington (Ebenezer) recommends to add the essence of old Art. 26 to Art. 23.
the Church at Burlington-South suggests the same.
- Art. 30 the Church at Burlington (Ebenezer) objects to the new rule added to Art. 30 since it would restrict addressing Synod on matters of urgent common concern.
the Church at Hamilton suggests to delete the last sentence since it introduces a very confusing rule and would make a "bureaucratic mess" with respect to matters of common concern.
- Art. 32 the Church at Smithville recommends to add "and instructions."
br. J. Gelderman also objects to the removal of the words "and instructions."
- Art. 35 the Church at Burlington-South, Hamilton, br. L. VanZandwijk and br. E. Witten request Synod to retain the sentence "Furthermore his office shall cease when the assembly has been ended."
- Art. 37 the Church at Burlington (Ebenezer) recommends to add the explanatory sentence "The consistory however has received from Christ the authority over the local congregation."
- Art. 38 the Church at Burlington (Ebenezer) states that it is not correct to say that the word "consistory" as meeting of ministers, elders and deacons is "in harmony with the Belgic Confession," since the Confession uses the word "council" in Article 33.
the Church at Burlington-South suggests to retain the wording of Art. 38 as in the drafts submitted in 1979 and 1981.
the Church at Cloverdale proposes to use the name "consistory" for the meeting of the elders and "council" for that of ministers, elders and deacons.
the Church at Orangeville wants to retain the previous draft proposal regarding this Article.
- Art. 39 the Church at Orangeville proposes to have Art. 39 read as follows "Where the number of elders is small, the deacons may be added to the elders by local arrangement; this shall invariably be done where the number of elders or the number of deacons is less than three." This shall be added to the presently proposed Art. 39 which Article shall be amended from "may meet" to "shall meet."
- Art. 40 the Church at Burlington-South deplores that the deacons can no longer be added to the consistory since under the proposed redaction they *already* belong to the consistory.
- Art. 42 the Church at Smithville recommends to add the stipulation that the deacons shall meet "as a rule at least once a month."
- Art. 43 the Church at Burlington-South proposes to retain the present (old) Article 43.
- Art. 44. the Church at Burlington (Ebenezer) suggests to make the following changes in this Article: "The classis shall consist of neighbouring

Churches that respectively delegate to the classical meeting . . . as were determined by the previous classical meeting . . . which would warrant the convening of a classical meeting, cancellation of a classical meeting, however, shall take place And finally, at the last classical meeting before the regional synod."

the Church at Burlington-South does not want Art. 43 placed under Art. 44 (see above).

- Art. 46 the Church at Hamilton recommends to delete "unless the great distances render this inadvisable."
br. J. Gelderman is of the opinion that too many specifics have been deleted from this Article, e.g. regarding school teachers and the youth.
- Art. 52 the Church at Hamilton recommends that the phrase "The Churches shall keep an order of service approved by General Synod" be added to this Article.
br. J. Gelderman wants to see retained the expression "Catechism, which at the present time is accepted in the Canadian Reformed Churches."
- Art. 55 the Church at Burlington-South suggests that the wording be changed to read: "In the worship services the Psalms will be sung in the rhyming adopted by the General Synod: and the Hymns, that have been approved by the General Synod."
- Art. 57 the Church at Carman proposes to stipulate that only those believers "who have made public profession of the Reformed faith" can have their children baptized.
- Art. 58 the Church at Burlington (Ebenezer) suggests to change the expression "attend a school" to "receive an education," also to title the Article "Education" instead of "Schools."
the Church at Burlington-South proposes to add the words "according to the promise at the baptismal font."
the Church at Hamilton recommends that the Article read "to the best of their ability as declared in the promise made at the baptismal font."
the Church at Smithville would like to have inserted "and according to the promise of baptism."
br. J. Gelderman proposes that there be in this Article a reference to the baptism promise.
- Art. 62 the Church at Burlington-South expresses concern that there are some who do not request an attestation, and would like to see this matter regulated.
the Church at Hamilton recommends to add "Notice shall be given to the receiving consistory that an attestation has been issued."
the Church at Smithville would like to see added "after previous announcements to the congregation" and also stipulated "by the chairman and clerk."
- Art. 63 the Church at Burlington (Ebenezer) proposes to delete the words "as are in accordance with the Word of God."
- Art. 65 the Church at Burlington-South, Cloverdale, Hamilton, Smithville and br. J. Gelderman all suggest to retain this Article.
- Art. 66 the Church at Hamilton recommends to add the phrase "the secret sins of which the sinner repents, or."
- Art. 67 br. J. Hendricks requests that the present (old) Article 76 be retained here. He objects specifically to a regulation for the excommunication of non-communicant members.
br. J. Gelderman questions whether a non-communicant member can be excommunicated and believes that he/she should simply be removed from the membership.

- Art. 68 br. J. Gelderman wonders why with respect to the confession of sin the phrase is deleted "where there is a difference of opinion about it in the consistory, be considered with the advice of two neighbouring Churches."
- Art. 69 the Church at Cloverdale is convinced that provision has to be made for the readmission of excommunicated non-communicants.
br. J. Hendricks remarks that this Article will need further stipulation for the readmission of baptized former members.
- Art. 70 br. J. Gelderman complains that the reference to the civil government has been omitted (also in Art. 71).
- Art. 83 the Churches at Burlington-South and Hamilton want this Article retained.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. The Committee has presented Synod with a definite draft, linguistically corrected, of the revised Church Order and thus has fulfilled its mandate.
2.
 - a. Although some of the suggestions of br. C. Groenewegen have been used by the Committee for their final revision, it is evident that the Committee could not decide in the line of various other proposals of br. C. Groenewegen.
 - b. The proposals of br. C. Groenewegen, basically suggesting "to adopt a policy similar to the practice of the RPCES" (Vol. 1, p. 6) extend far beyond the mandate given to the Committee, as well as beyond the intent of the revision as requested by previous Synods, namely to "undertake a general revision of the presently adopted Church Order, as much as 'the profit of the Churches demand it' (Art. 86 Church Order), with preservation of the Reformed character of this Church Order" (Acts 1971, Art. 82). Br. Groenewegen does not propose a revision of the existing order, but an entirely new order, while the Churches wish to remain with the Order adopted at Dordrecht 1618-1619.
3. The following considerations regard the submissions of Churches and individuals (cf. Observation 4):
 - Art. 1 the Committee has already changed the wording of the Article to suit the proposal of the Church at Hamilton.
 - Art. 3
 - a. the matter of "consistory with or without deacons" (Burlington-Ebenezer) can be best dealt with under Art. 38. Here the Advisory Committee agrees that in the process of election the deacons shall be involved;
 - b. the recommendation of the Church at Smithville to retain the expression "after preceding prayers" has merit in the light of Art. 31 Belgic Confession "with calling on the Name of the Lord."
 - Art. 4
 - a. the recommendations of the Churches at Burlington (Ebenezer) and Hamilton re the calling of candidates declared eligible for call in sister Churches abroad has merit in the light of the nature and rules of correspondence. The possibility left open by the Draft 1968 would be made impossible by this revision;
 - b. it is not really necessary to add the provision "or intend to live," since someone eligible for call would have to be a member of one of the Canadian Reformed Churches or sister Churches before being eligible for call and would be examined in the classis to which that Church belongs.
 - Art. 5
 - a. the recommendation of the Church at Burlington (Ebenezer) "from the Church only, in case he remains within the same classis" should be adopted, since one can not be discharged from service in a classis if one remains in that classis;

- b. the Church at Hamilton is correct in stating that the phrase "with the cooperation of the deputies" is too weak. The element of "concurring advice" (see also Art. 13) should be somehow expressed. We advise to change this Article to read, "with the cooperation *and concurring advice*."
- Art. 6 the suggestion of the Church at Burlington (Ebenezer) has already been followed.
- Art. 8 the suggestion of the Church at Burlington (Ebenezer) should not be followed because indeed when someone presents himself on the basis of exceptional gifts, these must include "godliness, humility and modesty," for the danger is not unreal that in such cases wrong motives have crept in or wrong attitudes prevail.
- Art. 9 see Consideration under Article 5.
- Art. 11 a. the recommendation of the Church at Burlington (Ebenezer) should be followed because the dismissal is not from the ministry as such, but from his ministry in that particular congregation. Therefore this should be changed to read "from his service within the congregation." The time period of three years is also appropriate with a view to a possible appeal to general synod;
- b. the proposal of the Church at Orangeville should not be adopted since it is too indefinite while the purpose of the Article is exactly to fix a period of time;
 - c. the suggestion of the Rev. M. Werkman should not be followed because one of the possibilities can be present, but also both, whereas his suggestion would imply that it must be one or the other.
- Art. 13 the proposal of the Church at Hamilton to add "for physical or psychical reasons" is not a necessary clarification, for it would simply be a stating of what is obvious.
- Art. 15 a. the recommendation of the Church at Smithville to specify that ministers should preach the Word and administer the sacraments within our federation only is not to the point for this Article concerns the position of a minister within the federation of Churches;
- b. the unclear suggestion of br. Gelderman does not contain grounds and should not be followed
- Art. 16 the recommendation of the Church at Hamilton to change "doctrine of salvation" to "doctrine of the Scriptures" should not be followed, because the expression "doctrine of salvation" does not limit but rather qualifies the purpose of instruction to the youth.
- Art. 17 br. Gelderman's question is not pertinent, for the matter of equality among elders and deacons is found in Article 25.
- Art. 18 the recommendation of the Church at Hamilton need not be followed; one should see here no distinction between "the (true) faith" and "their (personal) faith."
- Art. 19 a. the recommendation of the Church at Hamilton can not be included as is, for the "professors of theology" are appointed by the Board of Governors upon the direction of the General Synod. Besides, the appointment of professors by the Board has been amply regulated in the Canadian Reformed Theological College Act, 1981 and the By-Laws;
- b. the proposal of the Church at Smithville to retain the essence of old Art. 18 has merit, for it may be expected especially of the Doctors of Theology and the professors that they serve not only the students but also the Churches in expounding the Scriptures and vindicating the sound doctrine against heresies and errors. Since the descrip-

tion of the task of professors limits itself solely to the training for the ministry, the words of old Art. 18 can not be inserted here.

- Art. 23 it is not necessary to adopt the recommendations of the Churches at Burlington to stipulate that deacons maintain good contact with other agencies of support, since the necessity for such contact is self-evident and support for persecuted "strangers" will normally not be refused.
- Art. 30 the proposals of the Churches at Burlington (Ebenezer) and Hamilton should not be followed, for the addition re "urgent matters of common concern" would defeat the purpose of the preceding stipulation, namely to prevent new issues from being placed before major assemblies hastily and unlawfully before having been dealt with in the minor assemblies.
- Art. 32 the proposal of the Church at Smithville and br. J. Gelderman re "instructions" need not be followed since the revised version does not exclude the giving of instructions.
- Art. 35 the Churches at Burlington-South and Hamilton, as well as the brethren L. VanZandwijk and E. Witten propose to retain the sentence "Furthermore his office shall cease when the assembly has been ended." Fear is expressed that exclusion of this part of the Article will lead to some form of hierarchy or to the creation of permanent "higher" bodies or offices. This sentence could be maintained as follows, "In major assemblies the office of the president shall cease when the assembly has ended." The Committee for Revision does not consider this addition objectionable.
- Art. 37 it is not necessary to accede to the recommendation of the Church at Burlington (Ebenezer) since the leadership of Christ over the Church is sufficiently expressed in Article 29-31 of the Belgic Confession.
- Art. 38 a. various Churches object to the unexpected change that in the final
39 redaction the deacons are *included* in the consistory and express
40 concern about the fact that this major change is proposed so shortly "before the convening of Synod," leaving the Churches very little time to study such an important change. This objection can not be denied;
- b. the Committee for Revision is mistaken when it considers this change to be "in complete harmony with the Belgic Confession," for not only does the Confession use the term "council," but also a general confessional term should not be seen as being in conflict with further church-political distinctions. That the ministers, elders and deacons form the council of the Church (Belgic Confession Art. 30) does not necessarily imply that the deacons therefore belong to the consistory;
- c. it is important that in harmony with the teaching of the Scriptures and the Form for Ordination, the elders and deacons be kept distinct, also with respect to the body which is called to govern the Church. The present proposal may cause confusion here. That confusion is not taken away by the addition of Article 39, for this Article does not stipulate that elders and deacons shall meet separately "to deal with matters specifically pertaining to the respective special offices," but may do so (if they wish). The Church at Cloverdale is correct in stating "as a result our Church Order has been considerably weakened. It gives the Churches complete freedom to interpret the occasions when the deacons should be present. Moreover, it would be quite possible that the deacons will be allowed to attend all the meetings of the consistory. By trying to avoid confusion in the names of the consistory, this change will create confusion in something far

- more important, namely, the proper understanding of elders and deacons”;
- d. it is not wise to change longstanding terminology which has a strong principal basis. Also the Dutch sister Churches in their revision have maintained the terminology as used in the Reformed Churches for centuries;
 - e. the use of the term “council” does not really solve the problem of terminology and should not be included in the text of the Church Order;
 - f. the Advisory Committee proposes that the version given in the Provisional Report 1981 on the Articles 3, 38, 39 be adopted.
- Art. 42 it is wise to follow the recommendation of the Church at Smithville that some regularity be maintained with respect to the meetings of the deacons. The stipulation “as a rule once a month” is not as restrictive as the original rule “whenever necessary, every week,” and could very well be included.
- Art. 43 the proposal of the Church at Burlington-South to retain the old Article 43 need not be followed since the substance of this Article has been clearly maintained in proposed Art. 44 also with respect to “other major assemblies” than classis.
- Art. 44 the suggestion of the Church at Burlington (Ebenezer) should not be followed because the expression “classis” and “classical meetings” are used interchangeably by the Committee.
- Art. 46
- a. the suggestion of the Church at Hamilton to delete the clause regarding “great distances” should be followed, since present-day means of transportation render this clause obsolete. Furthermore, the danger is there that this clause might be used as an excuse not to conduct Church visitation;
 - b. br. J. Gelderman’s observation that much has been deleted from this Article is correct, yet this does not imply that the deleted matters may not be discussed during Church visitation. The notion is preserved in the phrase “to inquire . . . whether the adopted order is being preserved . . .”
- Art. 52
- a. the Church at Hamilton’s proposal to specify a certain order of worship can not be accepted because such an order has never been adopted;
 - b. br. Gelderman’s proposal to retain “Catechism, which at the present time is accepted in the Canadian Reformed Churches” need not be followed, since in the revision the further qualification “Heidelberg” has been added, which obviously is one of the Three Forms of Unity.
- Art. 55 the suggestion of the Church at Burlington-South need not be followed, as the final revision has already improved on the text of this Article.
- Art. 57 the proposal of the Church at Carman to stipulate that only children of communicant members may be baptized should not be followed, for such a rule was never included in the Church Order, even if such a practice might be desirable.
- Art. 58
- a. the suggestion of the Church at Burlington (Ebenezer) to have the expression “attend a school” changed to “receive an education” should not be followed, since the phrase “to the best of their ability” reckons with various contrary situations which may arise;
 - b. the Churches at Burlington-South, Hamilton, Smithville and br. J. Gelderman recommend an explicit reference to “the promise made at the baptism font.” The matter of the school has been addressed

- sufficiently in this Article and a reference of this kind, which has never been in this Article, should not be inserted. Even if such a reference is not included now, this does not mean that no relationship exists between the baptismal vows and the instruction at school.
- Art. 62 a. the proposal of the Church at Burlington-South should not be followed, for a church order should not try to exhaustively regulate exceptional matters;
- b. the recommendation of the Church at Hamilton should not be followed, for after an attestation has been issued to a certain member, the consistory has no supervision over such a member. Whether a notice shall be given must be left up to the consistories and need not be regulated in the Church Order;
- c. the proposal of the Church at Smithville re attestations should be accepted for it gives a clearer rule regarding the practice concerning attestations.
- Art. 63 the proposal of the Church at Burlington (Ebenezer) to delete "as are in accordance with the Word of God" should not be followed, because it is an essential provision with respect to the ministers, whereas the phrase "only in the Lord" refers to the members.
- Art. 65 since several Churches recommend that old Article 65 be retained, and the Committee has already formulated a revised version, this Article should be included as proposed.
- Art. 66 the proposal of the Church at Hamilton to mention specifically "secret sins" of which the sinner repents need not be adopted, because it is clear the entire Article is based on relevant passages from Matthew 18. Besides, the purpose of this Article is not to determine what the members shall do, but under which conditions the consistory may only become involved.
- Art. 67 since the Churches have accepted forms for the ex-communication of non-communicant members, regulation of this matter in the Church Order is not out of place. Baptized, non-communicant members do have a lawful place and position in the Church, be it different from that of communicant members, for by baptism they are "ingrafted into the Christian Church" (Lord's Day 27, Q. & A. 74). These members do form a part of the communion of saints, so the term "ex-communication" is applicable to them even if they have not been admitted to the communion of the table. The objections of the brs. J. Hendricks and J. Gelderman need not be sustained.
- Art. 68 br. J. Gelderman's question has been sufficiently answered in the Provisional Report of December 1981.
- Art. 69 it would be unwise to make exact stipulations concerning the readmission of noncommunicants, since circumstances may vary. Consistories will have to use their discretion.
- Art. 70 br. J. Gelderman gives no reason why the reference to the civil government in Art. 70 (and 71) should be retained.
- Art. 83 not only present-day circumstances, but especially the nature of the work of the deacons renders it unnecessary to retain old Art. 83. Caring for the poor includes as a matter of course also caring for the "departing poor." The argument given in the Provisional Report 1981 is convincing.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decides:

1. to thank the Committee on the Revision of the Church Order for the faithful completion of their mandate.

ADOPTED

2. not to accede to the requests of br. C. Groenewegen. ADOPTED
3. to adopt the revised Church Order, with the following amendments:
- Art. 3 add: "after preceding prayers" (8th line). ADOPTED
- Art. 4 add: "Have been declared eligible in, or" (5th line). ADOPTED
- Art. 5 add: "and concurring advice" (11th line). ADOPTED
"from the Church only, in case he remains within the same classis" (21st line). ADOPTED
- Art. 9 add: "of the Church only, if he remains within the same classis" (6th line). ADOPTED
- Art. 11 change: "from his ministry" to "from his service within the congregation" (4th line). ADOPTED
"two" to "three" (8th line). ADOPTED
- Art. 35 add: "In major assemblies the office of the president shall cease when the assembly has ended" (8th line). ADOPTED
- Art. 38 adopt Article 38, 39 of the Provisional Draft 1981. ADOPTED
39 add: "as a rule" to Art. 38 of the Provisional Draft (4th line — before "the ministers shall preside"). ADOPTED
- Art. 42 add: "as a rule once a month" (2nd line). ADOPTED
change: "in" to "to" (4th line). ADOPTED
- Art. 46 delete: "unless the great distances render this inadvisable" (3rd line). ADOPTED
- Art. 62 add: "after previous announcements to the congregation" (3rd line). ADOPTED
change: "two of its members" to "chairman and clerk" (4th line). DEFEATED
- Art. 65 insert Article 65 re funerals, and from thereon move up all numbers by one. ADOPTED
4. to have the Revised Church Order published in the *Book of Praise*, and as a separate booklet for use in the Churches (*Acts* 1980, Art. 122, D, 6, b). ADOPTED
5. to pass on copies of the adopted revised Church Order to the Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad in order that the sister Churches may be informed of our decisions. ADOPTED

Minority Report

Observations: as in the report of the advisory Committee III.

Considerations:

- a. the Committee for revision of the Church Order is completely correct in considering this change to be "in complete harmony with the Belgic Confession," where we read that besides the ministers there must be "also elders and deacons, who, together with the pastors, form the council of the Church." (Dutch: "om met de herders te zijn als de raad der Kerk" = de kerkeraad.);
- b. that the ministers, elders and deacons form the council of the Church (Art. 30 Belgic Confession) implies necessarily that the deacons therefore do belong to the consistory;
- c. using the term "council" for the minister, elders and deacons and the term "consistory" for the minister with the elders, as proposed by some Churches, assumes a difference between council and consistory and is therefore confusing and should not be inserted in the text of the Church Order;
- d. Art. 39 of the Church Order as proposed by the Committee on the Revision of

- the Church Order provides sufficient room for conducting separate meetings to deal with the matters specifically pertaining to their respective special offices;
- e. the wording of Art. 38, as proposed by the Committee on Revision of the Church Order does not interfere with the practice of the local Churches, but will promote the cooperation between elders and deacons.

Recommendation:

Synod decides:

as concerning Art. 38 and Art. 39 to adopt in the Revised Church Order the final proposal of the Committee on the Revision of the Church Order.

Since the Majority Report is adopted, the Minority Report is not voted upon.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 92

Book of Praise (Psalms and Hymns)

Committee I presents the report on the *Book of Praise* (Section I, Psalms and Hymns). This report is read and discussed.

ARTICLE 93

Adjournment

Rev. M. VanderWel requests to sing Psalm 92: 1, 2, and 6. and leads in thanksgiving. Synod is adjourned.

MORNING SESSION — THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1983

ARTICLE 94

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Hymn 2:1, 2, and 3, reads Revelation 4, and leads in prayer. Roll call is held; br. J. Hendricks is absent.

ARTICLE 95

Acts

The Acts Articles 86-93, are amended and adopted.

Adjournment

Session is closed until the afternoon. The Advisory Committees meet.

AFTERNOON SESSION — THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1983

ARTICLE 96

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Hymn 2:4 and 5. Roll call is held.

ARTICLE 97

Correspondence with Churches Abroad

The Report of Committee IV on Correspondence with Churches Abroad (sister Churches) is read and discussed. The Advisory Committee agrees to reconsider various formulations in this report before further discussion.

The report of Committee IV Presbyterian Church of Korea (Koryu Pa) is read and discussed. Session is closed for supper.

EVENING SESSION — THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1983

ARTICLE 98

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Hymn 46. Roll call is held.

ARTICLE 99

Correspondence with Churches Abroad

The discussion on the Advisory Report re Correspondence Presbyterian Church of Korea (Koryu Pa) is continued. One round of discussion is completed.

The discussion on the Advisory Report of Committee IV re sister Churches is continued. The Recommendations D 1-7 are adopted as amended.

Committee IV presents:

- A. **MATERIAL** — Agenda VIII, H. 1. Report from the Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad and additional report.
H. 2. Letter from the Free Reformed Churches of Australia.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. Synod Smithville 1980 gave the Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad the following mandate: "Gratefully to continue the correspondence under the adopted rules with:
 - a. The Free Reformed Churches of Australia
 - b. De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland
 - c. Die Vrije Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika."
2. The Free Reformed Churches of Australia:

The Committee reports:

 - a. The Acts of Synod Armadale 1980, contain the following comment:
"Re Canada a developing divergence is noted in matters of common concern such as new versions of the Creeds, Liturgical Forms and Prayers, due to lack of consultation. Synod decides to send a letter to the Synod of the Canadian Reformed Churches convening at Smithville next November, explaining our concern in the light of the official correspondence as we desire it" (Art. 30).
 - b. The Acts of Synod Kelmscott 1983, contain the following highlights:
 - i The adoption of the new Psalm section and the Forms of the Canadian Reformed Churches (Criticisms on the Forms will be passed on to the Canadian Reformed Churches).
 - ii The selection of only thirty-one Hymns out of the Hymn section for use in the Churches. (No explanation is given.)

- iii The adoption of a revised version of the Church Order. (This version was not available for comments and/or recommendations).
 - iv The recommendation to use the Revised Standard Version (1971 edition) in the Churches.
 - v The decision
 - a. to continue the correspondence with:
 - Canadian Reformed Churches
 - De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland
 - Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika
 - The Presbyterian Church in Korea
 - The Churches of Sumba-Savu;
 - b. to recognize as faithful Churches:
 - The Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ireland
 - The Free Church of Scotland
 - The Reformed Presbyterian Church of Taiwan;
 - c. to investigate the possibilities to seek new contacts with other Churches, in close connection with deputies from the sister Churches, especially The Netherlands;
 - d. to request the Deputies "to formulate rules for temporary contact with Churches which do not yet belong to the sister Churches";
 - e. to join the International Conference of Reformed Churches and to propose two amendments to the Constitution, one dealing with the Reformed Ecumenical Synod and the other stressing "that members should strive for unity with member Churches of the Conference in their own country."
 - c. A letter was sent to Australia (April 28, 1981) informing the Deputies that a certain letter mentioned in the Acts of Synod Armadale 1980 and addressed to Synod Smithville 1980 was never received, and that therefore this Synod was unaware of their concerns.
 - d. In April 1983 notice was received that the Synod of the Free Reformed Churches would meet the following month in Kelmscott. No report from the Australian Deputies for Correspondence was received.
The Committee recommends that the correspondence with the Free Reformed Churches in Australia be continued in accordance with the adopted rules.
3. De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland
- The Committee reports:
- a.
 - i that they did not send a delegate to Synod Arnhem 1981 due to the expenses factor and the upcoming Constituent Assembly of the ICRC at Groningen;
 - ii that they were notified of the upcoming Synod, scheduled for April 25, 1984 at Heemse. An invitation to send a delegate to this Synod was included.
 - b. that no response was received to the request of Synod Smithville. (Acts 1980, Art. 145), to use the Form for the Ordination/Installation of Missionaries in translated format;
 - c. that the Acts of Synod Arnhem 1981 disclose that this Synod decided:
 - i not to appoint general deputies ad Art. 19 Church Order, but to urge the deputies ad Art. 19 Church Order of the several Regional Synods to adopt among themselves a suitable form of cooperation;
 - ii to introduce a classical examination for missionaries and to establish an institute for training of missionaries. This institute will be independent and yet work in close cooperation with the Theological College;
 - iii to continue in accordance with the adopted rules Ecclesiastical Fellowship with:

- a. the Presbyterian Church in Korea
- b. the Free Reformed Churches of Australia
- c. the Vrije Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika
- d. the Canadian Reformed Churches
- e. the Reformed Churches on Sumba Savu
- iv to establish Ecclesiastical Fellowship with:
 - the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ireland
- v to offer to establish Ecclesiastical Contact with:
 - a. the Free Church of Scotland
 - b. the Dutch Reformed Church of Sri Lanka
 - c. the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Taiwan, Second Presbytery
 - d. the Reformed Church in Japan
 - e. Die Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid-Afrika — "Dopperkerken" (if certain conditions are met)
- vi to continue initial contact with:
 - a. the Reformed Churches of New Zealand
 - b. the Orthodox Presbyterian Church of New Zealand
 - c. the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in the USA
 - d. the Igreja Presbiteriana Conservadora do Brasil
 - e. the National Presbyterian Church of Chile
- vii to seek contact with:
 - a. the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA)
 - b. a Church in Nigeria
- viii to instruct the Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad to publish a bulletin in the English language every six months with a view to the many contacts abroad;
- ix to request the sister Churches abroad to change Rule c as follows:

"The Churches shall inform each other as much and as soon as possible concerning proposals (c.q. reports) and decisions which pertain to linguistic or such like changes of the Confessions or nonessential changes of the Church Order and the Liturgical Forms; concerning proposals for changes in essential points of doctrine, however, the sister Churches abroad shall receive ample opportunity (at least three years) to forward their judgment before binding decisions will be made."

The Committee recommends:

- a. not to accede to the request of General Synod Arnhem 1981 of our Netherlands sister Churches that their proposed Rule c for ecclesiastical fellowship (correspondence with Churches abroad) be adopted;
- b. to continue the correspondence with De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland in accordance with the adopted rules.

4. Die Vrije Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika

The Committee reports:

- a. Synod Pretoria 1980 decided to continue the efforts for contact with the Korean Presbyterian Church (Koryu-Pa);
- b. to continue the correspondence with the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland;
- c. Synod Johannesburg 1982 decided to continue the existing relationship of correspondence with the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, the Free Reformed Churches in Australia and the Canadian Reformed Churches;
- d. this Synod instructed the deputies to prepare a Scripturally responsible form of ecclesiastical communion with the Korean Presbyterian Church, taking into consideration the difference in language;
- e. this Synod rejected the "two levels of correspondence" as it is practised both

in Canada and The Netherlands (i.e. Ecclesiastical Fellowship and Ecclesiastical Contact);

- f. Die Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika (GKSA) have broken their relationship with the Synodical Reformed Churches in The Netherlands;
- g. the differences with the GKSA have now been narrowed down by Synod Johannesburg as follows:
 - i "Die Gereformeerde Kerk should break the ties with the RES.
 - ii Die Gereformeerde Kerk should discontinue the practice of the so-called "double correspondence," for instance they have ecclesiastical relations with the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland and the Christelike Gereformeerde Kerken in The Netherlands.
 - iii Die Gereformeerde Kerk should condemn the practice of some of its ministers to conduct services in the "14de laan Church" (a split from Die Vrije Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika)."

The Committee recommends:

To continue the relationship with Die Vrije Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika in accordance with the adopted rules.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. From the correspondence it has become clear that the Committee has made every effort to meet the concerns of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia regarding our new versions of the Creeds, Liturgical Forms and Prayers.
2. Synod Orangeville 1968 declared that the Canadian Reformed Churches are fully willing to bind themselves by the promise contained in this "voorafgaand overleg" whenever a change in the Three Forms of Unity is deemed necessary (Acts, 1968, Art. 79, 6, b).
3. From the correspondence with and the Acts of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia, De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland and Die Vrije Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika, we may gratefully conclude that these Churches are faithful to God's Word and the Church Order.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide:

1. To continue the Ecclesiastical Fellowship with The Free Reformed Churches of Australia, De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland and Die Vrije Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika in accordance with the adopted rules. ADOPTED
2. To request the Free Reformed Churches of Australia to make their revised version of the Church Order available to our Committee for Correspondence for possible comments and/or recommendations. ADOPTED
3. To add to the present Rule c of the Rules for Correspondence: "re proposals for changes in the Three Forms of Unity, the sister Churches abroad shall receive ample opportunity (at least three years) to forward their judgment before binding decisions will be made."
Rule c reads then as follows:
To inform each other concerning changes of, or additions to, the Church Order and Liturgical Forms, while the corresponding Churches pledge to express themselves on the question whether such changes or additions are considered acceptable. Regarding proposals for changes in the Three Forms of Unity, the sister Churches abroad shall receive ample opportunity (at least three years) to forward their judgment before binding decisions will be made."
4. Again to request the Netherlands sister Churches permission to publish the trans-

lation of the Form for Ordination/Installation of Missionaries for use in the Canadian Reformed Churches.

5. a. To request the Churches abroad that in the matter of "relationships 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 conjunction with these sister Churches.
6. 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.
7. To thank the Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad for the diligent performance of their work.

ARTICLE 100

Adjournment

Br. M. VanderVelde requests to sing Psalm 124, and leads in thanksgiving. Synod is adjourned.

MORNING SESSION — FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 1983

ARTICLE 101

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Psalm 89:1, 3, and 4, reads Revelation 2:1-7, and leads in prayer. Roll call is held.

ARTICLE 102

Acts

The Acts, Articles 94-100, are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 103

Adjournment

Session is closed; the Advisory Committees meet.

AFTERNOON SESSION — FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 1983

ARTICLE 104

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Psalm 141:1, 2, 3, and 4. Roll call is held.

ARTICLE 105

Correspondence with Churches Abroad

(Presbyterian Church of Korea-Koryu-Pa)

Committee IV presents an emended version of its report on the Presbyterian Church

of Korea (Koryu-Pa). This report is discussed. The Recommendations D1, 2, 3a, b, c, and are ADOPTED.

Committee IV presents:

- A. **MATERIAL** — Agenda VIII, H, 1 Reports from the Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad, and an Enclosure entitled: "An Update on the Korean Connection."
H, 3 Letter from the Church at Smithville.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. Synod Smithville 1980 charged the Committee on Correspondence with Churches Abroad (Acts, Art. 153, E — 4, 5).
 - a. to continue the contact with the Korean Presbyterian Church (Koryu-Pa) with the following mandate:
 - i to evaluate the Form of Government and to pass this evaluation on to the next General Synod;
 - ii to inform the Synod regarding the state of communication with these Churches and also evaluate the communication with the Korean Presbyterian Church (Koryu-Pa) as to the question whether official ecclesiastical correspondence, even if it would be warranted in principle, can be responsibly maintained, due to distance and language;
 - iii to make recommendations to the Synod regarding a future relationship with the Korean Presbyterian Church (Koryu-Pa).
 - b. to evaluate the criticism of the Deputies of the Netherlands sister Churches on the Historical Review, Korean Presbyterian Church, and to report on this to the next Synod.
2. The Committee reports:
 - a. on the criticism of the Historical Review by the Dutch Deputies:
 - i that it has evaluated the criticism of the Dutch Deputies and found no reason to amend or retract its conclusions/consequences as stated in the Historical Review.
A report written for the Dutch Deputies by Prof. J.M. Batteau contains the following quotation: "The Canadian report, by the way, is an excellent and accurate one, and deserves careful reading by all those interested in these questions";
 - ii that in this same report Prof. Batteau speaks of an apparent recommendation made in the Report-Visscher of offering a sister Church relationship to the Hap-Dong Church.
However, the Committee stated under the heading Consequences: "In light of the above, your Committee believes it to be only fair and honest that, should the General Synod 1980 decide to offer to establish an official relationship with the Koryu-Pa, because they have requested this, we should be willing to consider the establishment of a similar relationship with the Hap-Dong, if so requested by these Churches."
 - b. on the contacts with the Korean Presbyterian Church:
 - i **Regarding Form of Government:**
 - a. that it received material from Korea written in Korean characters. After having it translated the Committee discovered that it was not a revised edition of the entire Form of Government, but only a list of the changes that have been made. The edition as a whole is apparently not available in the English language. From speaking with Dr. K.S. Lee and Dr. S.G. Hur at the ICRC in Groningen it was learned that the remainder would contain no surprises and is in line with the classic Presbyterian Form of Government;

- b. that the list of changes received, deals with some of the following subjects: the various officers in the Church — lay evangelists, woman exhorter, licensed preachers, candidates for the ministry, the installed pastor, pastor emeritus, meritorious pastor, military chaplain, retired pastor, institutional chaplain, missionary, subsidiary military pastor, elder, diaconate, financial matters, duties of a Session, congregational meetings, duty of the Presbytery, authority of the General Assembly, training for the ministry, examination of candidates, ceremony of installation, a minister coming from another denomination, and other matters.

This list of subjects immediately indicates that the Korean Form of Government is both more elaborate and deals with topics not mentioned in our Church Order;

- c. that a woman exhorter is "a lady over 50 years of age, elected by two-thirds of the congregation, but not ordained."
- d. that "nothing in these changes constitute an obstacle with respect to the recognition of the Presbyterian Church in Korea as a Church being governed by the principles of Reformed or Presbyterian Church government."

ii Regarding Communications

- a. that in March 1983 it received a brief report in English of the 32nd General Assembly held in September 1982;
- b. that the Fraternal Relations Committee gave a prompt reply in English to the Dutch Deputies' request to scrutinize the above-mentioned Historical Review;
- c. that, although the Korean Churches appear to be making a more concerted attempt to answer inquiries addressed to them, no prediction can be made whether a correspondence relationship could be responsibly maintained.

iii Regarding Language

- a. that the matter of language presents great difficulties;
- b. that to "take heed" can only be done through English summaries of the actions of the General Assembly, through translations of pertinent material, through using the good offices of Profs. Batteau and Gootjes and through the ICRC;
- c. that the language difficulties call for a different form of permanent ecclesiastical relationship;
- d. that it, therefore, has reservations about the manner of Synod Smithville's response to the Church at Surrey (Acts 1980, Art. 154);
- e. that Synod Smithville's charge "to make recommendations to the Synod regarding a future relationship with these (Korean) Churches" leaves room for different applications of the one relationship called "correspondence."

- 3. The Committee would like to add the words "in so far as the circumstances will allow" to the first rule and to change "Church Order" in the third rule for correspondence to "Form of Government."

On this basis the Committee recommends:

- a. that the Presbyterian Church in Korea (Koryu-Pa) be recognized as a true Church of our Lord Jesus Christ;
- b. that we offer to them the status of sister Church governed by the following rules of correspondence:
 - i To take mutual heed in so far as the circumstances will allow that the

- corresponding Churches do not deviate from the Reformed Confession in doctrine, liturgy, church government and discipline.
- ii To forward to each other the agenda and decisions of the broadest assemblies and to admit each other's delegates to these assemblies as advisors.
 - iii To inform each other concerning changes of, or additions to, the Confession, Form of Government and Liturgical Forms, while the corresponding Churches pledge to express themselves on the question whether such changes or additions are considered acceptable.
 - iv To accept each other's attestations and to permit each other's ministers to preach the Word and to administer the Sacraments.
 - v To give account to each other regarding correspondence with third parties.
- c. that we inform the Presbyterian Church in Korea about the regulations that govern visiting ministers, namely the need for a declaration of good standing to be issued to the minister;
 - d. that the Committee for Correspondence be charged to initiate a discussion with the sister Churches regarding the application of the rules of correspondence to various Churches and the creation of alternative relationships. Furthermore, that an attempt be made to come to a uniform set of rules that would be flexible but also faithful to the principles of interchurch relations.
4. The Church at Smithville considers that there is no reason to specify in the case of the Koryu-Pa "in so far as the circumstances will allow," for correspondence is always under that condition (as became evident e.g. in the second World War).

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. The Committee makes it clear that it was unable to give a proper evaluation of the Koryu-Pa's Form of Government since it did not receive a copy of the entire Form of Government, but only a list of changes.
2. The Committee was unable to evaluate these changes in the context of the Form of Government as a whole.
3. It is not edifying to proceed with Ecclesiastical Fellowship at this time in view of
 - a. the mandate given to the Committee for Contact with the OPC, namely: "to publish for the benefit of our Churches a detailed evaluation of the confessional and church-political divergencies, showing proof that these divergencies do not form an impediment in recognizing the OPC as a true Church of the Lord Jesus Christ." Acts Synod Cloverdale, 1983;
 - b. the lack of clarity with respect to the present situation between the Koryu-Pa and the Hap-Dong.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide:

1. Not to accede to the Committee's recommendations with respect to the Korean Presbyterian Church (Koryu-Pa).
2. To express its gratitude to the Committee for all the work done.
3. To charge the Committee on Correspondence with Churches Abroad with the mandate:
 - a. to obtain and evaluate the complete text of the Koryu-Pa's Form of Government;

- b. to enquire into the grounds of the many changes made in this Form of Government;
- c. to seek an official evaluation from the Koryu-Pa of the confessional and church-political divergencies as these have been discussed and are being discussed with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church,
- d. to seek information from the Koryu-Pa regarding its relations with the Hap-Dong Churches so that the implications of establishing correspondence with the Koryu-Pa may become completely clear in this respect.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 106

Correspondence with Churches Abroad (Church Relations)

Committee IV presents its amended report on Correspondence with Churches Abroad re Church Relations.

This report is discussed.

ARTICLE 107

Adjournment

Br. T. VanLaar requests to sing Psalm 139:1, 3, and 13, and leads in thanksgiving. Synod is adjourned until Saturday morning.

MORNING SESSION — SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1983

ARTICLE 108

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Psalm 135:1, 2, and 9, reads Revelation 2:8-12, and leads in prayer.

ARTICLE 109

Acts

The Acts, Articles 101-107, are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 110

Correspondence with sister Churches Abroad

The discussion on the Report of Committee IV re Church Relations is continued after some changes in the Report are noted.

The Recommendations under D. are adopted.

Committee IV presents:

- A. **MATERIAL** — Agenda VIII, H, 1 Report of the Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad (and additional report).
H, 2 Letter from the Church at Smithville.

B. OBSERVATIONS

- 1. The Rules for Ecclesiastical Fellowship, referred to in the Committee's mandate, are:
 - a. To take mutual heed that the corresponding Churches do not deviate from the Reformed Confession in doctrine, liturgy, church government and discipline.

- b. To forward to each other the agenda and decisions of the broader assemblies and to admit each other's delegates to these assemblies as advisors.
 - c. To inform each other concerning changes of, or additions to, the Confession, Church Order and Liturgical Forms, while the corresponding Churches pledge to express themselves on the question whether such changes or additions are considered acceptable.
 - d. To accept each other's attestations and to permit each other's ministers to preach the Word and to administer the Sacraments.
 - e. To give account to each other regarding correspondence with third parties (Acts 1962, Art. 139).
2. The Rules for Temporary Ecclesiastical Contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church are:
- a. To invite delegates to each other's General Assemblies or General Synods and to accord such delegates privileges of the floor in the Assembly or General 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 continued discussions to use the contact for the purpose of reaching full correspondence.
3. The Committee for Correspondence requests to receive the mandate to initiate a discussion with the sister Churches on the rules of correspondence in light of the fact that all kinds of additional rules have either been accepted or are being considered. (See main report, p. 12, 5, d.)
4. Synod Kelmiscott of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia has instructed the Deputies "to formulate rules for temporary contact with Churches which do not belong as yet to the sister Churches."
5. Synod Johannesburg of Die Vrije Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika has rejected the model of "temporary ecclesiastical contact" as it has been adopted in both Canada and The Netherlands, because it did not want "two levels of correspondence."
6. Synod Johannesburg decided to instruct Deputies to investigate to what extent the language differences would be an impediment for the exercise of correspondence in accordance with the adopted rules and to look for a different kind of relationship that is Scripturally responsible.
7. Synod Smithville, in answer to the Church of Surrey's request to have another, less comprehensive relationship, stated:
- a. "There is no reason to establish a different form of permanent ecclesiastical relationship with other Churches in the world than as regulated in the rules for correspondence.
 - b. These rules can be applied realistically according to the circumstances, like the lesser or greater degree of difference between the Churches" (Acts 1980, Art. 154).
8. The Church at Smithville expresses its concern about the trend of ecclesiastical relationships. It concludes that there could be essentially four different kinds of official "ecclesiastical relationships":
- a. correspondence (according to the existing rules)
 - b. correspondence "in revised form" (with Koryu-Pa)
 - c. temporary ecclesiastical contact relationship (with the OPC)
 - d. "alternative relationships" (see Report VII, 4 and 5 d)

This Church sees no reason why a discussion concerning "alternative relationships" should be initiated by our Committee, and furthermore (with reference to the decisions of Synod 1980 in this regard) considers "alternative relationships" (i.e. necessarily less comprehensive relationships) as unwarranted by Scripture.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. The Committee is correct in warning against all kinds of rules to cover different kinds of ecclesiastical relationships and in recommending one uniform set of rules for all the sister Churches.
2. The official temporary contact relationship with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church was not designed to become a common practice to formalize relations with Churches with which correspondence cannot yet be established. It was an exceptional measure to accommodate specific concerns of the OPC.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decides to instruct the Committee on Correspondence with Churches Abroad:

1. That whenever a discussion with the sister Churches on rules to cover ecclesiastical relationships is initiated, to urge the sister Churches to maintain Correspondence according to the adopted rules as the only form of permanent ecclesiastical relationship.
2. To inform the sister Churches that the Canadian Reformed Churches have not made it a common practice to formalize ecclesiastical contacts with Churches with which correspondence cannot yet be established.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 111

Finances — General Synod 1980

Committee IV presents:

A. MATERIAL — Agenda VIII, M, 1

Report of the financial Committee on Revenue and Expenses of General Synod Smithville 1980.

Agenda VIII, M, 2

Audit report by the Church at Lincoln re finances of General Synod Smithville 1980.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. General Synod Smithville 1980, appointed the Church at Lincoln to audit the books of finances of Synod 1980, and to send a report to General Synod 1983 (*Acts* 1980, Art. 49, C, 5).
2. From the report regarding the finances of General Synod 1980, it appears that

the total income was	\$ 22,047.35
total expenses	\$ 21,844.56
Balance	\$ 202.79
3. The Consistory of the Church at Lincoln has audited the books of the financial committee of Synod Smithville 1980, and reports that they were found in good order.
4. The balance of \$202.79 was recommended to be transferred to the convening Church of the next General Synod.

The Recommendations C, 1, 2, and 3 are ADOPTED.

Synod decides to request the brethren Cl. Stam and J. Visscher to serve Synod with proposals re the printing and quantity of Reports to be sent to the Churches.

ARTICLE 113

Archives — General Synod 1980

Committee IV presents:

A. **MATERIAL** — Agenda VIII, M, 5 Report from the Church at Burlington-West re the Archives of Synod 1980 (Smithville)

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. The Church at Burlington-West reports that it has examined the Archives of Synod 1980 (Smithville) and has found them in good order;
2. It reports that one item identified as M. 2 Audit Report of the Finances re General Synod Toronto 1974 (Article 49 of the Acts of Synod 1980) was missing although the substance of the report is included in the Acts.
3. Article 49 of the Acts of Synod 1980, B, 3, reads: The Consistory of the Church at Brampton did audit the books of the financial committee of Synod 1974 and reports that they were in good order.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide:

1. To express its thankfulness to the Church at Burlington-West for having examined the Archives of Synod 1980(Smithville).
2. To appoint the Church at Burlington-West to examine the Archives of Synod 1983 (Cloverdale).

The Recommendations C, 1 and 2 are ADOPTED.

ARTICLE 114

Address Church

Committee IV presents:

A. **MATERIAL** — Agenda VIII, M, 6 Report of the "Address Church," the Church at Burlington-East.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. Synod Smithville 1980 appointed the Church at Burlington-East as "Address Church";
2. The "Address Church" received and acted upon the following material:
 - a. A request by Miss Ruth A. Moses, Nigeria, West Africa, for Am. \$260.00 to pay off her study debts. Unless instructed otherwise, we would pass this request on to Canadian World Relief Fund.
 - b. A request from Festus Oguh, S. Mankato, MN 56001, USA, for financial support to finish his college studies in order that he can help "the hungry people of the world beginning from the worst part of Africa." We suggest that this request is not responded to.
 - c. A request from Richard H. Taylor, Andover, CT 06232, USA, for some

historical data about our Churches. This information has been given to him by us.

- d. A request by Sarah N. Lee, Arlington, TX 76011, USA, for the address of all our Churches, with a view to her graduate project. Unless instructed otherwise, we will not grant this request.
- e. A request from Rev. Dr. C.L. Chilton, Phoenix, AZ 85018, USA, for a sample copy of "your periodical." We suggest that this request does not receive a reply.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. With the exception of request c. there is no indication that the "Address Church" has responded to the communications received.
2. The "Address-Church" should not pass on the request of Miss Ruth A. Moses to the Canadian Reformed World Relief Fund; it acted correctly by not granting the request of Festus Oguh, S. Mankato, MN, 56001, USA.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide:

1. That the "Address Church" should acknowledge the receipt of communications to those who sent them.
2. That the "Address Church" should either itself provide general information about the Canadian Reformed Churches, wherever so requested, or should pass on addresses from which this information can be obtained.
3. To thank the Church at Burlington-East for the work done.
4. To reappoint the Church at Burlington-East as the "Address Church" of the Canadian/American Reformed Churches and to request it to ensure that it be known as the Church to which communications for the Canadian Reformed Churches should be addressed.

The Recommendations D, 1, 2, 3, and 4 are ADOPTED.

ARTICLE 115

Bible Translations

Committee IV presents:

- A. **MATERIAL** — Agenda VIII, M, 7 Report of the Committee for Bible Translations appointed by Synod Smithville 1980.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. The Committee on Bible Translations received the mandate by Synod Smithville 1980
 - 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 next Synod.
2. Due to the departure of Prof. H. Ohmann to The Netherlands, Acts, Art. 111, C, 4, and the special studies of Professor C. VanDam, in connection with the Theological College, as well as the distances between the committee members, the committee was apparently unable to carry out its mandate.

3. A vacancy has arisen in the Committee because of the departure of Prof. H. Ohmann.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide:

1. To reappoint the Rev. P. Kingma and Prof. C. VanDam to the Committee on Bible Translations with the same mandate as noted under observations: 1. a, b, c.
2. To add Rev. J. DeJong of Burlington-South to the Committee to fill the present vacancy, and to replace Rev. J. Geertsema of Surrey by Rev. J. VanRietschoten of Chatham in order to overcome the problem of traveling distances between the members.

The Recommendations C, 1 and 2 are ADOPTED.

ARTICLE 116

Interchurch Relations Committee of the Council of the Christian Reformed Churches in Canada

Committee III presents:

- A. **MATERIAL** — Agenda K, 1 The Council of the Christian Reformed Churches in Canada. re appoint a contact committee.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. The Interchurch Relations Committee of the CCRCC "enters into conversations with other denominations based in Canada" and the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church "has agreed to our request that we approach you within the restricted terms of Council's committee."
2. The Committee further states that theirs is a "new and Canadian initiative, with a new focus" and adds "given that there are issues that have kept our denominations apart, which issues it is not our task to resolve since we are only a segment of the Christian Reformed denomination, nevertheless we question seriously whether these issues absolve us from the calling to seek contact with the Canadian Reformed Churches In short, the Interchurch Relations Committee of the CCRCC desires to begin informal discussions with a committee of your appointing."

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. Synod 1972 of the Christian Reformed Church decided to discontinue the Contact Committee with the Canadian Reformed Churches, and assured "the Canadian Reformed Churches of its willingness to continue discussion with them in the future, whenever they feel conditions will be conducive for a fruitful exchange" (Acts 1977, Coaldale, Art. 77, Cons. 3).
2. In the past the Canadian Reformed Churches have appointed a committee for contact with the Christian Reformed Church with the mandate to speak about specific obstacles. As a result, a number of obstacles were removed; however, the main obstacle, which is the relationship between the Christian Reformed Church and the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (Synodical-GKN), remains to this day.
3. The IRC of the CCRCC in its letter states that it is not able to deal with issues that keep our "denominations" apart, and that they are more interested in having informal discussions; hence it would be impossible to deal with the main

obstacle as well as other obstacles that may have arisen in the meantime between our respective Churches.

D. RECOMMENDATION

Synod decide:

Not to enter into informal discussions with the Interchurch Relations Committee of the Council of the Christian Reformed Churches in Canada.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 117

Adjournment

Rev. J. Visscher requests to sing Psalm 23:1 and 3, and leads in thanksgiving. Synod is adjourned.

MORNING SESSION — MONDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 1983

ARTICLE 118

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Psalm 89:2, 7, and 8, reads Isaiah 55 and leads in prayer. Roll call is held.

ARTICLE 119

Acts

The Acts, Articles 108-117, are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 120

Correspondence with sister Churches Abroad (ICRC)

The chairman reads the proposed Constitution of the International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC).

Committee IV then presents its report on Correspondence with Churches Abroad re membership in the International Conference of Reformed Churches.

The discussion of this report is begun.

AFTERNOON SESSION — MONDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 1983

ARTICLE 121

Reopening-Correspondence with Churches Abroad (ICRC-continued)

The report of Committee IV is further discussed and, after emendations, the Recommendations D, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 are ADOPTED. Since the Majority Report is adopted, a Minority Report presented by the Rev. P. Kingma is not voted on.

Committee IV presents:

- A. **MATERIAL** — Agenda VIII, H, 1 Report of the Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad and an enclosure entitled: "A report on The Constituent Assembly of the International Conference of Reformed Churches."

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. Synod Smithville 1980 charged the Committee on Correspondence with Churches Abroad with regard to the proposed Reformed International Conference:
 - a. to send two delegates to this Conference;
 - b. to analyze its basis, aim, powers, structure, members and agenda, and to come with a recommendation to the next Synod how to proceed further in this matter;
 - c. to refrain from any official endorsement of this Conference due to its preliminary character.
2. The Committee reports:
 - a. That Rev. M. VanBeveren and Rev. J. Visscher represented the Canadian Reformed Churches at the Constituent Assembly of the ICRC, held from October 26 - November 4, 1982, in Groningen, The Netherlands.
 - b. That the following Churches were represented:
 - The Free Reformed Churches of Australia
 - The Reformed Presbyterian Church of Taiwan, S.P.
 - The Presbyterian Church in Korea
 - The Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ireland
 - The Free Church of Scotland
 - The Free Reformed Churches in South-Africa
 - The Reformed Churches in The Netherlands
 - The Canadian Reformed Churches.
 - c. That our representatives criticized the fact that the Dutch Churches kept to themselves the power of determining who should or should not be invited to the Assembly and as such rejected the Committee's request to invite the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.
 - d. That our representatives objected to the proposed agenda to discuss first the differences in confessions, Church polity, relations with other Churches and missions and then to deal with the matter of the constitution and regulations.
 - e. That the Assembly decided to give the matter of the constitution and regulations primacy of place on the agenda and that the papers to be delivered be scheduled to accommodate this change.
 - f. That not only the Three Forms of Unity but also the Westminster Standards form the Basis of the Constitution.
 - g. That according to the Committee the opinion "that only the Three Forms of Unity should have been used in the Basis 'suggests' that either the Three Forms of Unity are sufficient for the task and/or they are superior to the Westminster Standards in various ways."
 - h. That the exclusion of the Westminster Standards form the basis of the ICRC can only be construed as "insensitive" and/or "unhistorical" since "for many years the Reformed Churches have recognized that the Westminster Standards belong to that group of confessions called Reformed."
 - i. That with the exception of the South-African delegates all the representatives, by rising from their seats, expressed agreement with the fact that the Three Forms of Unity and the Westminster Standards should serve as the Basis of the ICRC.
 - j. That the Assembly decided to delete the following sentence from the Basis: "Subscription to this Basis means that we find nothing in the Confessions of the member Churches that hinders us from the fullest participation in this Conference in respect to its purpose" (On behalf of the committee, the Rev. J.N. Macleod of the Free Church of Scotland stated that such a clause would

mean that a participating Church need not feel itself compelled to express agreement with every expression or formulation in, for example, the Westminster Confession).

- k. That the purpose of the Conference shall be:
 - i to express and promote the unity of faith that the member Churches have in Christ;
 - ii to encourage the fullest ecclesiastical fellowship among the member Churches;
 - iii to encourage cooperation among the member Churches in the fulfillment of the missionary and other mandates;
 - iv to study the common problems and issues that confront the member Churches and to aim for recommendations with respect to these matters;
 - v to present a Reformed testimony to the world.
- l. That those Churches shall be admitted as members which:
 - i adhere and are faithful to the confessional standards stated in the Basis;
 - ii furnish
 - a. their confessional standards;
 - b. their form of government;
 - c. their form of subscription;
 - d. their declaratory acts (if applicable);
 - iii are accepted by a two-thirds majority vote of the member Churches, every member Church having one vote;
 - iv are not members of the World Council of Churches or any other organization whose aims and practices are deemed to be in conflict with the Basis;
 - v termination of membership shall be by a two-thirds majority whenever the Conference is of the opinion that the member Church in its doctrine and/or practice is no longer in agreement with the Basis.
- m. One of our delegates did not want the Reformed Ecumenical Synod mentioned in the Constitution. He pointed out that such a restriction in the Constitution would be unacceptable to the Canadian Reformed Churches which have accepted the Orthodox Presbyterian Church as a true Church even though it is still a member of the RES.
- n. Article V — Authority

The conclusions of the Conference shall be advisory in character. Member Churches are urged to receive the decisions of the Conference and are recommended to work towards their implementation.

3. The Committee recommends:
 - a. that the Canadian Reformed Churches agree to join the International Conference of Reformed Churches;
 - b. that the Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad be authorized to send, in accordance with the Constitution of the ICRC, two of its members as delegates to the first meeting of the ICRC to be held in Edinburgh in 1985, and that Dr. J. Faber be designated to attend as advisor;
 - c. that the Committee for Correspondence be charged to recommend for membership in the ICRC the Orthodox Presbyterian Church;
 - d. that the Committee be authorized to inform the Convening Church of the ICRC that the Canadian Reformed Churches would like to see the following subjects placed on the agenda:
 - i the doctrine of the Church in the Reformed Confessions;
 - ii the doctrine of the Covenant in the Reformed Confessions;
 - iii the exercise of interchurch relations;
 - e. that the Committee be authorized to invite the ICRC to hold its second meeting

- to be held in 1989, in Vancouver, BC, as guests of the Canadian Reformed Churches;
- f. that the Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad report to the next General Synod on the activities of the ICRC.
4. The Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad of the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands has decided to make the following proposal to the General Synod of Heemse 1984 regarding the ICRC:
- a. to set up a study group with the following tasks:
 - i to present the member Churches with information about relevant literature on missionary matters;
 - ii to present the member Churches with information about existing colleges and/or courses for missionaries, and about opportunities for co-ordination;
 - iii to serve the member Churches, if possible, by setting up a missiology on a truly Scriptural basis, for instance, by compiling an Introduction;
 - b. to institute a consultative committee with the following tasks:
 - i to advise the member Churches on choosing mission fields;
 - ii to investigate and indicate opportunities for the coordination of development work on mission fields;
 - iii to investigate and indicate opportunities for the exchange of missionaries.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. The Canadian Reformed Churches (CRC) have neither "Ecclesiastical Fellowship" nor "Ecclesiastical Contact" with:
 - a. The Reformed Presbyterian Church of Taiwan, S.P.
 - b. The Presbyterian Church in Korea
 - c. The Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ireland
 - d. The Free Church of Scotland.
2. Churches which were invited but "for one reason or another were not able to come" are:
 - a. The Korean Presbyterian Church of São Paulo, Brazil
 - b. The Dutch Reformed Church of Sri Lanka
 - c. The Reformed Church of Japan
 - d. The Reformed Church in South Africa (which "was absent due to the fact that adequate progress had not been made in establishing temporary ecclesiastical contact between it and the inviting Dutch Churches").
3. The Dutch sister Churches by inviting the above-mentioned Churches introduced the Canadian Reformed Churches to Churches with which the Canadian Reformed Churches do not have any ecclesiastical relationship. It should be noted that by joining the ICRC the Canadian Reformed Churches will be faced with "third party" relationships.
4. From the context of the discussion about the Basis of the ICRC, it might be understood that the charter members at the Constituent Assembly upon joining the ICRC subscribe to every expression or formulation of both the Three Forms of Unity and the Westminster Standards; however, membership in the ICRC must not be taken to mean that the Canadian Reformed Churches subscribe to the Westminster Standards.
5. Since there are divergencies between the Three Forms of Unity and the Westminster Standards, it is imperative that at the Conferences discussions on

these divergencies receive priority. It is therefore wise to follow the recommendation of the Committee on Correspondence to request that the following subjects be placed on the agenda of the next Conference:

- i the doctrine of the Church in the Reformed Confessions;
 - ii the doctrine of the Covenant in the Reformed Confessions;
 - iii the exercise of interchurch relations.
6. Having acknowledged that the Orthodox Presbyterian Church is a true Church of Christ does not imply that the Canadian Reformed Churches consider membership in the RES and ICRC acceptable.
7. The nature of the matters to be discussed at Edinburgh make it desirable that the Canadian Reformed Churches send a special advisor along with the delegates.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. to join the ICRC with the clear instruction to move the following amendments to the proposed Constitution:
 - a. a stipulation in the Basis of the ICRC that the delegates subscribe only to the standards of the Churches of which they are members;
 - b. that membership of the RES is an impediment to membership in the ICRC;
 - c. that under "Authority" (Art. V) change "are urged to receive the decisions" to "urged to *consider*";
 - d. to add to Purpose (Art. V, 5) "to encourage each other as member Churches to . . .";
 - e. to amend the Regulations (Art. II, 4, b, iv) "to forward to the Churches material . . .";
 - f. to amend the Regulations (Art. II) "Each Conference shall elect . . ."
2. to request the ICRC at Edinburgh to deal with:
 - a. the doctrine of the Church in the Reformed Confessions;
 - b. the doctrine of the Covenant in the Reformed Confessions;
 - c. the exercise of interchurch relations.To give these matters priority after amendments to the Constitution before attending to matters of mission.
3. to appoint Prof. Dr. J. Faber as an advisor to accompany two of the members of the Committee for Correspondence to the Conference 1985 at Edinburgh;
4. to report to the next General Synod on the activities of the ICRC;
5. to authorize the Committee to invite the ICRC to hold its second Conference, to be held in 1989, in the Vancouver area, as guests of the Canadian Reformed Churches;
6. to express its gratitude for the substantial work done by the Committee on Correspondence with Churches Abroad.

ADOPTED

E. MINORITY REPORT (Rev. P. Kingma)

Synod decide:

Not to adopt the recommendations of the Report of the Advisory Committee IV regarding the International Conference of Reformed Churches.

Grounds:

1. The International Conference of Reformed Churches is proposed to be a Conference whose character is unknown in the Church Order of the Canadian/American Reformed Churches.

2. The Church Order does not regulate an official ecclesiastical representation of the Canadian/American Reformed Churches to a Conference.
3. The Church Order only knows of ecclesiastical assemblies — of Classes, Regional Synods and General Synods constituted by delegates from minor to major assemblies.

Session is adjourned.

EVENING SESSION — NOVEMBER 21, 1983

ARTICLE 122

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Psalm 107:1, 2, and 12. Roll call is held.

ARTICLE 123

Book of Praise (Psalm and Hymn Section)

The discussion on the report of Committee I on the *Book of Praise* (Psalm and Hymn Section) is continued.

The Committee takes over some proposals re Hymn 17:

1. stanza 1: change "The angel" to: "An angel"
2. stanza 2: change the wording of the last line, "all mankind" (since the message of the angel is addressed to "all the people" = Israel)
3. stanza 4: change "the heavenly Babe" into e.g. "the newborn Babe"

The Standing Committee of the *Book of Praise* will be instructed to incorporate these changes (see Recommendations).

The Recommendations 1-14 are ADOPTED.

A. MATERIAL — Agenda VIII, B, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

1. Report from the Standing Committee for the *Book of Praise*
2. Letter from brother M.M. DeGroot of Burlington, Ontario
3. Letter from the Church at London
4. Letter from brother J. DeRaadt of Calgary, Alberta
5. Letter from brother L. VanZandwijk of Burlington, Ontario

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. The Standing Committee reports that they could not immediately proceed with publication of the *Book of Praise* after having received their mandate from Synod Smithville 1980.
2. This was caused by the need for time to familiarize themselves with all aspects of their instructions.
3. The Committee was able to accept a carefully formulated publishing contract tailor-made to the requirement of the Churches.
4. The Committee continued with some final minor changes and corrections of the rhymings of Psalms and Hymns.
5. They included a rhymed version of the Apostles' Creed, as instructed by the Synod Smithville 1980.
6. They request Synod's permission to retain the new rhyming of the *Te Deum* (Hymn 2 in the 1979 Hymn Section), instead of replacing it with Hymn 46 in the old

edition; a large majority of the Churches indicated their agreement with the Committee's view in this respect.

7. The Committee attached a copy of the contract mentioned under 3.
8. The Committee investigated various possibilities, but came to the conclusion that none was "able to offer the advantages we will enjoy with Premier Printing."
9. Psalms and Hymn sections have been typeset and proofread and are ready to be printed as soon as Synod provides the Committee with its decisions regarding the contents of the *Book of Praise*.
10. The new edition can appear early in 1984, the Lord willing.
11. The present Committee became a corporation known as the Standing Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise* of the Canadian Reformed Churches, and is registered as #516 455 Ontario Ltd.
12. Upon the request of the Committee, brother M.M. DeGroot and Rev. G. Van-Dooren continued to do the work formerly done by the so-called Publication Committee, until supplies were depleted, by which the transitional period mentioned in the Acts of Synod Smithville 1980 came to a natural conclusion.
13. The Music Subcommittee, with the advice of Mr. M.M. DeGroot as well as that of experts in The Netherlands and others, prepared the music for printing.
14. No financial statement is included, since the Committee was not involved in financial transactions.
15. The Committee was not able to represent the Churches at the Conference for Psalmody.
16. An Appendix has been added to the report, showing the various changes in rhyming made by the Committee.
17. The Committee recommends that the tune of Hymn 37 be retained, as it considers this tune appropriate for the text of the Hymn as a whole.
18. The Committee recommends that the tune of Hymn 39 be replaced with that of Gezang 9 (Avondzang) as already is being done in the Free Reformed Churches of Australia.
19. It recommends that the tune of Hymn 46 be replaced with that of "Daar is uit 's werelds duistre wolken," as the present tune is already used for three Psalms and one other Hymn.
20. The Committee has used the *Liedboek voor de kerken* as an example for "layout and music notation."
21. The Name "Jesus" is not found literally in the *Rhymed Version of the Apostles' Creed*, Stanza 1, line 5.
22. Brother M.M. DeGroot expresses his concern with regard to the *Book of Praise* remaining the possession and under full control of the Churches.
23. He states that the Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise* still exists and holds all the copyrights, so that permission to have the Hymn Section reprinted should have been obtained from this Committee.
24. He also states that Synod Coaldale 1977 appointed the Committee for the *Book of Praise* as coordinating committee for the complete Church Book. He complains that publications which resulted from decisions of the Synod Smithville 1980 were not entrusted to the Publication Committee as the arm of the Committee for the *Book of Praise*, which Publication Committee is "still in existence with its copyrights."

25. He respectfully suggests "that Synod should instruct the Committee to appoint an Administrator."
26. The Church at London, Ontario, requests Synod "to delete or alter the expression 'Praise the Holy Spirit' in Hymn 36:1, 2, 3, and Hymn 37:1." since this expression "is entirely foreign to the Scriptures."
27. The same Church requests "to reintroduce Hymn 8 in the *Book of Praise*, since it found "the grounds given in . . . the Acts of Synod Smithville . . . to be untrue."
28. Brother J. DeRaadt of Calgary, Alberta, presents to Synod two Hymns for possible inclusion in the Hymn Section.
29. Brother L. VanZandwijk of Burlington, Ontario, proposes to delete Hymns 12, 44, 45, on the grounds that they come from the dark middle ages and are essentially a Romish leaven (12), the congregation takes the position of hosts instead of that of guests at the Lord's Supper (44), and the Shepherd is presented here in a way which differs from Holy Scripture, e.g. John 10 and Hebrews 13:20. (45).
30. He further urges Synod to insert the word "Christian" before "Church" in Hymn 1.
31. He also objects to the text of Hymn 60, as being archaic.
32. However, brother VanZandwijk does not request any specific action on his submission in each and every respect.
33. He complains that the Committee for the *Book of Praise* seems to have suppressed submissions from the Churches and that there was an "unwillingness of the 'old' Church Book Committee to report on these proposals."

B. CONSIDERATIONS

1. The Standing Committee for the *Book of Praise* appear to have familiarized themselves with all aspects of their instructions and is therefore to be able to proceed without delay.
2. The agreement between the Standing Committee and Premier Printing provides adequate safeguards for the rights to and control by the Churches over the *Book of Praise* and its contents.
3. The Committee concluded its work of scrutinizing by suggesting some minor changes and corrections of the adopted rhymings.
4. The Committee fulfilled the mandate to include a rhymed version of the Apostles' Creed, in which the Name "Jesus" is not found in Stanza 1, line 5, while it is advisable in a rhyming of the Apostles' Creed to retain all the elements.
5. The evaluation of "old Hymn 46," as submitted by the Committee, supported by a large majority of the Churches, makes it advisable to retain the new rhyming of the *Te Deum* (Hymn 2 in the 1979 Hymn Section).
6. There appears to be no reason why the recommendation of the Committee to retain the tune of Hymn 37; to replace the tune of Hymn 39 with that of the Avondzang; to replace the tune of Hymn 46 with that of "Daar is uit 's werelds duistre wolken . . ." should not be accepted.
7. In the Athanasian Creed we confess that the glory of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit is equal (Art. 6), and thus it appears not to be contrary to the Scriptures to "praise the Holy Spirit," even though this expression is not found literally in them.
8. The reasons given by the Church at London why Hymn 8 should be retained in the *Book of Praise* carry sufficient weight to rescind the decision of Synod Smithville 1980, Acts Art. 122, III, D, 5, re this Hymn.

9. The songs presented by brother J. DeRaadt do not fill a vacuum in nor add anything to our *Book of Praise* which is not already found in it.
10. The fact that Hymn 12 comes "from the dark middle ages" is no criterion why it should be rejected; and it has not been proved that the thoughts expressed in it are un-Scriptural.
11. Exhorting one another to do what the Lord has commanded us to do is not "an usurpation and misappropriation of the privileges of the Host, by us, as misguided guests" and is therefore no reason why Hymn 44 should be deleted.
12. Christ takes also care of the lambs (John 21:15; Mark 13:16; Matt. 18:5, 6, 10); the prayer "Teach Thy lambs Thy voice to hear" is in accordance with John 10:3; asking the Shepherd that the lambs' steps may not stray from the straight and narrow way is based on Psalm 23:3, 4, and Matt. 7:12, 13. Thus the contents of Hymn 45 appear to be Scriptural.
13. The very use "thee" and "thou" with the corresponding verb-endings does not yet make a song archaic.
14. The fact that not every submission to the *Book of Praise* was mentioned in its report to Synod, is no proof that the Committee did not consider every submission; thus brother VanZandwijk's statement regarding suppressing submissions and unwillingness on the part of the Committee is an unsubstantiated insinuation.
15. Brother DeGroot incorrectly states that the Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise* holds all the copyrights. The copyrights were and are held on behalf of the Churches by the (Standing) Committee for the *Book of Praise*. The Standing Committee, appointed by the Synod Smithville 1980, did not appoint a publication committee and was fully entitled to have the Hymn Section reprinted, since the Hymn Section was adopted by Synod Smithville 1980, was (and is) the property of the Churches. (See also the agreement mentioned under 2. above.)
16. The appointment of the Committee for the *Book of Praise* as coordinating committee applied only for the time until the following General Synod.
17. In the light of the foregoing it would be incorrect if General Synod urged the Committee for the *Book of Praise* to appoint an administrator.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. To thank the Standing Committee for the *Book of Praise* for the work done in preparing the Psalm and Hymn Section for publication.
2. To approve the agreement that the Committee concluded with Premier Printing.
3. To adopt the rhymed version of the Apostles' Creed, with the recommendation that the Committee include the Name "Jesus" in St. 1, line 5.
4. To rescind the decision of Synod Smithville 1980 re "old Hymn 46," and to retain in its place the new rhyming of the *Te Deum* (Hymn 2 in the 1979 Hymn Section).
5. To retain the tune of Hymn 37; to replace the tune of Hymn 39 with that of the Avondzang; and to replace the tune of Hymn 46 with that of "Daar is uit 'swerelds duistre wolken."
6. Not to follow the suggestion of the Church at London regarding the words "Praise the Holy Spirit."
7. To adopt the proposal of the Church at London to retain Hymn 8 in the 1979 Hymn Section.
8. Not to include in the *Book of Praise* the songs presented by brother J. DeRaadt.

9. Not to accede to the request of brother L. VanZandwijk regarding Hymns 12, 44, and 45.
10. To express appreciation for brother M.M. DeGroot's concern regarding the publication of the *Book of Praise*.
11. Not to follow brother M.M. DeGroot's suggestions re this publication.
12. To continue the Standing Committee for the *Book of Praise*.
13. To charge the Standing Committee linguistically to scrutinize and correct the text of the entire *Book of Praise*, wherever necessary, in order to achieve uniformity with respect to language and punctuation.
14. To instruct the Committee to change Hymn 17 as indicated in the *Acts* (Article 123).

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 124

Book of Praise (Revision of the Prayers)

The report of Committee I on the Revision of the Prayers is read and discussed.

It is decided that the members of Synod shall scrutinize the draft of the Advisory Committee re the prayers and come with written proposals for possible changes so that the Advisory Committee can make recommendations to Synod on these proposals.

ARTICLE 125

Book of Praise (Revision of the Liturgical Forms)

The first part of the Report of Committee I on the revision of the Liturgical Forms is read.

ARTICLE 126

Farewell Dutch Delegates

The chairman speaks a few words of farewell to the brethren Dr. K. Deddens and Rev. J. de Gelder, fraternal delegates from the Dutch sister Churches, thanking them for their helpful advice and encouraging presence. The chairman expresses gratitude for the bonds between the Canadian and Dutch sister Churches, and wishes the brethren a safe journey home.

On behalf of the Dutch delegates the Rev. J. de Gelder responds as follows:

"Mister Chairman, brothers, delegates,

The visit of the delegates of your Dutch sister Churches has almost come to an end. Tomorrow morning, at the moment that you, Mr. Chairman, reopen the session, we hope to depart from Vancouver airport. And I may say, Mr. Chairman, it was a pleasure to be here. We enjoyed the personal contacts with all the brothers, between and after sessions, and also the contacts with the brothers and sisters on the Sundays and during the worship services. We *believe* that "the Church is spread and dispersed over the whole world, and yet is joined and united with heart and will, by the power of faith, in one and the same spirit" (Art. 27, Belgic Confession). We *believe* this — and we could also see and recognize this in the course of these weeks. And that is reason for great gratitude.

This fellowship has been there also in the work at Synod. We are glad, Mr. Chairman, that our visit was not only a formal duty, but that we had the opportunity to take part in your work during these two weeks. It was also possible for us to bring forward our advisory remarks in personal conversations, in some of the committees and in the plenary sessions.

At this Synod you take new steps in the direction of a complete revised *Book of*

Praise. And we wish you that the completion will be there at no distant date.

We congratulate you with the finalizing of the revision of the Church Order.

You can understand, Mr. Chairman, that we followed with great interest especially the discussion of the last days of last week and of this day. We have tasted and felt your difficulties and concern regarding these matters. We can understand that very well. We have to deal with the same questions and uncertainties at our coming Synod Heemse. You can take a certain route — but the question is: *where* does it lead? What will be the end of it? Therefore, Mr. Chairman, we as delegates are really grateful for the decisions that your Synod made regarding the contacts with the sister Churches and the ICRC.

We can imagine that, regarding our Korean sister Churches, you could not come further yet, for we can understand your position on *this* continent with Churches which have the Presbyterian Confessions and Church government. Nevertheless — we are impressed by the high level of the discussions about these matters. It is really not an easy route to go. Skipping over all the difficulties and joining the broad ecumenical movement, and so give up the riches that we received by God's grace — that would be an easy route! Remaining on your own chair, and seeing nothing except the one route of the "vrijgemaakte Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland" and the Churches which proceeded from them, in fear that we would lose what we received — that would be an easy route too!

But, Mr. Chairman, in gratitude for what we received, we *have* to hold steadfastly on to the riches which the Lord gave us in the Three Forms of Unity and our Church Order, and at the same time, we know that Christ gathers His people in all times, places and cultures till the day that He comes. Recognizing that, and respecting that — that is not an easy route! That is a route which asks much faithful effort of all our Churches.

Mr. Chairman, may the decisions of the General Synod of Cloverdale under the blessing of the Lord be a step on that route, behind our Lord Jesus Christ, the King of the Church.

We thank you, brothers, for your cordiality, your hospitality and your brotherly fellowship. We felt at home these two weeks in the Fraser Valley.

May the Lord give you strength and wisdom also to conclude for the praise of God — and in that way — for the benefit of your Churches the other matters which are yet on your agenda. May the Lord be with you and with the Canadian Reformed Churches.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman."

ARTICLE 127

Adjournment

Br. J. Hendricks requests to sing Psalm 121, and leads in thanksgiving. Synod is adjourned.

MORNING SESSION — TUESDAY NOVEMBER 22, 1983

ARTICLE 128

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Hymn 39, reads John 15:1-11, and leads in prayer. Roll call is held.

ARTICLE 129

Acts

The Acts, Articles 118-127, are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 130

Adjournment

Session is closed. The Advisory Committees meet.

EVENING SESSION — TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 1983

ARTICLE 131

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Hymn 61. Roll call is held.

ARTICLE 132

Book of Praise (Prayer Section)

The report of Committee I re the revision of the Prayers is further discussed. The proposed Prayers are provisionally adopted as amended (see Appendix).

A. MATERIAL

- A. Report of Committee on Translation and Revision of the Prayers and Forms
- B. Letter from the Church at Abbotsford
- C. Letter from the Church at Brampton
- D. Letter from the Church at Burlington South
- E. Letter from the Church at Chatham
- F. Letter from the Church at Chilliwack
- G. Letter from the Church at Cloverdale
- H. Letter from the Church at Coaldale
- I. Letter from the Church at Langley
- J. Letter from the Church at Surrey (Maranatha)

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. The draft presented in the Report of the Committee on Translation and Revision of Forms and Prayers differs considerably from the one presented to Synod Smithville 1980, as we could establish when comparing the two.
2. The Synod Smithville 1980 requested the Committee to "present the next Synod with a completed, linguistically corrected, final draft of the prayers," and added the obligation to update language and contents "taking into account also the new Dutch version of the prayers."
3. The comments received from the Churches are for the larger part general and express dissatisfaction with the now presented draft. Only a few concrete remarks were made, containing specific criticisms and recommendations.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. The Committee on Translation and Revision of Forms and Prayers fulfilled the mandate received from Synod Smithville 1980.
2. It appears from the communications received that the Churches are not happy with the now presented draft.
3. This makes it advisable to retain the old prayers as much as possible.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide:

1. To express its appreciation to the Committee which prepared the draft now presented to Synod.

2. Provisionally to adopt the Prayers as amended by Synod (see Appendix).

ARTICLE 133

Book of Praise (Liturgical Forms)

The discussion on the report of Committee I on the Liturgical Forms section of the *Book of Praise* is continued.

The Form for the Baptism of Infants and the Form for the Baptism of Adults are provisionally adopted as amended by Synod. The Form for the Public Profession of Faith is adopted partially.

ARTICLE 134

Adjournment

Rev. B.J. Berends requests to sing Psalm 145:1, 2, and 3, and leads in thanksgiving. Synod is adjourned.

MORNING SESSION — WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 1983

ARTICLE 135

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Psalm 103:5, 6, and 7, reads Matthew 19:13-16 and 21:14-18, and leads in prayer. On behalf of the members of Synod, the chairman offers condolences to br. G. Lodder who has learned that a baby grandchild had passed away. The chairman points to the comfort in God's covenant promises and mentions that br. Lodder is free to decide to leave Synod or stay.

ARTICLE 136

Acts

The Acts, Articles 128-134, are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 137

Adjournment

Session is closed. The Advisory Committees meet.

EVENING SESSION — WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 1983

ARTICLE 138

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Psalm 56:1, 4, and 5. Roll call is held: br. G. Lodder has left Synod to return home because of the passing away of a grandchild.

ARTICLE 139

Proposals re Printing and Distributing of Acts and Reports

The proposals of the brethren Stam and Visscher re the printing and distributing of Acts of Synod and Reports to Synod and the Churches are adopted.

SYNODICAL COMMITTEE REPORTS — PRINTING AND DISTRIBUTION

Re The Board of Governors

The Standing Committee for the *Book of Praise*

The Committee on Correspondence with Churches Abroad

The Committee for Contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church

The Committee on Bible Translations.

1. All reports to Synod should be printed in a uniform format (same size and type style as *Acts* 1980, and *Acts* 1983) in order to facilitate possible incorporation into the *Acts* as appendices.
2. To supply as many copies of reports to the local Churches as there are office bearers, plus 2 copies for the local archives, 35 copies for the convening Church and as many copies as may be required for internal committee use or for Churches Abroad.
3. To send 3 copies of each report to the Library of the Theological College.

PUBLICATION OF THE ACTS

1. To base the number of copies of the *Acts* on the number of copies of the *Yearbook* of the Canadian Reformed Churches as published annually.
2. To pass on to the Committee for Correspondence 12 copies of the *Acts*.
3. To pass on to the Committee for Contact with the OPC 6 copies.
4. To send 3 copies of the *Acts* to the Theological College, and 1 copy to the Theologische Hogeschool (Kampen).

ARTICLE 140

Book of Praise (Liturgical Forms Section)

The discussion on the Report of Committee I re *Book of Praise* (Liturgical Forms Section) is continued

The following Forms are adopted as emended: (see: Appendix)

- a. Form for the Public Profession of Faith
- b. Form for the Celebration of the Lord's Supper
- c. Abbreviated Form for the Celebration of the Lord's Supper
- d. Form for the Excommunication of Non-communicant Members
- e. Form for the Excommunication of Communicant Members
- f. Form for Readmission into the Church of Christ
- g. Form for the Ordination (Installation) of Ministers
- h. Form for the Ordination (Installation) of Missionaries
- i. Form for the Ordination of Elders and Deacons

The discussion is closed.

ARTICLE 141

Adjournment

Rev. J. Geertsema requests to sing Psalm 116:1, 7 and 10, and leads in thanksgiving. Synod is adjourned.

MORNING SESSION — THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1983

ARTICLE 142

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Psalm 119:60, 62, and 63, reads Luke 12:35-49, and leads in prayer. Roll call is held.

ARTICLE 143

Acts

The Acts, Articles 135-141, are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 144

Adjournment

Session is adjourned. The Advisory Committees meet.

AFTERNOON SESSION — THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1983

ARTICLE 145

Reopening — Book of Praise (Liturgical Forms — continued)

The chairman requests to sing Hymn 49. Roll call is held.

The discussion on the Report of Committee I re *Book of Praise* (Liturgical Forms) is continued, after some changes in the Report are announced.

The Form for the Solemnization of Marriage is adopted, as amended. Herewith the discussion on the Liturgical Forms section is concluded. The Recommendations D, 1 and 2 are ADOPTED.

Report of Advisory Committee I re Book of Praise. THE FORMS

A. MATERIAL — Agenda VIII, B, 6, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28.

- B, 6 Report of the Committee on Translation and Revision of the Prayers and Forms
- 16 Letter from the Free Reformed Churches in Australia re Forms
- 17 Letters from the Church at Abbotsford re Forms
- 18 Letter from the Church at Burlington-East re Forms
- 19 Letter from the Church at Chilliwack re Forms (B, 11)
- 20 Letter from the Church at Coaldale re Forms (B, 13)
- 21 Letter from the Church at Langley re Forms (B, 14)
- 22 Letter from the Church at London re Forms
- 23 Letter from the Church at Ottawa (Men's Society)
- 24 Letter from the Rev. D. DeJong
- 25 Letter from the Rev. J. DeJong (Gravamen re Marriage Form)
- 26 Letter from br. W. VanderKamp
- 27 Letter from br. L. VanZandwijk
- 28 Letter from the Church at Cloverdale re delay adoption until General Synod 1986
- 29 Letter from the Church at Surrey re delay until 1986 (B, 15)

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. In accordance with the mandate given by the Synod of Smithville 1980 (Acts Art. 128, D, 3, 4) the Committee on Translation and Revision of Forms and Prayers gave the provisionally adopted liturgical Forms in the hands of a subcommittee for language and style and published the result in a separate booklet, since no other parts for the *Book of Praise* were ready for publication. This booklet was

sent to the Churches and a number was provided to the Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad for the sister Churches.

2. Some Churches and individual members submitted proposals with corrections. They were considered by the Committee and partly incorporated in the final draft. The Committee submits this final draft to the Synod together with a list of these proposed corrections.
3. Dr. W. Helder presented a linguistically corrected copy of the Forms. All his corrections were taken over by the Committee, with the exception of only a few, which it recommends to the Synod for consideration.
4. The Committee recommends also "that Synod appoint Dr. W. Helder in Hamilton, an acknowledged language expert, as final editor for the linguistic aspects of the Forms and Prayers, so that a uniform text and punctuation may be achieved."
5. The Committee mentions "the highly appreciated help of Dr. J. Faber who served the Committee as substitute member during the leave of absence of Rev. Stam."
6. In their letters the Churches mentioned sub A, and the sister Churches in Australia, as well as some individual members in our Churches address Synod with questions and proposals, which are grouped together in the order of the Forms.

a. FORM FOR THE BAPTISM OF INFANTS:

1. read "... Baptism signifies and seals to us the cleansing from our sins," instead of "... seals to us the promise of the cleansing ...";
2. read "cling to" instead of "cleave to";
3. delete the words "which is no more than a constant death" since it is a Methodist line of thinking;
4. shorten the first question, since it is cumbersome; replace the word "utmost"; and have the parents answer "I do, God helping me";
5. read "army" instead of "host."

b. FORM FOR THE BAPTISM OF ADULTS:

1. the word "God" has been deleted here in the sentence "... the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit," and should be retained as in the other Form;
2. change "Creeds," into "Creeds and Confessions" (fourth question).

c. FORM FOR THE PUBLIC PROFESSION OF FAITH:

1. retain the words "... true and complete doctrine of salvation";
2. retain the words "before God and His Church" from the old Form;
3. read "Do you truly detest your sins and humble yourself before God because of them, and do you seek your life outside of them?";
4. read "certainly" instead of "truly."

d. FORM FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER:

1. Several Churches object to the new list of sins, including the sister Churches in Australia, since the new expressions are vague and ambiguous as well as too specific and already included in the more general terms which also are maintained;
2. retain "only begotten," instead of "only";
3. delete from the words spoken when the cup with wine is presented "from it, all of you," so that it reads: "Take, drink, remember."

e. ABBREVIATED FORM FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER:

1. change "afternoon service" into "second service" or "second celebration";
2. revoke the decision of the General Synod of Smithville, Acts, Art. 136, D. 1, "To add in the title of the Abbreviated Form, between brackets (For the afternoon service)," and replace it by the following statement "It should be noted that the Abbreviated Form is not meant as a replacement of the original Form, but is to be used in addition to it for making it easier to

have more celebrations of the Lord's Supper than the minimum of 4 or 6 times a year. Therefore, at least once a year the original Form must be used";

3. in the early Church, the Lord's Prayer always preceded the celebration of the Lord's Supper. This prayer never functioned as a *thanksgiving* after this celebration. For this reason Synod Arnhem 1981 deleted the Lord's Prayer from the abbreviated Form. It is advisable that we follow the same course.

f. FORMS FOR EXCOMMUNICATION:

1. change "we elders and overseers" into "we overseers," change "Tax Collectors" into "sinners";
2. maintain uniformity in the two Forms and delete the words "sinning against the . . . commandment";
3. read "do not associate with" instead of "have nothing to do with."

g. FORM FOR THE READMISSION INTO THE CHURCH OF CHRIST:

the suggestion is made to disconnect the readmission from "the next celebration of the holy supper" since that can take too long; and to change "within a week," since that can be too short.

h. FORM FOR THE ORDINATION (OR INSTALLATION) OF MINISTERS:

1. have the ministers also answer "I do" to maintain uniformity between all office-bearers;
2. retain in the prayer the words from the old Form and add after "increased" "in number and in virtues";
3. maintain uniformity in the questions in this Form and in the next and read in both either "do you believe" or "do you receive" (second question).

i. FORM FOR THE ORDINATION OF ELDERS AND DEACONS:

1. use the words "elders and deacons" consistently;
2. use consistently "secondly" and "thirdly," instead of "second," "third";
3. do not use the word "presbytery," where this has a different meaning in the Presbyterian Churches;
4. give the correct text in the place of Mark 22:27.

j. FORM FOR THE SOLEMNIZATION OF MARRIAGE:

1. change the words ". . . shall live happily in sincere love and holiness" since it places too much emphasis on "happily" rather than on "love";
2. retain a paragraph in which reference is made to Genesis 3:16, 19;
3. reject the present revised Form "in favour of a revision which more closely follows the original Form introduced by Dathenus; or that it be revised again to reintroduce some important elements in the older Form on the grounds that:
 - a. "The present revision has lost much of the beauty and style of the older Form."
 - b. "No grounds have ever been given why . . . this Form . . . had to be *shortened*. None of the Churches asked for a shorter Form."
 - c. Particularly in the section on the *Duties in Marriage*, many points of the older Form have been dropped, "which is a *departure* from our heritage, rather than a revision . . ."
 - d. Synod Coaldale did not give proof for the validity of taking away the reference to Gen. 3:16; it should be maintained, since our forefathers were correct in calling "a punishment an *ordinance*."
 - e. Also the reference to I Pet. 3:5, showing the submission of Sarah to Abraham as her lord should be maintained as an example and expression of God's norm for us.

7. The Advisory Committee has noted the following changes in the Draft which the Committee presents to Synod.

1. On page 2, in the margin, Romans 6:5 has been deleted.
2. On page 4, in the Prayer, the word "Thy" in "this Thy child" has been deleted.
3. On page 4, as throughout the Forms, brackets are used to indicate the alternate gender.
4. On page 5, the words "in this Christian Church" have been replaced by "here in this Church of Christ." See also page 12 and page 13.
5. On page 6, in the final sentence of the Prayer, the Committee returns to the wording in the old Form. See also page 14.
6. On page 9, the word "into" has been changed into "in" in the words "baptizing them into the Name . . ."; and the word "Name" is not capitalized.
7. On page 12, in the fifth question, the following words have been added: "If it should happen, and may God graciously prevent it, that you become delinquent either in doctrine or in conduct"?
8. On page 16, in the quotation of 1 Peter 5:10, the capitals of the personal and possessive pronouns have been dropped, as has been done in quotations throughout the Forms.
9. On page 22, the form reads ". . . and He declared: As often . . ."
10. On page 22, at the bottom, the text reference Romans 8:11, has been deleted.
11. On page 48, the Form for Readmission has the word "person," in "shall loose this person from . . ."
12. On page 49, the form reads "our fellow-brother (sister) . . ."
13. On page 49, the form reads "we will now receive him (her) into the communion . . ."
14. On page 49, the word "GOD" is completely capitalized.
15. On page 50, the form reads "and readmit you, brother (sister) -----, to . . ."
16. On page 54, the closing bracket in the title is placed behind "word."
17. On page 54, the word "Name" in "Name of the Lord," has not been capitalized. cf. p. 56 etc.
18. On page 56, the form reads "baptizing them in the name of . . ."
19. On page 61, in the first paragraph, a sentence has been inserted which describes the task of a missionary.
20. On page 61, third paragraph appears to try to "include too much" in one sentence. (Dr. W. Helder)
21. On page 61, the last word "shepherd" is not capitalized.
22. On page 62, the first paragraph is not fully clear.
23. On page 62, the duties of the missionary show a cumbersome accumulation of Scripture sentences with hardly any coherence. (Dr. W. Helder)
24. On page 62, the observation has been made that "the wording of the text is inserted here in an awkward manner." (Dr. W. Helder)
25. On page 63, the number 1 in Titus 1:9 has not been printed in a clear way.
26. On page 63, the third paragraph starts with "And whereas . . ."
27. On page 63, the first line of the last paragraph the word "they" occurs. The question has been raised who are meant with those "they."
28. On page 64, the first paragraph contains an awkward combination of sentences.
29. On page 64, in the third question, the additional words "in close cooperation . . ." weaken the promise. (Dr. W. Helder)
30. On page 65, in the quotation of 1 Peter 5:1, the word "chief" is not capitalized, while it is done in the same quotation on page 57; see also p. 73.
31. On page 65, in the last paragraph, the word "his" in "in all his ways," excludes the family.
32. On page 67, the first paragraph speaks of "office" while the third paragraph has "offices."
33. On page 68, the fifth paragraph uses the word "presbyters" and the

- “bishops or overseers” as if these were identical.
34. On page 70, the third paragraph reads, “impressed . . . to show mercy.”
 35. On page 73, Galatians 6:10 is quoted in connection with the work of the deacons.
 36. On page 1, the Form reads “the promise of the cleansing from our sins” See also pp. 2 and 8.
 37. On page 4, the words of the old Form “the obstinate pharaoh and all his host” have been changed into “the entire host of the obstinate pharaoh.” See also p. 10.
8. Brother W. VanderKamp requests Synod to inform him whether the interpretation of the word “creeds” in the questions found in the Forms for baptism and for the public profession of faith includes the Three Forms of Unity.
 9. The Consistory of the Church at Cloverdale requests Synod “to delay the final adoption of the *Book of Praise* until General Synod 1986” on the following grounds:
 - a. The Prayer-section “needs to be extensively reworked.”
 - b. The Belgic Confession with the proposed changes “was never made known to the Churches.”
 - c. The Heidelberg Catechism was not received in time and in sufficient copies to be tested in the Catechism classes.
 - d. “The Canons of Dort were sent to the Churches in part” and not the whole as corrected, in accordance with the mandate of Synod Smithville 1980.
 - e. The Revised Church Order “contains a basic and fundamental change” in proposing the use of the name “Consistory” “to designate meetings of ministers, elders, and deacons.”

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. The Committee on Translation and Revision of Forms and Prayers fulfilled its mandate given by the Synod of Smithville 1980, *Acts*, Art. 128, D, 3, 4.
2. The Committee presented its final draft in which a number of critical remarks from the Churches were incorporated, as well as the corrections submitted by Dr. W. Helder as language expert. This makes it possible to finalize the revision of the Forms.
3. In order to ensure linguistic uniformity in the *Book of Praise* it appears mandatory to charge the Standing Committee on the *Book of Praise* to prepare all parts of the *Book of Praise* adopted by this Synod for printing.

4. A. FORM FOR THE BAPTISM OF INFANTS

1. Also on the ground of question and answer 71 of the Heidelberg Catechism it is advisable to read the Form as follows (page 1, third paragraph) “Baptism signifies and seals to us the washing away of our sins through Jesus Christ.”
2. In order to bring this Form into line with Matt. 28:19 and the Form for the Baptism of Adults, the word “God” should be deleted in the third paragraph on page 1, so that it reads “. . . baptized into the Name of the Father, the Son”
3. The Scripture reference in the margin on page 2 beside the first paragraph should be retained, so that it says there “Romans 6:5.”
4. It is not necessary to replace the verb “to cleave” by the verb “to cling.” since also the RSV retains the verb “to cleave” in Gen. 2:24, and other places.
5. On the basis of Ex. 14:6, 10, 17, 18, and Psalm 136:15 the prayer before baptism should read “Thou hast drowned the obstinate pharaoh and his entire host in the Red Sea.”

6. On page 4, in the Prayer before baptism, the word "Thy" should be retained in the following form "look upon this child of Thine"
7. In the second question the words "in the Church of Christ" should be changed to ". . . in this Christian Church"
8. In order to avoid misunderstanding, the word "creeds" in the second question should be replaced by "confessions."
9. To add to the answer of the parents the words "God helping me," would not be fitting.
10. The word "utmost" in the third question is a normal English word. There is no need for change.

B. FORM FOR THE BAPTISM OF ADULTS

1. On page 7, last paragraph, the formulation should be changed in accordance with the Form for the Baptism of Infants, and read ". . . . Baptism signifies and seals to us the washing away of"
2. On page 9, the quotation of Matt. 28:19 should be changed as follows ". . . baptizing them into the Name of"
3. In the Prayer on page 10, the same formulation should be used as in the Prayer in the Form for the Baptism of Infants "Thou hast drowned the obstinate pharaoh and his entire host in the Red Sea."
4. In the fourth question on page 12, the wording should be as follows ". . . the Word of God summarized in the confessions and taught here in this Christian Church."

C. FORM FOR THE PUBLIC PROFESSION OF FAITH

1. In order to maintain the uniformity of expression the address on page 15 should read "We now ask you to answer sincerely the following questions before God and His Church:"
2. The formulation of the first question is similar to that of the fourth question in the Form for the Baptism of Adults. There is, therefore, no need to add ". . . the true and complete doctrine of salvation."
3. In the first question the word "Creeds" should be replaced by "confessions."
4. To read "detest your sins" instead of "detest yourself" weakens the meaning.

D. FORM FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

1. It is evident that none of the Churches which sent in submissions is satisfied with the list of sinners as it was expanded by the Synod Smithville 1980. In accordance with suggestions made, the text as adopted by our Dutch sister Churches should be followed. On page 19 it should read as follows ". . . to be guilty of the following offensive sins to abstain from the table of the Lord, and we declare to them that they have no part in the kingdom of Christ: all who refuse to trust in the LORD alone or serve Him in their own manner; all who abuse the Name of the LORD by cursing or in any other way; all who do not diligently attend the worship services and who despise the proclamation of God's Word or the sanctity of the sacraments; all who are disobedient to their parents or to others in authority over them; all who violate human life or cherish hatred against their neighbour and refuse to be reconciled to him; all who, either within or outside of holy wedlock, do not keep their bodies pure; all who by stealing, greed, or extravagance, lead a worldly life; all liars, backbiters, and slanderers; briefly, all who either in word or conduct show themselves to be unbelieving by leading an offensive life."
2. On page 22, the word "saying" should be inserted after "declared," so that it reads ". . . and He declared, saying, As often"
3. Beside the last paragraph on page 22, the text reference to Romans 8:11 should be added again after "Acts 2:33," as this was inadvertently omitted.

4. On page 23, in the margin, the word "Fellowship" at the top of the page has been deleted and should be reinserted.
5. In the Thanksgiving on page 28, the word "only" should be changed to "only begotten."

E. FORM FOR THE LORD'S SUPPER (ABBREVIATED)

1. Since this form is not meant to replace the longer form, a decision to say that "at least once a year the original form must be used" would promote such replacing.
2. There is no objection to changing the term "afternoon service" to "second service."
3. The Lord's Prayer should be replaced as prayer of "Thanksgiving." (see: amended Form)

F. THE FORM FOR THE EXCOMMUNICATION OF NON-COMMUNICANT MEMBERS

1. The suggestion to change "we elders and overseers" to "we overseers" should be followed as the former is a tautology. The same on pp. 44, 51.
2. The suggestion has been made to change "Gentile and Tax-collector" to "Gentile and sinner." However, neither the word "Tax Collector" nor "sinner" conveys what the Lord Jesus wishes to say. Therefore the following reading is to be preferred ". . . as a Gentile and an outcast, . . ."
3. On page 36, 1st paragraph, it should be added (guilty of sin) "*against the . . . commandment.*" See also page 41.

G. FORM FOR THE EXCOMMUNICATION OF COMMUNICANT MEMBERS

Last paragraph on page 41: see above F 3.

H. FORM FOR THE READMISSION INTO THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

1. It has been suggested to disconnect the readmission into the Church from "the next celebration of the holy supper," since this is thought to be too long in some instances. This suggestion should not be followed up since:
 - a. readmission must be based on sufficient evidence of true repentance (see Lord's Day 31); and
 - b. it is proper that readmission become visible by admitting a person to the celebration of the Lord's Supper.
2. On page 48, third paragraph, the word "person" is found. It should be replaced by "man/woman."
3. On page 49, first paragraph, it reads "conversion of our fellow-brother/sister." It is incorrect at this stage to use the title "brother/sister." Therefore the above sentence should read "the conversion of A."
4. On page 50, third paragraph: see under 3 above.
5. On page 49, 4th line from the top, the word "again" is found, whereas it is missing in the 6th line. This word should be inserted in line 6.
6. On page 49, fourth paragraph, the word "God" is written with three capitals. It should be changed to "God."

I. FORM FOR THE ORDINATION (INSTALLATION) OF MINISTERS OF THE WORD

1. The closing bracket in the title should be placed behind the word "Installation."
2. On page 54, first paragraph, the word "Name" in "the Name of the Lord" should be capitalized. See also p. 56, etc.
3. On page 56, in the quotation of Matt. 28:19, the word "into" has incorrectly been changed to "in."
4. On page 57, in the second-last paragraph the second question says, "Do you believe" while in the Form for the Ordination of a Missionary it says "Do you receive . . ." The latter form should be changed according to the former.

J. FORM FOR THE ORDINATION (INSTALLATION) OF MISSIONARIES

1. On page 61, first paragraph contains a sentence which describes the task of a missionary. This is out of place here and should be deleted.
2. On page 61, the third paragraph should be cut up into two sentences, as follows "God, our heavenly Father, in His good pleasure, gathers a Church from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. He calls them out of the corrupt race of man unto life eternal."
3. On page 61, the last word should be capitalized.
4. On page 62, the first paragraph is not fully clear and should be changed as follows "In order to gather His Church, Christ has sent the Spirit as He promised, saying, *'When the Counsellor comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, He will bear witness to Me,'* John 15:26. The apostles were also witnesses, sent by Christ as the Father had sent Him; they testified that the Father had sent His Son as the Saviour of the world."
5. On page 62, the third paragraph should be changed as follows "From the time of the apostles, the Holy Spirit has commanded the Church to set men apart for the work to which He has called them."
6. On page 62, the fifth paragraph should be broken up as follows "According to the mandate of the Lord Jesus Christ and His apostles, a missionary shall first of all preach the Word of God to those who are without Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant of promise. Thus he brings hope to those who have no hope and are without God in the world, that they, being far off, may come near through the blood of Christ."
7. On page 62, last paragraph, should be changed as follows "God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. He has entrusted the ministry of reconciliation to men whom He made ambassadors of Christ. Therefore the missionary shall beseech men in the Name of Christ, *be reconciled to God.*"
8. On page 63, in the margin the text reference on Titus 1:9 must be printed more clearly.
9. On page 63, third paragraph, starts with "And whereas" This should be changed to "And since"
10. On page 63, last paragraph, change as follows "In order that the apostles would be able to fulfil this charge, the Lord Christ, to whom has been given all authority in heaven and on earth, comforted and encouraged them, and in them His whole Church, with the promise"
11. On page 64, first paragraph, the words "The glory of God is its light and its lamp is the Lamb," should be deleted.
12. On page 64, the sentences in the second question should be changed, see page 57.
13. On page 64, last paragraph, the words "in close cooperation with the consistency of this Church" should be deleted. The following words should then be added "Do you also promise to do your work under the direction of and in close cooperation with the consistory of this Church?"
14. On page 65, in the quotation of 1 Peter 5:4, the word "chief" is not capitalized, whereas this was done on page 57; on page 73 it is not capitalized either. None of them should be capitalized.
15. On page 65, in the last paragraph, it should read "In all his/their ways."

K. FORM FOR THE ORDINATION OF ELDERS AND DEACONS

1. On page 69, fourth paragraph, last sentence, should read "For this purpose they form, together with the ministers of the Word, the consistory of the Church.
2. On page 70, third paragraph, it should read "the Lord impressed upon His people Israel the obligation to show mercy"

3. On page 70, the text reference Mark 22:27 should be replaced by Matt. 4:23, 24.
4. On page 72, the answer should read "I do with all my heart."
5. On page 73, second paragraph the sentence "Let us do good to all men, especially to those of the household of faith" and the text reference Gal. 6:10 in the margin, should be deleted.

Consideration K,5 DEFEATED.

L. FORM FOR THE SOLEMNIZATION OF MARRIAGE

1. Announcement The consistory announces that . . . and . . . have indicated their intention to enter into the married state, according to the ordinance of God. They desire to begin this holy state in the Name of the Lord and to complete it to His glory. If no lawful objection is brought forward, the ceremony will take place, the Lord willing, on

Introduction . . . and . . . , since the consistory has duly made known to the congregation your desire to enter into the married state, and no lawful objection has been presented, we may now proceed to the solemnization of your marriage in the Name of the Lord.

The Institution of Marriage
 Heb 13:4
 Gen 1:27
 Gen 2:18-24

Let us first listen to a summary of what the Word of God teaches us about marriage. We find there that marriage is an institution of God which pleases Him and must therefore be held in honour among all. After God our Father made heaven and earth. He created man in His own image. And the LORD God said, *It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.* When the man did not find a helper fit for him among the other creatures of God, *the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh; and the rib which the LORD God had taken from the man He made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man."* Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh.

We therefore believe that the LORD also today gives husband and wife to one another, and, united by His hand, nothing shall separate them in this life.

Jn 2:1-11 Also our Lord Jesus Christ honoured marriage when He revealed His glory at the marriage feast at Cana. He teaches us that marriage is an institution of God and should not be broken, and said, *What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder.*

Mt 19:6 Since God has made marriage such a strong bond, He hates divorce, as also our Lord Jesus Christ shows when He says, *Whoever divorces his wife, except for fornication, and marries another, commits adultery.*

Mal 2:16 As the Lord forbids immorality, *each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband,* so that our bodies may be preserved as temples of the Holy Spirit and we may glorify God in our bodies.

The Profound Mystery
 Eph 5:22-33
 Jn 13:1

The apostle Paul teaches us that the unity of husband and wife in marriage is a profound mystery, as reflecting the relationship between Christ and His Church. As Christ is the Head of the Church, so the husband is the head of his wife. Christ loved His Church to the end, and gave Himself up for her, that she might be holy and without blemish. Likewise the husband shall love his wife as his own body, take care of her, and cherish her, as Christ does the Church.

1 Pet 3:5	<p>As the Church is subject to Christ, so the wife shall be subject in everything to her husband, respect him, and entrust herself to his loving care, following the example of godly women who trusted in God and were subject to their husbands.</p> <p>Husband and wife shall assist each other in all good things, heartily forgiving one another their sins and shortcomings. United in love, they will more and more reflect in their marriage the unity of Christ and His Church.</p>
1 Cor 7:28	<p>Although it is true, as the apostle says, that those who marry will face trouble in this state and because of sin will experience many difficulties and afflictions, yet they may also believe the promise of God that they, as heirs of the grace of life, will always receive His aid and protection, even when they least expect it.</p>
The Purpose of Marriage	<p>The Word of God also teaches us about the purpose of marriage. First, husband and wife shall live together in sincere love and holiness, helping each other faithfully in all things that belong to this life and to the life to come.</p>
Gen 1:28	<p>Second, by marriage the human race is to be continued and increased, and under the blessing of God, husband and wife will be fruitful and multiply. If it pleases God to give them children, they shall nurture these children in the true knowledge and fear of the Lord.</p>
Eph 6:4	<p>(The minister shall ask them to rise.)</p>
The Duties of Marriage	<p>Bridegroom and Bride, hear from the Word of God what the Lord requires of you in marriage.</p>
1 Pet 3:7	<p>Bridegroom, know that God has set you to be the head of your wife. You shall love her as your own body, as Christ loved His Church and gave Himself up for her; guide, protect, and comfort your wife. Live with her wisely and honour her, because she is an heir to eternal life together with you; then your prayers will not be hindered.</p>
Eph 4:28	<p>Work faithfully in your daily calling, that you may support your family and also help those in need.</p> <p>Bride, you shall love your husband and be subject to him, as the Church is subject to Christ. Accept his guidance and assist him in all good things. Take proper care of your family and household, and live modestly, in faith, love, and holiness.</p>
Psalm 128:1, 2	<p>Assist each other always and be faithful to each other. Diligently fulfil the calling which the Lord has given you in the Church and in this world. Believe God's sure promise, <i>Blessed is every one who fears the LORD, who walks in His ways! You shall be happy, and it shall be well with you.</i></p>
Psalm 124:8	<p>... and ..., you have now heard what the Lord requires of you and what He has promised you. May our gracious God give you the strength and the faithfulness to live together as husband and wife in this manner and may your help be in the Name of the LORD who made heaven and earth.</p>
The Marriage Vows	<p>(Minister: Will you now join right hands?)</p> <p>To the Bridegroom: ..., do you declare here before the Lord and these witnesses that you take as your lawful wife ..., here present? Do you promise to love and guide her faithfully, to maintain her, and to live with her in holiness, according to the holy Gospel? Do you also promise never to forsake her, but to be true to her always, in good days and bad, in riches and poverty, in health and sickness, for as long as you both shall live?</p>

	What is your answer?
Answer	Answer: I do To the Bride: . . . , do you declare here before the Lord and these witnesses that you take as your lawful husband . . . here present? Do you promise to love and obey him, to assist him, and to live with him in holiness, according to the holy Gospel? Do you also promise never to forsake him, but to be true to him always, in good days and bad, in riches and poverty, in health and sickness, for as long as you both shall live?
	What is your answer?
Answer	Answer: I do.
Pronouncement	(Minister:) I now pronounce you husband and wife. The Father of all mercies, who by His grace called you to this holy state of marriage, bind you together in true love and faithfulness, and grant you His blessing. Amen. Bridegroom and Bride, since we cannot expect anything from ourselves, you shall kneel before the Lord and we shall pray with you and for you that He may enable you to fulfil your vows and will grant you His blessing.
Intercession	Almighty and heavenly Father, Thou hast said from the beginning that man should not be alone. We thank and praise Thee that Thou hast given this brother and sister to each other in marriage, that they may be one. We pray Thee, grant them Thy Holy Spirit that they may live together according to Thy will in true faith. Help them to resist the power of sin, and to live in holiness before Thee. Lift up Thy countenance upon them, and guide them in prosperity and adversity by Thy fatherly hand. Grant them Thy blessing according to the covenant-promises given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. If it pleases Thee to give them children, confirm Thy covenant to them and to their seed; and grant them that they may nurture these children in the fear of the Lord, to the glory of Thy Name, and to the edification of the Church. Let them live in communion with Thy Son, Jesus Christ, in the harmony of true love, and to the benefit of their neighbour. Cause them to look forward with all the Church to the great day of the marriage feast of the Lamb. Hear us, merciful Father, for the sake of Jesus Christ, Thy beloved Son, who with Thee and the Holy Spirit, the only true God, lives and reigns for ever, Amen. (or add: <i>Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, And forgive us our debts, As we also have forgiven our debtors; And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one, For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, for ever. Amen.</i>)
Benediction	Brother and sister . . . , our Lord God bless you richly and grant you a long and holy life together in all godliness, love, and unity, AMEN.

2. Since the headship of man is clearly maintained in the form, addition of Gen. 3:16 would not add any essential element; this even apart from the uncertainty as to the explanation of this text.
5. The use of the word "confessions" instead of "creeds" in the questions of the Forms for Baptism and for Public Profession of Faith answers the question posed by brother W. VanderKamp.
6. Even though this Synod will be unable to adopt the final text of all parts of the Church Book, and some parts can be adopted only in a provisional form, it is advisable to publish a complete *Book of Praise*.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Synod adopt the Forms as amended above.
 2. Synod express its appreciation for the work done by the Committee on Translation and Revision of Forms and Prayers, as well as for the work done by Dr. W. Helder and Dr. J. Faber.
- ADOPTED

ARTICLE 146

Heidelberg Catechism

Committee II presents its Report on the Revision of the Heidelberg Catechism. The discussion on this report is begun.
Session is adjourned.

EVENING SESSION — THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1983

ARTICLE 147

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Psalm 125:1, 2, and 4. Roll call is held.

ARTICLE 148

Appeals

Appeals of the Churches at Neerlandia and London re Acts Synod Smithville 1980, Art. 143.

Committee I reports:

A. MATERIAL

- A. J. 11, Appeal of the Church at London
- B. J. 12, Appeal of the Church at Neerlandia

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. The Church at London states that it cannot accept the decision recorded in Art. 143 of the Acts of Synod Smithville 1980 "as settled and binding."
2. The Church at London has three reasons for the above statement:
 - a. The decision does not contain any grounds.
 - b. The decision is confusing.
 - c. Injustice has been done to both parties involved.
3. The Church at London requests Synod to "deal with the question whether the published exhortation, to *practise communion* of saints 'with other believers who do not go with us' p. 30 sermon, is against Scripture and confessions or not."

4. The Church at Neerlandia appeals point 1 of the decision mentioned in Observation 1.
5. As "this Synodical decision as a whole finds itself without any grounds" the Church at Neerlandia requests this Synod "to do what the previous Synod failed to do."
6. The Church at Neerlandia requests Synod "to consider its (appeal to Synod Smithville 1980) content and to judge whether we have indeed failed to submit proof that the views of Rev. D. DeJong regarding the Church and the Communion of Saints are against Scripture and Confession."
7. The Church at Neerlandia recommends acceptance of Observations (except No. 10), Considerations 1, e-j, and the subsequent Recommendations as presented to Synod Smithville, Acts, page 107-111.
8. The Church at Neerlandia holds that "the view that all the believers without exception (whether they belong to false churches or not) are all members of Christ's holy congregation is in direct conflict with the spirit and content of Art. 28."
9. The Church at Neerlandia states that "In Art. 28 we confess that there is a calling for believers outside the Church to join Christ's holy congregation wheresoever God has established it. Only by joining this holy congregation are believers able to maintain its unity"

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. It is regrettable that Synod Smithville 1980 did not publish the grounds for its decision mentioned above.
2. From both the above submissions it is evident that the issue is: Does Art. 28 of our Belgic Confession call the believers to prove that they are Church members or to join the Church while not being members at that moment?
3. Article 28 of the Belgic Confession states clearly:
 - a. No person ought to withdraw from the Church.
 - b. All men are in duty bound to join themselves to the Church, thereby maintaining the unity of the Church.
 - c. It is the duty of all believers to join themselves to this congregation.
 - d. All those who separate themselves from it act contrary to the ordinance of God.
 - e. All those who do not join themselves to it act contrary to the ordinance of God.
4. The statement that "all believers already belong to the Church" would nullify the above confession.
5. Although we confess in Lord's Day VII that those are saved who are ingrafted into Christ by a true faith, yet it is obvious that question and answer 55 describes the communion of saints as a characteristic of and a gift to the Church.

D. RECOMMENDATION

To send the above Considerations to the Churches at London and Neerlandia as Synod's judgment on the issue raised in their appeals.

ARTICLE 149

Request Reformatiorische Politieke Federatie re Seal Hunt.

Committee III presents:

A. MATERIAL — Agenda K,3 Letter Reformatiorische Politieke Federatie

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. The letter of the Reformatorische Politieke Federatie is a circular letter of which a copy has also been sent to the General Synod via the convening Church.
2. The Reformatorische Politieke Federatie urges Synod to support the resolution of the European Parliament prohibiting the import of the pelt of slaughtered newborn seals, especially since the Canadian government has pronounced its "disappointment and concern" over the European resolution. The RPF appeals to Synod to do "everything in your might to make government and citizens of Canada change their minds."

C. CONSIDERATION

According to Article 30 of the Church Order ecclesiastical assemblies shall deal only with ecclesiastical matters. Since the request of the RPF presents a humanitarian and political matter, it is not in the province of Synod to deal with it.

D. RECOMMENDATION

Synod decide to declare the request of the Reformatorische Politieke Federatie inadmissible.

The Recommendation is ADOPTED.

ARTICLE 150

Overture Church at Ottawa re The Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America

Committee III presents:

A. **MATERIAL** — Agenda L, 1 Overture Church at Ottawa re Contact Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. The Church at Ottawa has supplied Synod with information regarding the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, concerning the history, statistics, standards, church polity, worship, ethics, and relations of the RPCNA as follows:
 - a. The RPCNA finds its roots in Scotland. They are commonly referred to as "covenanters" because in their struggles against such kings as Charles I, Charles II and James VII who fanatically attempted to force a semi-Roman Catholic system of worship and doctrine and an episcopal, hierarchical Erastian form of Church government upon them, they found that the act of signing "covenants" was of great benefit for mutual protection and the defence of Protestantism. All those who signed such a covenant would thereby swear to God to be faithful mutually to the Presbyterian and Scriptural principles of the Reformation. The terrible years of persecution and bloodshed came to an end when James VII died and William of Orange came to rule in his stead; thereafter the Reformed Presbyterian Church gradually took shape. In 1743 the first Reformed Presbytery was organized. In the nineteenth century many members of these Churches immigrated to North America, and there formed the present RPCNA.
At this time the RPCNA has about 80 congregations and a total membership of about 10,000. Over the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, there existed in Canada about 26 congregations and about 80 other mission stations or resident groups. Today however, only 3 congregations can be found in Canada, all in and around Ottawa; they are in Almonte, Lochiel, and Ottawa itself.

- b. As to doctrine, the RPCNA adheres to the *Westminster Confession of Faith* and to the *Westminster Larger and Shorter Catechisms*. In addition to these, in 1806 it has adopted *The Declaration and Testimony of the RPCNA* (amended 1823-1928); in setup as well as in contents, it is very similar to the Westminster Confession. Moreover, as recently as 1980 the RPCNA has adopted another *Testimony*; typed in parallel columns with the Westminster Confession, it attempts to set forth the teachings of the RPCNA with respect to areas of concern today. Insofar as we have studied it, we have found it to be truly Reformed, speaking out against the erroneous views of Barth, Bultmann and others with respect to Scripture, against pentecostalism, evolution, gambling, pacifism, against hierarchical and independentistic systems of church government, for the establishment of Christian schools, and about a host of other matters. Furthermore, on account of its history and on account of its belief that just as "God's people under the old covenant engaged in corporate acts of repentance and renewal in relation to the transgression of specific commandments or to general apostasy from God," so in the New Testament "it is appropriate for Churches and nations to covenant to be the Lord's and to serve Him," (*Testimony 1980*, ch. 22), the RPCNA in 1871 subscribed to a document called *The Covenant*. Insofar as we have studied it, we have found it to be a moving, worshipful, Reformed document which in no way detracts from the Scriptural character of the other confessions mentioned above.
- c. As to church government, the RPCNA has adopted that system that is commonly referred to as "Presbyterian." In their history, they have shown themselves to be persons who will sacrifice life and limb to keep out all hierarchical and Erastian tendencies and to acknowledge Christ as the Sole Head of the Church. The document called *The Form of Church Government* (adopted, 1945) outlines this system, and another document entitled *The Book of Discipline* (adopted, 1945) sets forth the steps to be followed in matters of discipline and in disputes.
- d. As to the matter of worship, the RPCNA has a couple of distinctive features: the use of hymns and of organs is forbidden. *The Testimony of 1980* (ch. 21) says about this: "The Book of Psalms, consisting of inspired Psalms, hymns and songs, is the divinely authorized manual of praise. The use of other songs in worship is not authorized in the Scriptures. . . . The Psalms are to be sung without the accompaniment of instruments, which are not part of the New Testament pattern of worship. Musical instruments were commanded for use with the offering of sacrifices in the Old Testament temple worship. The death of Christ being the perfect and final sacrifice brought an end to this way of worship. There is neither command for nor example of the use of musical instruments in the words or practice of Christ and the apostles. The command of the New Testament is to offer the sacrifice of praise — the fruit of our lips. . . ." With respect to the celebration of the Lord's Supper, it can be noted that persons who are not members of the RPCNA are admitted only after examination by the session of the local Church.
- e. As to ethics, *The Testimony of 1980* witnesses to the fact that in an age of great moral decline, the RPCNA requires its members to walk in a manner that is godly and obedient to the Scriptures. Members are not to join in societies which require an oath of secrecy at initiation. *The Testimony of 1980* urges members "to be careful in the use of drugs. Christians should avoid enslavement to alcohol, tobacco or any habit-forming drug" (ch. 26); office-bearers must totally abstain from the use of any alcohol and tobacco.
- f. The RPCNA has "fraternal relations with the Reformed Presbyterian Churches of Australia, Ireland, and Scotland. As a member of NAPARC (North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council), it also has fraternal relations with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, the Presbyterian Church in America and

the Christian Reformed Church. Besides these, the RPCNA also has fraternal relations with the Greek Evangelical Church of Cyprus, the Free Church of Scotland (Synod of North America), and the Reformed Church in the USA (Eureka Classis).

2. a. The Church at Ottawa informs Synod particularly about "occasional contacts" established in Ottawa between members of the Canadian Reformed Church and local RPCNA congregations.
 - b. The Church at Ottawa has been "encouraged by the presence of these other small and faithful congregations and desires to establish more contacts and ties with them."
 - c. The Church at Ottawa does not want to proceed with these contacts in an "independentistic fashion" and feels that since local contacts "can only proceed to a limited extent," it is necessary "for (the) committees of the respective Synods to relate with each other."
3. On the basis of the above, the Church at Ottawa recommends to Synod that:
 1. Synod express its willingness to initiate contact with the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America;
 2. and that in order to establish such contact and to study fully the doctrinal, ethical, liturgical and church governmental principles and practices of the RPCNA, Synod Cloverdale either:
 - a. broaden the mandate of its Committee on Correspondence with Churches Abroad or of its Committee on Contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in such a way that one of these committees executes this task, or;
 - b. that Synod appoint another committee and give it the above mandate

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. The Church at Ottawa has made a fairly substantial submission to Synod on the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, however, it has not supplied Synod with a copy of either The Westminster Standards as adopted by this Church, nor a copy of the Form of Government, nor a copy of *The Testimony 1980*.
2. General Synod Hamilton 1962, stated that minor assemblies, when making a proposal for taking up contact with other Churches, should supply Synod with sufficient information (*Acts*, Art. 82; see also *Acts* 1965, Art. 141).
3. Synod Toronto 1974 (*Acts*, Art. 20) as well as Synod Coaldale 1977 (*Acts*, Art. 95), decided not to grant requests respectively from the Churches at Lincoln and Calgary to establish contact committees with other Churches because these requests were not accompanied with sufficient information about these Churches, e.g. concerning Confession, Government, origin, history, statistical data etc.
4. The Church at Ottawa introduces a new matter which has not been dealt with at the minor assemblies and therefore has not adequately involved and prepared the Churches re its overture.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decides:

1. Not to grant the overture of the Church at Ottawa
2. To advise the Church at Ottawa to have this matter introduced in the way of the minor assemblies and to provide sufficient information as stipulated by previous Synods.

The Recommendations D, 1 and 2 are ADOPTED.

ARTICLE 151

Heidelberg Catechism

The discussion of the Report of Committee II on the Revision of the Heidelberg Catechism is continued.

ARTICLE 152

Adjournment

Br. P. Jansen requests to sing Psalm 72:1, 8 and 9 and leads in thanksgiving. Synod is adjourned.

MORNING SESSION — FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 1983

ARTICLE 153

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Psalm 127:1 and 2, reads Romans 12, and leads in prayer. Roll call is held.

ARTICLE 154

Acts

The Acts, Articles 142-152, are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 155

Adjournment

Session is closed. The Advisory Committees meet.

AFTERNOON SESSION — FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 1983

ARTICLE 156

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Psalm 133. Roll call is held.

ARTICLE 157

Appeal br. H. DeJong

Committee I presents its report on the appeal of br. H. DeJong of Edmonton against a decision of Regional Synod West (September 1983):

- A. **MATERIAL** — Agenda VIII, J,8 Appeal br. H. DeJong of Edmonton against a decision of Regional Synod West of September 1983. with appendices.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. Brother H. DeJong requests General Synod to judge that:
 - a. Rev. S. DeBruin, by teaching that the Lord Jesus gathers His Church in the communion of the same faith also in sects and false churches, is contradicting Scripture, Lord's Day 21, Articles 27 through 32 of the Belgic Confes-

- sion, as well as the Articles 53 and 54 of the Church Order.
- b. By maintaining this doctrine, Rev. S. DeBruin has broken his promise made in the Subscription Form for ministers of the Word, and thus is worthy of suspension.
 - c. The Consistory, Classis and Regional Synod involved have tolerated the abandonment of the binding nature of the Belgic Confession, as it is described in Articles 53 and 54, and in the Subscription Form, and have thereby blocked the road to unity in the Church.
 - d. Through this tolerance the doors of the Canadian Reformed Churches are now wide open for freedom of doctrine to enter.
2. Brother H. DeJong requests General Synod to decide that:
 - a. Rev. S. DeBruin, by maintaining the deviant doctrine contained in the sermon and the Hand Out, has made himself worthy of suspension.
 - b. The consistory is to act accordingly, since this is its calling.
 3. Regional Synod West, September 20-22, 1983, considered, among other things, that the "Presbytery of the Immanuel Canadian Reformed Church" at Edmonton "does not really go into the complaint that brother H. DeJong has laid at the door of the Presbytery"; and that in the light of this fact "it is not within the province of the Regional Synod to deal with the sermon on Lord's Day 21. Br. DeJong should receive a response from the Presbytery, assess it, and then if he is still in disagreement with the position of the Presbytery, appeal the matter further."
 4. The Regional Synod decided that:
 - a. The Presbytery of the Immanuel Canadian Reformed Church instead of requesting br. H. DeJong to bring to their attention any remaining complaints he may still have after the decision of Classis, should as yet respond fully to the charge he has made.
 - b. Br. H. DeJong's withdrawal short-circuits the appeal process laid out in the Church Order, and as such, he should request readmission to the Church and follow the church orderly way.
 - c. Br. H. DeJong's requests a, b, c, cannot be answered in the manner that he puts them due to the aforementioned considerations.
 5. Br. H. DeJong writes in his appeal to General Synod "None of my objections against the preaching in general, and particularly concerning Lord's Day 21, has ever been answered by the consistory."

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. From the observations it is clear that, although brother H. DeJong was not satisfied with the answer received from the consistory, he did not appeal this answer to Classis.
2. From this it is evident that Regional Synod indeed did not have the right to enter into the substance of his complaints regarding the preaching of Rev. S. DeBruin.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

General Synod decide:

1. Not to accede to brother H. DeJong's requests;
2. To inform brother H. DeJong that, if he cannot accept the Consistory's response to his objections, he should address himself to Classis.

The Recommendations 1 and 2 are ADOPTED.

ARTICLE 158

Appeal br. H.J. Noot

Committee I presents its report on the appeal of br. H.J. Noot against a decision of the Regional Synod West (September 20-22, 1983).

The discussion on this report is begun.

EVENING SESSION — FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 1983

ARTICLE 159

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Hymn 10:1, 9 and 10. Roll call is held. Rev. W. Pouwelse is absent in connection with congregational work.

ARTICLE 160

Women's Voting Rights

Committee IV presents its report on the Report from the Committee on Women's Voting Rights.

The Recommendations D, 1, 2 and 3 are ADOPTED.

A. MATERIAL — Agenda VIII

1. Report from the Committee on Women's Voting Rights
2. Letter from the Church at Abbotsford
3. Letter from the Church at Burlington-South
4. Letter from the Church at Carman
5. Letter from the Church at Chilliwack
6. Letter from the Church at Cloverdale
7. Letter from the Church at Fergus
8. Letter from the Church at Hamilton
9. Letter from the Church at Smithers
10. Letter from the Church at Smithville
11. Letter from br. and sr. J. Tillema
12. Letter from br. T. Vandenbrink
13. Letter from br. B. VanHuistede
14. Letter from br. A. VanRaalte
15. Letter from br. Cl. VanRaalte

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. Synod Smithville 1980 decided to continue the Committee on Women's Voting Rights with the mandate:
 - a. to reexamine the matter, including the Study Report presented to Synod, in the light of criticism voiced in letters to Synod and in the report of the Advisory Committee;
 - b. to give more consideration to material available in other study reports re the place and task of women in the Church;
 - c. to submit a report with recommendations to the next General Synod with a sufficient number of copies to the Churches.
2. The Committee provides General Synod with a Report that contains the conclusions re the following Scriptural Data:
 - a. *Genesis 3:16* — Man's rule over the woman is not an ordinance of God, but part of the curse of sin. It is a statement of the cursed state of affairs. Gen.

- 3:16 should read "Yet your desire shall be to rule over your husband, and he shall rule over you." Man is going to rule over her, instead of leading her as it was in the beginning.
- b. *Ephesians 5:21-33* — The verb "be subject" (Greek: "hypotassomai") in verse 22 does not so much mean *to obey* but *to lose or to give up your own right or your own will*. Any suggestion of subordination must be rejected. It only expresses the woman's recognition of man's assigned position. Man is the head (Greek: "kephale") of the woman. The Greek word for head here has the meaning of "source" or "beginning" or "what comes first," or "what goes ahead," or "completion" or "crown." That wives must be subject to their husbands means in this connection, that they must follow where they lead, where they go ahead.
 - c. *1 Peter 3:1-8* — The verb "hypotassomai" is used in the specific situation of wives whose husbands are unbelievers and who subsequently fail to treat them in the way of the Lord. These wives are like Sarah, if they like Sarah do right, and like Sarah, let nothing terrify them. Both they and Sarah were up against terrifying things in their marriages. Sarah obeying Abraham like a slave, acting like a slave and in doing so calling him lord or master is pictured before the eyes of Christian women, whose husbands treated them like slaves, as an example to be followed. The verb "to obey" should be understood here as "to follow." The woman is called the weaker one because she, as female, was created after man had been created, and therefore according to God's creation order is the *follower* in God's service.
 - d. *1 Corinthians 11:3-16* — The original and most common meaning of the Greek word "exousia" is to have the freedom or the authority to do something or to be licensed to do something. In the way the woman covered her head she demonstrated her exousia i.e., the freedom or authority, the correct license to pray and prophecy. It is therefore strange to call the exousia on the woman's head a sign of man's authority over her instead of a sign of her authority. Vs. 10 speaks then about the Christian freedom of the woman to pray and prophecy, provided she does it as a woman and realizes that man has received a place between her and God. Man is the glory of God and woman the glory of man. Man being the first goes ahead and the woman as woman follows him.
 - e. *1 Corinthians 14* — In the New Testament the election of special office-bearers consisted of an appointment preceded by a prophetic pointing out of the persons to be appointed for these offices. This prophetic pointing out is the privilege of both men and women. Once all the prophets in the congregation have made their prophecies, others must carefully weigh and judge these prophecies. "Let your women keep silence in the Churches" (1 Cor. 14:34ff) does not deny the women the right to prophecy (e.g. the pointing out of special office-bearers) but denies them the right to judge this prophecy by means of a teaching and ruling discussion.
3. With respect to the Historical Data the Committee remarks:
- a. It is highly unlikely that the women in ancient Greece and Rome were allowed to participate in the election of assemblies.
 - b. The Reformation did not succeed in transcending the view of the woman as it was held during the Middle Ages. The Articles of Wesel (1568) are silent about the participation of women in electing office-bearers. The time was simply not ripe for women's voting rights.
 - c. The Enlightenment changed the thinking about the position of the woman. It is this change which caused the Churches to reconsider its principles and practices. The new situation of the changed times, which allows women to receive the place which Scripture never denied them, must be taken into account.

- d. The Dutch sister Churches have resisted a change in voting practice. The Synod of Groningen 1978 stated: "In the vote the congregation gives its opinion, but this act of giving its opinion is of binding character as regards the Church council. It is not in accordance with the position of submissiveness of women to credit them with an independent decisive vote."
 - e. The terms "to approbate" and "to elect" were used interchangeably. Approbation of the single number was open to women as well, according to the Waalse Synod. The approbation of the chosen candidate before his installation was also expected from the women. It would be logical if women also participated in approbating by way of voting from a double number. Submission of names, voting and approbation must be seen as a whole.
 - f. Since voting cannot be seen as an act of ruling with authority over the Church, over the male members or over the consistory the women must be given an equal voice with the men to express their insight.
4. The Committee recommends that Synod decide:
that there are no Scriptural or church political grounds which forbid the consistories to call the sisters in the congregation to participate in the election of office-bearers by their vote.
- Grounds:
- 1. Voting is not an act of participating in the government of the Church.
 - 2. Women have received the Spirit of wisdom no less than men to exercise the congregational right and freedom to elect its own office-bearers.
5. Br. T. Vandenbrink advises Synod to adopt the recommendation of the Committee for two reasons:
- 1. The report leading to this recommendation is clear and sufficient.
 - 2. The recommendation leaves it to the wisdom of the local Churches whether or not the prohibition of voting by female members will be lifted.
- Moreover, there is no indication in the New Testament that only male members were invited when the whole congregation was called to choose office-bearers. Although there is no absolute certainty that women did vote, all things point in this direction. Male members do not represent the whole congregation.
6. Br. B. VanHuisstede concludes from the use of the word "congregation" in Article 3, Church Order "I and every Church member may read the *whole* congregation, in *this* case of election for office-bearers thus those communicant members in good standing, or still in other words, those who are allowed to participate in the celebration of the Holy Supper."
7. The reaction of Churches and members to the Scriptural Data of the Committee's Report.
- a. **Re Gen. 3:16:**
 - i Genesis 3:16 is an ordinance of God.
 - ii The Report's reading of Gen. 3:16 differs from the generally accepted reading "your desire shall be to your husband and he shall rule over you."
 - iii The Report's interpretation of this text needs insertion of some words which are not found in the original.
 - iv I Cor. 14:34 refers also to Gen. 3:16 when this verse speaking about the women to keep silence in the Churches, not being permitted to speak, but to be subordinate, adds "even as the law says."
 - b. **Re Ephesians 5:21-33:**
 - i The Report's paraphrase of Eph 5:21-33 is a generalizing and therefore a weakening of the original word "hypotassoo" in view of its context.
 - ii The Greek word "hypotassoo" involves a relationship of authority, and does not simply mean "to follow." In Eph. 5:24 Paul refers to the authority

of Christ over His Church. The element of recognized authority appears to be lost in the Report.

- iii Calvin is referred to as saying: woman is subject to man as the body to the head. In his *Commentaries Vol. xx*, page 357 (Baker House) Calvin writes "that as the woman derives her origin from man, she is therefore inferior in rank" and "that the woman was created for the sake of the man, she is therefore subject to him, as the work ultimately produced is to its cause." This shows the difference in rank between man and woman, although they are one in Christ. Voting by women is not a following of man. Voting by women in the Church means that they are stating their opinion, while the apostle Paul says that women should keep silence in the Churches.
- iv Eph. 5:22 is taken as a proof-text for showing honour "to all in authority over me," and for "submitting myself with due obedience to their good instruction and correction," in Q. and A. 104 of Lord's Day 39.
- v When the Committee refers to G. Kittel's *Theologisches Wörterbuch* for its definition of "hypotassoo," other theological dictionaries of W. Bauer, W.F. Arndt, and F.W. Gingrich give as definitions:
 - 1. subject, subordinate,
 - a. (active) to bring someone to subjection
 - b. (passive)
 - i become subject (to a person or state of being);
 - ii subject oneself, be subjective or subordinated, obey (towards the husband, parents, masters, secular authorities, church officials, Christ, the law).

Bauer, Arndt and Gingrich give the following definition of "kephale" (head)

- 1. (lit.) head
 - a. of man or beast
 - b. metaphorically, Christ the Head of the Church (thought of as a body, Col. 1:18)
- 2. (fig.)
 - a. superior rank (of the husband in relation to his wife, 1 Cor. 11:3, Eph. 5:23).
 - b. (of things) the uppermost part, extremity, end.

This also coincides with the description of the husband's headship in the old and new Forms for the Solemnization of Marriage.

c. **Re 1 Peter 3:1-8:**

- i The Report gives the impression that, while in v. 7 the believing husbands are exhorted to live considerably with their wives, in the vv. 1-6 only those wives are called to submission who are mistreated by unbelieving husbands, but v. 1 starts with a general call to all married sisters to be submissive to their husbands, whether they are believers or not.
- ii There is no reason to remove the word "obey" from the marriage vows or to replace it by a weaker term because Scripture clearly states that wives must be subject to their husbands, which implies a form of obedience as is shown in the example of Sarah.
- iii The Apostle Peter maintains the wife's subordination to her husband within the created order.
- iv The context shows that Sarah is an example of how holy women in general, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves and were submissive to their husbands. Therefore, Peter commends the holy example of Sarah.

d. **Re 1 Corinthians 11:3-16:**

- i Here "head" is used figuratively; it means a governing, ruling organ. (F.W. Grosheide, *New International Commentary of the New Testament*) It was necessary to write, "the head of the woman is man" because the Chris-

tian women at Corinth abused their liberty; there was a desire to put man and woman on the same level as equals. A man ought not to cover his head because he is the image and glory of God. A woman covered her head in public to show that she was subject to her husband. In the verses 8 and 9 this is shown as a created relationship between man and woman.

ii The Committee does not seem to agree with its own conclusions. It contradicts itself by the statement: "v. 10 speaks about Christian freedom of the woman to . . . prophesy, provided that she does it AS a woman." Would this say that a woman is a prophet, and, as such, may perform only the prophetic duties of a woman prophet?

e. **Re 1 Corinthians 14:**

i The central point of the verses 33-35 is that the women should not prophesy in the public meetings. These verses would sooner argue against the Report's conclusion that the gift of prophecy to men and women included pointing out those who were to rule in the congregation of Christ.

ii The Committee's statement that prophecy plays a part in the acquiring of office-bearers has not been proven.

iii The Committee itself admits that there is a difference between the early Church and today with respect to the place and function of prophecy.

iv The Committee's argument regarding the role of prophecy in acquiring office-bearers is inconclusive.

v When 1 Cor. 14:34-36 reads that women must keep silent in the Churches the question may be asked how a woman can give a deciding vote in the election of office-bearers in the Church.

vi No clear proof is given by the Committee to conclude that a connection exists between prophesying and "Women's voting rights."

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. This Committee comes with a totally different recommendation than the last Committee. It demonstrates the contrasting views on this point in our Churches. There is an obvious lack of consensus on this matter.
2. The Committee's explanations of the aforementioned Scripture passages are rather unusual if not questionable. They are by no means generally accepted explanations of the passages in question.
3. Although our Dutch sister Churches do not consider voting an act of governing, they still maintain that voting carries a binding character for the Church council and that the submissiveness of women does not allow an independent vote.
4. Various Churches have expressed the conviction that the matter of "Women's Voting Rights" does not live in the midst of the Churches and that granting women's voting rights would definitely cause great concern and even division. Even if the Report of the Committee would be conclusive and clear with respect to its considerations, which it is not, it would still for the above mentioned reasons be unwise to grant such voting rights.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide:

1. to thank the Committee for the work done;
2. not to accede to its recommendation;
3. not to appoint a new Committee on this matter.

ARTICLE 161

Heidelberg Catechism (Conclusion)

Committee II presents:

A. MATERIAL — Agenda VIII, E

1. Report from the Committee on the Heidelberg Catechism (plus covering letter)
2. Letter from the Church at Brampton
3. Letter from the Church at Burlington-East
4. Letter from the Church at Burlington-South
5. Letter from the Church at Carman
6. Letter from the Church at Chatham
7. Letter from the Church at Chilliwack
8. Letter from the Church at Cloverdale (see C.8)
9. Letter from the Church at Smithers (see C.10)

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. Synod 1980 gave the Committee the following mandate:
 - a. To complete the "Draft Translation 1979," considering the comments received from Rev. S. DeBruin, the Church at London, Ontario, the Church at Barrhead, Alberta, and to use the following guidelines:
 - i to make use of the first and second draft translation and the present English text, taking as basis the German and Latin of 1563 and the Dutch text of 1611;
 - ii to replace the difficult and archaic words and expressions, if proper equivalents are available in today's English;
 - iii to restructure, with discrimination, sentences which are too complicated, into positive and separate sentences which directly answer the question.
 - b. To submit its final draft translation to a panel of three English language experts before submitting it to the Churches, with the understanding that this panel is to be appointed by the Committee and must include one of its members.
 - c. To submit to the Churches the (revised and completed) "Draft Translation 1979" together with reference notes where needed and invite comments to be submitted to the Committee before November 1, 1982.
 - d. To submit their report with recommendations to Synod 1983.
 - e. To establish what the original proof texts are and to see whether the selection can be improved by replacing, deleting and/or adding and to include them in the "Draft Translation 1979."
 - f. To provide an index to cross-reference the Three Forms of Unity.
2. The Committee has been able to complete its mandate, although it has not been able to keep the time schedule set out by the mandate. Since the Committee members had obligations in other Synodical Committees and since the work required many weekly meetings, the Committee had to present its report somewhat late.
3. Owing to a late start and the amount of time required to complete the mandate, the Committee was not able to invite comments and to evaluate them before making their final report. However, the numerous comments, previously given to past Committees, as well as the comments, mentioned in the mandate, were all evaluated.
4. With respect to the individual questions and answers Synod received a great number of comments, suggestions and objections from Churches and Church members.

5. Re Answer 76 the Committee writes: "The Committee received comments suggesting the elimination of "sacred body" and "we are flesh of His flesh and bone of His bones." Though "sacred body" presents no heresy and points to the union with the Holy One, it has a R.C. ring to it, it was said "We are flesh of His flesh and bone of His bone" was based on a text in Eph. 5:31 but it is now regarded as a later addition and modern translations do not include it. The Committee feels that the General Synod should decide on these matters.
6. Re Answer 103 the Committee writes: "The feast day" is according to the German ("am feiertag") and the Latin ("festis diebus") texts. We kept to the singular (German text) instead of the plural (Latin text) in order to prevent misunderstandings (cf. Art. 67, C.O. about "the feast days").
7. The Church at Chatham would like to see the question repeated in the answers of *all* the Lord's Days or leave out the repeat of the question in the answers of *all* Lord's Days for the sake of consistency.
8. The Church at Chatham is pleased with the removal of the word "then" from Q & A 15 and asks Synod to consider removing "then" from Q & A's 6, 7, 9 and 22 as well.
9. The Church at Burlington-South finds that the new translation is very inconsistent when changing some of the Catechism's terminology and considers this new translation in several places very stilted and in no way an improvement over the translation presently used by our Churches.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. The Committee has completed its mandate, but was not able to invite and evaluate comments from the Churches, before making its final report.
 2. The Committee recommends that the text of the Catechism be adopted for use by the Churches.
 3. The Committee recommends that the list of proof texts be approved by Synod for use by the Churches as an aid in the understanding and usage of the Heidelberg Catechism.
 4. The Committee recommends that the proposed Cross-References be adopted and included in the new Church Book as an aid in the usage of the Confessions.
 5. A great number of comments, received from Churches and Church members has to be evaluated by Synod, before the final report can be adopted.
 6. After evaluation of the various comments, the Advisory Committee came to the conclusion that the following emendations should be implemented in the final text of the Heidelberg Catechism. The emendations are numbered according to the pertinent questions and answers of the Catechism.
- Q. & A. 1 The Church at Cloverdale proposes the following sentence restructure "I am not my own, but belong with body and soul, both in life and death, to my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ. He has fully paid for all my sins with His precious blood"
- Q. & A. 6 The Church at Burlington-East and the Church at Brampton propose to replace the word "as" by "in" and read "in His Image."
- Q. & A. 7 The Church at Chatham proposes to read "From where did man's depraved nature come?" The Advisory Committee proposes to add the word "then" and read "From where then did man's depraved nature come?"
- Q. & A. 8 The Advisory Committee proposes to replace the words "born again" by "regenerated."
- Q. & A. 9 The Church at Chatham proposes to eliminate the word "not" and read "Is God, then, unjust."

- Q. & A. 10 The Advisory Committee proposes to add the word "for" and read "No, for God so created man."
- Q. & A. 10 The Church at Carman proposes to read "our actual sins."
The Church at Chatham proposes to read "Therefore He will punish them by a just judgment both now and in the age to come."
- Q. & A. 12 The Church at Brampton proposes to replace the words "punishment both now and in the age to come" by the expression "temporal and eternal punishment."
- Q. & A. 19 The Church at Cloverdale proposes the following sentence restructure "From the holy gospel which God Himself."
- Q. & A. 21 The Church at Chatham proposes to rephrase "to me also" by "also to me."
- Q. & A. 22 The Church at Chatham proposes to delete the word "then" in the question, and read "What must a Christian believe."
- Q. & A. 23 The Church at Chatham proposes to insert the word "begotten" and "Christian" and to make the punctuation consistent with that presented in the Acts of Synod 1980.
- Q. & A. 31 The Church at Chatham proposes to read instead of the expression "by the Holy Spirit" the phrase "with the Holy Spirit."
- Q. & A. 32 The Church at Cloverdale proposes the following sentence restructure "Because I am a member of Christ by faith and thus a shareholder in His anointing, so that I may as prophet confess His Name, as priest." The Advisory Committee proposes to read "Because I am a member of Christ by faith and thus I share in His anointing, so that I may as prophet confess His name, as priest"
- Q. & A. 33 The Church at Chatham proposes to insert also here the word "begotten."
- Q. & A. 37 The Church at Carman proposes to read instead of "His whole life on earth" "all the time He lived on earth."
- Q. & A. 39 The Church at Carman proposes to change the expression "a crucified one" in "the death of the cross" (was cursed by God).
- Q. & A. 40 The Church at Carman proposes to replace the phrase "payment for our sins" by the word "satisfaction."
- Q. & A. 44 The Church at Chatham proposes to change "sorrows and temptations" into "temptations and sorrows."
- Q. & A. 52 The Church at Cloverdale proposes the following sentence restructure "He will cast all His and my enemies into everlasting condemnation, but He will take me and all His chosen ones to Himself into heavenly joy and glory."
- Q. & A. 53 The Church at Carman proposes to insert the word "along" and read "He is, along with the Father" The Advisory Committee proposes to read "He is, together with the Father"
- Q. & A. 53 The Church at Chatham proposes to rephrase the words "share, by true faith, in Christ" as "by true faith share in Christ"
- Q. & A. 54 The Church at Cloverdale proposes the following sentence restructure "a Church chosen to everlasting life. Moreover, I believe that I am and forever shall remain a living member of it." The Advisory Committee proposes to delete the word "moreover" and read "a Church chosen to everlasting life. I believe that I am and forever shall remain a living member of it."
- Q. & A. 56 The Church at Cloverdale proposes the following sentence restructure "I believe that God, because of Christ's satisfaction, will no more remember my sins, nor my sinful nature, against which I have to struggle all my life, but will graciously grant me the righteousness of Christ so that I may never come into condemnation."
- Q. & A. 57 The Church at Cloverdale proposes the following sentence restructure "this my body."
- Q. & A. 60 The Church at Burlington-South proposes to replace the phrase "all I need to do is accept" by "If only I accept."
- Q. & A. 61 The Church at Burlington-South proposes to change the words "make it

- mine" into "make it my own."
- Q. & A. 62 The Church at Cloverdale proposes the following sentence restructure "whereas even our best works."
- Q. & A. 66 The Church at Cloverdale proposes the following sentence restructure "They were instituted by God that by their use He might the more fully declare and seal to us the promise of the gospel. And this is the promise that God graciously."
- Q. & A. 69 The Church at Chatham proposes to read, instead of "remind and assure you" "signify and seal to you."
- Q. & A. 75 The Church at Carman proposes to change the expression "remind and assure you" into "signify and seal to you."
- Q. & A. 78 The Advisory Committee proposes to replace the word "language" by "usage" and read "the nature and usage of sacraments."
- Q. & A. 78 The Church at Chatham proposes to change "so too the bread" into "so also the bread."
- Q. & A. 79 The Church at Carman proposes to replace the phrase "are true food and drink of our souls" by "are true food and drink for our souls."
- Q. & A. 80 The Church at Carman proposes to replace "declares" by "testify."
- Q. & A. 84 The Church at Cloverdale proposes the following sentence restructure "According to the command of Christ, the kingdom of heaven is opened when it is proclaimed and publicly testified to each and every believer . . . by a true faith . . ." The kingdom of heaven is closed when it is proclaimed."
- Q. & A. 84 The Church at Chatham proposes to change "the testimony" into "this testimony."
- Q. & A. 86 The Church at Brampton proposes to replace the phrase "we may win our neighbour for Christ" by "our neighbour may be won for Christ."
- Q. & A. 91 The Advisory Committee proposes to change the expression "human tradition" into "precepts of men."
- Q. & A. 92 The Church at Chatham proposes to insert the words "to them" in "bow down to *them* or serve them."
- Q. & A. 93 The Advisory Committee proposes to read "Into two tables" instead of "Into two parts."
- Q. & A. 93 The Church at Carman proposes to insert the word "duties" in "what duties we owe our neighbour."
- Q. & A. 103 The Churches at Chilliwack and Carman propose to replace the expression "feast day" by "day of rest" and the Churches at Brampton and Smithers propose to read "the Lord's Day." The Advisory Committee proposes to use the expression "day of rest" (see Recommendations 8).
- Q. & A. 108 The Church at Cloverdale proposes the following sentence restructure "and live chaste and disciplined lives."
- Q. & A. 115 The Church at Cloverdale proposes the following sentence restructure "more and more become aware of our sinful nature and therefore seek more eagerly the forgiveness of sins . . . renew us after God's image."
- Q. & A. 120 The Church at Chatham proposes to change the phrase "which should be basic to our prayer" into "which should be the basis of our prayer."
- Q. & A. 120 The Advisory Committee proposes to delete the word "human" and to read "than our fathers refuse us earthly things."
- Q. & A. 125 The Church at Cloverdale proposes the following sentence restructure "Grant, therefore, that we may withdraw our trust from all creatures and place it only in Thee."
- Q. & A. 126 The Church at Chatham proposes to omit the words "that we are" in the expression "wretched sinners that we are."
- Q. & A. 127 The Churches at Burlington-South and Carman propose to replace the word "win" by "obtain" (the complete victory).
7. Re Answer 76. The Advisory Committee is of the opinion that the expressions "sacred body" and "flesh of His flesh and bones of His bones" are proper trans-

lations of the original German text of the Heidelberg Catechism. The Advisory Committee agrees with the Committee that these expressions point to the unity between Christ and His Church. Although this expression is not found in the present translation of Eph. 5:31, it is found in Gen. 2:23, to which Eph. 5 refers. Therefore the Advisory Committee considers it correct to maintain these expressions in the Heidelberg Catechism.

8. Re Answer 103. The Advisory Committee is of the opinion that the request from the Churches should be granted, to replace the expression "feast day" by "day of rest." The original German word "feiertag" can be translated by "feast day" as well as by "day of rest." However, we are faced nowadays with a growing tendency to reduce the Day of the LORD to a "feast day," apart from the commandment of the LORD to rest ("a sabbath to the LORD, your God; in it you shall not do any work"). In this situation it is preferable and warranted to retain the word "day of rest" in the Heidelberg Catechism.
9. The Advisory Committee does not agree with the Church at Chatham that the questions either should be repeated in *all* the answers or should be left out of *all* the answers.
10. The request of the Church at Chatham to remove the word "then" should be granted with respect to answer 22 but not as far as the answers 6, 7 and 9 are concerned.
11. The Advisory Committee is of the opinion that the rest of the comments and amendments (56 out of 106) should not be implemented in the final text of the Heidelberg Catechism.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide:

1. to thank the Committee for the Translation of the Heidelberg Catechism for the faithful completion of its mandate; ADOPTED
2. to adopt provisionally the text of the Heidelberg Catechism as proposed by the Committee, with the following amendments, numbered according to the pertinent questions and answers of the Heidelberg Catechism:
 - Q. & A. 1 Read "I am not my own, but belong with body and soul, both in life and death, to my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ. He has fully paid for all my sins with His precious blood" ADOPTED
 - Q. & A. 6 Replace the word "as" by "in" and read "in His Image." ADOPTED
 - Q. & A. 7 Read "From where then did man's depraved nature come?" ADOPTED
 - Q. & A. 8 Replace the words "born again" by "regenerated" ADOPTED
 - Q. & A. 9 Eliminate the word "not" and read "Is God, then, unjust." REJECTED
 - Q. & A. 10 Add the word "for" and read "No, for God so created man." ADOPTED
 - Q. & A. 10 Read "our actual sins." ADOPTED
 Read "Therefore He will punish them by a just judgment both now and eternally." ADOPTED
 - Q. & A. 12 Replace the words "punishment both now and in the age to come" by the expression "temporal and eternal punishment." ADOPTED
 - Q. & A. 19 Read "From the holy gospel which God Himself." ADOPTED
 - Q. & A. 21 Rephrase "to me also" by "also to me." ADOPTED

- Q. & A. 22 Delete the word "then" in the question, and read "What must a Christian believe?" DEFEATED
- Q. & A. 23 Insert the word "begotten" and "Christian" and to make the punctuation consistent with that presented in the Acts of Synod 1980. ADOPTED
- Q. & A. 31 Read instead of the expression "by the Holy Spirit" the phrase "with the Holy Spirit." ADOPTED
- Q. & A. 32 Read "Because I am a member of Christ by faith and thus share in His anointing, so that I may as prophet confess His name, as priest" ADOPTED
- Q. & A. 33 Insert also here the word "begotten." ADOPTED
- Q. & A. 37 Read instead of "His whole life on earth" "all the time He lived on earth." ADOPTED
- Q. & A. 39 Change the expression "a crucified one" into "the death of the cross" (was cursed by God). DEFEATED
- Q. & A. 40 Replace the phrase "payment for our sins" by the word "satisfaction." ADOPTED
- Q. & A. 44 Change "sorrows and temptations" into "temptations and sorrows." DEFEATED
- Q. & A. 52 Read "He will cast all His and my enemies into everlasting condemnation, but He will take me and all His chosen ones to Himself into heavenly joy and glory." ADOPTED
- Q. & A. 53 Read "He is, together with the Father" ADOPTED
- Q. & A. 53 Rephrase the words "share, by true faith, in Christ . . ." as "by true faith share in Christ . . ." ADOPTED
- Q. & A. 54 Read "a Church chosen to everlasting life. I believe that I am and forever shall remain a living member of it." ADOPTED
- Q. & A. 56 Read "I believe that God, because of Christ's satisfaction, will no more remember my sins, nor my sinful nature, against which I have to struggle all my life, but will graciously grant me the righteousness of Christ so that I may never come into condemnation." ADOPTED
- Q. & A. 57 Read "this my body." DEFEATED
- Q. & A. 60 Replace the phrase "all I need to do is to accept" by "if only I accept." ADOPTED
- Q. & A. 61 Change the words "make it mine" into "make it my own." ADOPTED
- Q. & A. 62 Read "whereas even our best works." ADOPTED
- Q. & A. 66 Read "they were instituted by God that by their use He might the more fully declare and seal to us the promise of the gospel. And this is the promise that God graciously." ADOPTED
- Q. & A. 69 Read instead of "remind and assure you" "signify and seal to you." ADOPTED
- Q. & A. 75 Change the expression "remind and assure you" into "signify and seal to you." ADOPTED
- Q. & A. 78 Replace the word "language" by "usage" and read "the nature and usage of sacraments." ADOPTED
- Q. & A. 78 Change "so too the bread" into "so also the bread." ADOPTED

- Q. & A. 79 Replace the phrase "are true food and drink of our souls" by "are true food and drink for our souls." ADOPTED
- Q. & A. 80 Replace "declares" by "testify." ADOPTED
- Q. & A. 84 Read "According to the command of Christ, the kingdom of heaven is opened when it is proclaimed and publicly testified to each and every believer . . . by a true faith The kingdom of heaven is closed when it is proclaimed." ADOPTED
- Q. & A. 84 Change "the testimony" into "this testimony." ADOPTED
- Q. & A. 86 Replace the phrase "we may win our neighbour for Christ" by "our neighbour may be won for Christ." DEFEATED
- Q. & A. 91 Change the expression "human tradition" into "precepts of men." ADOPTED
- Q. & A. 92 Insert the words "to them" in "bow down to *them* or serve them." ADOPTED
- Q. & A. 93 Read "Into two tables" instead of "Into two parts." DEFEATED
- Q. & A. 93 Insert the word "duties" in "what duties we owe our neighbour." ADOPTED
- Q. & A. 103 Use the expression "day of rest." ADOPTED
- Q. & A. 108 Read "and live chaste and disciplined lives." ADOPTED
- Q. & A. 115 Read "more and more become aware of our sinful nature and therefore seek more eagerly the forgiveness of sins . . . renew us after God's image." ADOPTED
- Q. & A. 120 Change the phrase "which should be basic to our prayer" into "which should be the basis of our prayer." DEFEATED
- Q. & A. 120 Delete the word "human" and to read "than our fathers would refuse us earthly things." ADOPTED
- Q. & A. 125 Read "Grant, therefore, that we may withdraw our trust from all creatures and place it only in Thee." ADOPTED
- Q. & A. 126 Omit the words "that we are" in the expression "wretched sinners that we are." ADOPTED
- Q. & A. 127 Replace the word "win" by "obtain" (the complete victory). ADOPTED
3. to adopt the list of proof texts for use by the Churches as an aid in the understanding and usage of the Heidelberg Catechism; ADOPTED
 4. to adopt the proposed Cross-References as an aid in the usage of the Confessions; ADOPTED
 5. to include the revised text of the Heidelberg Catechism with proof texts and the Index of Cross-References in the *Book of Praise* for use by the Churches, after it has been linguistically scrutinized.

The discussion on the Report of Committee II on the revision of the Heidelberg Catechism is continued and concluded.

The Heidelberg Catechism is adopted as amended.

Adopted are also the Recommendations D. 1, 3, 4, and 5.

ARTICLE 162

Adjournment

Rev. P. Kingma requests to sing Psalm 48:1, 3 and 4, and leads in thanksgiving. Synod is adjourned.

MORNING SESSION — SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1983

ARTICLE 163

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Psalm 132:6, 7, 8, 9, and 10, reads Revelation 12, and leads in prayer. Roll call is held.

ARTICLE 164

Acts

The Acts, Articles 153-162, are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 165

Appeal br. H.J. Noot

The discussion on the appeal of br. H. J. Noot is continued. The recommendations are adopted.

Committee I presents:

A. MATERIAL — Agenda J,9

Appeal by brother H.J. Noot with appendices.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. Brother Noot appeals the decision of the Regional Synod West of September 20-22, 1983 which Synod:
 - a. Did not grant brother Noot's request to Regional Synod "to judge 'that Classis Alberta-Manitoba did not do justice to request #1 of the Immanuel Presbytery as it did not deal with the Christian doctrine (that which is taught) in the sermon, but that it missed the point.'"
 - b. Did not grant brother Noot's request "'to please clearly state what we confess and believe' (concerning the Church)," since "the request 'to state what we confess and believe' can only be answered by referring to the text of the Confession, and not to various interpretations of the Confession."
2. Brother Noot asks General Synod to state:
 - a. That the view "'that believers scattered throughout false churches and sects are by a true faith ingrafted not only into Christ, but also into His Body, the Church' is not a view leading out of the Confession but is a view contrary to the Confession."
 - b. "What we confess and believe about the Church."
3. The Regional Synod did not grant request #1 of brother H.J. Noot, mainly on the ground that "brother Noot gives an incorrect extension to the term 'doctrine' and "therefore incorrectly interprets request #1 of the Immanuel Presbytery as the request to judge the whole sermon in all its statements."
4. The request mentioned under 3 was "'to judge whether the Christian doctrine

concerning the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, as taught by Rev. S. DeBruin in the sermon on Lord's Day 21 of the H.C. and Answer 54 on September 12, 1982, is in full accordance with the Holy Scriptures as confessed in our Three Forms of Unity."

5. Both Classis and Regional Synod restricted the term "doctrine" to "the principle of the sermon," namely, "that the holy catholic Church is not limited to the Canadian Reformed Churches or to those with whom our Churches have a corresponding relationship as sister Churches."
6. The above sermon was typed from a tape, and unspecified parts of it were withdrawn later on.
7. Rev. S. DeBruin himself issued a document "Hand-out" containing his views on the point in question.
8. From this document it becomes evident that Rev. S. DeBruin teaches, among other things:
 - a. "All who have received a true faith become by virtue of that fact 'a member of Jesus Christ and of His Church' " (p. 4).
 - b. "When one calls or encourages true Christians who are members of a false church, or who are isolated, into a visible unity with a true Church, such ought not to join in order to *become* members of the holy catholic Church, but because they *are* already members by faith . . . and *therefore* are duty-bound to join in obedience to Christ's command" (p. 6, 9d).
 - c. "Since the word 'pluriformity' as used in relation to the diversity of Churches in the world has become suspect . . . it is advisable . . . to use the word 'plurality' in relation to obvious numbers of different Churches or Church federations in the world. Based on our own confession (see Art. 27 B.C.) it is simply impossible to deny this plurality in the world . . ." (p. 9ff.).
 - d. "In principle the communion of saints is as broad as the holy catholic Church, i.e. they cover each other perfectly" (p. 11, 19).
 - e. "Due to situations beyond one's control (result of sin in general) it may become necessary for one's own (or family) spiritual well-being to look for another communion of saints (Church), without having to judge the Church one leaves as being false" (P. 13, 23).

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. To restrict the term "doctrine" to "the principle of the sermon" is unwarranted and arbitrary, since this so-called "principle" was elaborated on by Rev. S. DeBruin in sermon as well as in "Hand-out."
2. As unspecified parts of the sermon were withdrawn, it would be incorrect to base a judgment on it.
3. From Observation 8 it is clear that Rev. S. DeBruin teaches:
 - a. that all believers are members of Christ's Church;
 - b. that, in fact, a true believer cannot *become* a member since he *is* a member already;
 - c. that there is a plurality of Churches;
 - d. that the communion of saints is as broad as the holy catholic Church (as consisting of all true believers);
 - e. that one's "spiritual well-being" may make it mandatory to leave a certain Church without it having become a false church.
4. In our Confession we state:
 - a. that no person ought to withdraw from the Church;

- b. that all men are in duty bound to join and unite themselves with it;
 - c. that all believers are to join themselves to this congregation;
 - d. that all who separate themselves from it or do not join themselves to it act contrary to the ordinance of God.
5. To state that all true believers are already members of Christ's Church would nullify the above Confession.
 6. To state that there is a plurality of Churches in fact undermines the Confession that everyone is in duty bound to join the Church and to this end "ought diligently and circumspectly to discern from the Word of God which is the true Church."
 7. What the Church believes and confesses has been summarized in the Three Forms of Unity. The Regional Synod West of September 20-22, 1983, therefore was correct in answering brother H.J. Noot's second request by referring him to the Confession.

D. RECOMMENDATION

Synod declare that by the above considerations brother H.J. Noot's questions have been answered. ADOPTED

ARTICLE 166

Appeal br. J. Werkman re decision of the Regional Synod West (Sept. 20-22, 1983)

Committee I presents:

A. **MATERIAL** — Agenda J,10 Appeal br. J. Werkman

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. Brother Werkman requests General Synod:

"to judge that the Regional Synod was wrong when it decided that, 'it cannot grant the request of br. Werkman that it judge that classis Alberta-Manitoba was wrong in its judgment on the sermon of Rev. DeBruin, and that Rev. DeBruin is worthy of being suspended as minister of the Word.'"
2. Brother Werkman adduces the following grounds:
 - a. In reply to the statement of Regional Synod West of September 20-22, 1983, that "Although the Confession speaks of true and false, this does not imply that the use of such expressions as 'Churches with errors and weaknesses' is unscriptural" he points to Art. 29 B.C.: "in short, if all things are managed according to the pure Word of God, all things contrary thereto rejected."
 - b. In reply to the consideration of the Regional Synod "When Classis said (ad c) that brother Werkman did not prove that the view that all believers belong to the Church is in conflict with Scripture and Confessions, Classis did not wrong brother Werkman," he refers to his objections against the sermon on Lord's Day 21 as he presented these to the Consistory, claiming that Regional Synod did not abide by Scripture and Confessions.
 - c. In reply to the consideration of the Regional Synod "Classis did not wrong brother Werkman when it stated that brother Werkman did not prove that the teaching that Churches which in some minor points of doctrine and practice deviate from the Three Forms of Unity, may still be called true Churches, necessarily implies the pluriformity of the Church as it has become known in recent times," and that Rev. DeBruin "states that he teaches a plurality of Churches," he states that "if this is true, then we better do away with Art. 28 B.C.," and that, in this case, also Art. 29 B.C. falls by the wayside.

- d. In reaction to the refusal of Regional Synod to allow his appeal, he states that "the consistory of the Immanuel Church, the Classis of Alberta-Manitoba and the Regional Synod of Western Canada, all have left the door open for freedom of doctrine," and that "They all seem to have forgotten that any Church that does not ward off false teachings, is already a false church (Art. 55 C.O.)."
- e. "The teaching of Rev. DeBruin on Lord's Day 21A and the "Hand-out" and his reconsideration is against Scripture and Confession, which makes him worthy of being suspended as minister of the Word."
- f. "Rev. DeBruin has attacked our Confessions . . . and by doing so has made himself guilty of breaking his promise, which he made when he signed the subscription form."

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. Brother Werkman overlooks the fact that our Confession does not say that errors and impurities make a Church a false church, but that the false church is the *opposite* of the true Church.
2. Although unspecified parts of the sermon on Lor's Day 21 were withdrawn, Rev. DeBruin himself stated that the "Hand-out" contains what he teaches concerning the Church.
3. In Lord's Day 7 we confess that those are saved who are ingrafted into Christ by a true faith.
Regional Synod West of September 20-22, 1983, correctly stated that the true believers "thus are included in the Church gathering work of Christ (*congregatio*)."
Regional Synod, however, upholding the judgment of Classis Alberta-Manitoba of May 3-5, June 15, 16, 1983, hereby leaves room for identifying being "included in the Church gathering work of Christ" and "being a member of Christ's Church," thus trying to answer the question how it is possible that there are true believers who yet are not members of Christ's Church (*coetus*).
Rev. DeBruin clearly tries to find an answer to the same question, the answer to which the LORD has reserved for Himself, Deut. 29:29.
4. However, the statement that "all who have received a true faith become by virtue of that faith 'a member of Jesus Christ and of His Church' . . . and as mutual members of the same Body (Art. 28) they are therefore duty-bound to join themselves to Christ's Church" in fact nullifies what we confess in this very same 28th article, namely,
 - that no person ought to withdraw from the Church;
 - that all men are in duty bound to join and unite themselves with it;
 - that all believers are to join themselves to this congregation;
 - that all who separate themselves from it or do not join themselves to it act contrary to the ordinance of God.
5. The statement that there is a plurality of Churches in fact undermines the Confession that everyone is in duty bound to join the Church and to this end "ought diligently and circumspectly to discern from the Word of God which is the true Church."
6. Although some statements and teachings of Rev. DeBruin are to be rejected, yet it cannot be said that he attacks the Confessions and has thereby broken the promise given when he signed the subscription form for ministers of the Word. Coming with a certain interpretation of the Confession which is to be rejected does not necessarily mean launching an attack on the Confession.

D. RECOMMENDATION

Synod decide:

To send the above considerations as Synod's judgment on the appeal of br. J. Werkman.

The Recommendation is adopted as amended.

ARTICLE 167

Adjournment

Br. E. Ludwig requests to sing Psalm 126, and leads in thanksgiving. Synod is adjourned.

MORNING SESSION — MONDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 1983

ARTICLE 168

Reopening

The chairman requests to sing Psalm 90:1, 7 and 8, reads Psalm 90, and leads in prayer. Roll call is held. The chairman congratulates the Rev. B.J. Berends who received a call from the Church at London and wishes him the wisdom of the Lord in arriving at a responsible decision.

ARTICLE 169

Acts

The Acts, Articles 163-167, are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 170

Finances

Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise*

Committee IV presents:

- A. **MATERIAL** — Agenda VIII, M, 4 Report of the Church at Brampton regarding audit of the finances of Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise*, dated October 19, 1983.

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. The General Synod Smithville 1980, appointed the Church at Brampton to audit the finances of the Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise* (*Acts*, Art. 122, D, 10).
2. The Church at Brampton reports that they were informed by this Committee that no audit was necessary since no financial transactions have taken place from the time of its appointment.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide:

1. To express its thankfulness to the Church at Brampton for the completion of its mandate.

2. To reappoint the Church at Brampton to audit the finances of the Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise*.

The Recommendations are ADOPTED.

ARTICLE 171

Canons of Dort

Committee III presents the final report on the Revision of the Canons of Dort. The Canons and Refutation of Errors are adopted as amended. This decision replaces the decision recorded in *Acts*, Article 71.

A. MATERIAL — Agenda D,1-9

1. Report from the Committee on the Canons of Dort
2. Letter from the Church at Abbotsford re Canons of Dort
3. Letter from the Church at Abbotsford re not to accept this new translation (see also C, 3)
4. Letter from the Church at Burlington (Ebenezer)
5. Letter from the Church at Burlington-South (see also B, 9)
6. Letter from the Church at Carman
7. Letter from the Church at Chilliwack
8. Letter from the Church at Cloverdale (see C, 8)
9. Letter from the Church at Langley

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. The Committee on Translation and Revision of the Confessional and Liturgical Forms received the following mandate from Smithville 1980:
 - a. "To pass on the remarks of the Advisory Committee regarding the newly translated text of the Chapters I-V to the Committee for consideration or incorporation into the final draft.
 - b. To charge the Committee to complete the revision of the Rejection of Errors and to present the whole, corrected by a subcommittee of linguistic experts, to the Churches nine months prior to the next General Synod for final adoption for use in the Churches." (*Acts*, Smithville 1980, Art. 123, II, D, 2,3)
2. The Committee reports:
 - a. That it did not receive the remarks of the Advisory Committee of Synod Smithville 1980 regarding the newly translated text of the Canons. They were not passed on to the Committee as adopted by Synod according to Article 123 II, D, 2 of the *Acts*. These remarks could for that reason not be considered by the Committee.
 - b. That the brothers Rev. R. Aasman, W. Horsman and N. VanDooren were appointed as a language subcommittee with the mandate to examine the Creeds with regard to vocabulary, style, punctuation and readability.
 - c. That due to the time limitation the Refutation was not submitted to the language subcommittee.
 - d. That it received "a request of the deputies Church Book of the Free Reformed Churches in Australia to remain informed as to the progress of the work of the Committee. This request was granted by passing on the completed material."
3. The Committee recommends:

To appoint Dr. W. Helder of Hamilton as language scrutineer of the Refutation of Errors, added to the Canons of Dort.

4. The Churches at Abbotsford, Burlington-East, Burlington-South, Carman, Chilliwick, Cloverdale and Langley have provided Synod with a long list of linguistic emendations and/or objections to the proposed version on doctrinal grounds.
5. The Church at Abbotsford recommends not to adopt the new translation of the Canons of Dort in its present form because:
 1. The Committee on Translation and Revision of the Confessional and Liturgical Forms did not complete its mandate in time (see Acts General Synod 1980 Art. 123, I, D, 2b re Belgic Confession; Art. 123, II, D, 3 re Canons of Dort).
 2. Partly as a result of the above mentioned ground the material for General Synod 1983, received by the consistories in the last six months, was just too much to be dealt with justly.
 3. Some of the proposed revisions and translations showed that we still suffer from lack of expertise in the English language.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. a. The Committee could complete its mandate given to it by Synod 1980, except for submitting the Refutation of Errors to the language subcommittee because of lack of time.
- b. The Committee states that it could not deal with the remarks of the Advisory Committee of Synod Smithville 1980, since these are not available.
- c. It appears from the official documents submitted to Synod that the various remarks passed on by Churches have been dealt with by the Committee for the Revision of the Canons of Dort and also that various letters from Churches have been received by Synod 1983 making it possible to arrive at a provisional draft.
2. Although the Refutation of Errors has not been submitted to the language subcommittee, this need not deter Synod from provisionally adopting the Canons and the Refutation of Errors, since all the material for the *Book of Praise* will yet be scrutinized linguistically by the Standing Committee for the *Book of Praise*.
3. Although it appears that the final draft of the revision of the Canons has not been sent to the Churches, while the Refutation of Errors was, this need not deter Synod from provisionally adopting the Canons since the final revision is restricted to remarks previously made by the Churches and passed on by the Synod 1980.
4. The following suggestions from the Churches should be considered.

FIRST HEAD OF DOCTRINE

- Art. 6 amend last sentence to read "Although perverse, impure, and unstable men twist *this decree* to their own destruction, *it* provides unspeakable comfort for holy and God-fearing souls."
- Art. 10 amend first sentence to read "The cause of this gracious election is *solely* the good pleasure of God."
- Art. 14 amend second sentence to read "Therefore also today this doctrine should be taught in the Church of God."
- Art. 16 amend sixth sentence to read "They should *be even less* terrified by the doctrine of reprobation."

THIRD AND FOURTH HEAD OF DOCTRINE

- Art. 1 amend first sentence to read "In the beginning man was created *in* the image of God."
 amend third sentence to read "But, *rebellng against* God through the instigation of the devil."
- Art. 2 amend first sentence

- Art. 3 amend first sentence to read "incapable of any *saving* good."
- Art. 4 amend second sentence to read "But *he* is so far from arriving at the saving knowledge of God."
- Art. 5 amend first sentence to read "nor gives him power to *rise out of* this misery."
change "Decalogue" to "Ten Commandments."
- Art. 16 amend second sentence to read "*pleasantly* and at the same time powerfully bends it."
- Art. 17 amend second last sentence to read "His works *proceed*."

FIFTH HEAD OF DOCTRINE

- Art. 1 amend first sentence to read "Those whom God according to His purpose calls."
the Advisory Committee would like to respond to the suggestion of the Church at Burlington-South which intimates that the new rendering of the Committee to change "from the infirmities of the flesh" to "from the flesh" might be "plainly heretical." Since the Latin text reads "a carne," it is obvious that this Church is plainly mistaken.
- Art. 7 amend second sentence to read "As a result they grieve from the heart with a *godly sorrow* for the sins they have committed."
- Art. 13 amend second sentence to read "... God should again turn away His face from them."

REJECTION OF ERRORS

Chapter I

Paragraph 1 — Refutation (R) amend first sentence to read "This error is deceptive and clearly contradicts Scripture, *which* declares not only"

Paragraph 3 — Error (E) amend first sentence to read "but that He out of all possible conditions"

Paragraph 4 — (R) amend second sentence to read "This *smacks* of the teaching of Pelagius"

Paragraph 5 — (R) amend first sentence to read "This error militates against *all of* Scripture which constantly impresses upon us."

Chapter II

Heading — amend to read "And the redemption of man by *this death*."

Paragraph 1 — (R) amend last sentence to read "Finally, this error contradicts the article of faith concerning the Church."

Paragraph 3 — (E) amend the last sentence to read "that either *no one* or all men"

Paragraph 6 — (R) amend the last sentence to read "the *pernicious* poison of Pelagianism."

Paragraph 7 — (E) amend first sentence to read "Christ could not die. *did not need to die* and did not die"

Chapter III-IV, V

none of the comments received make emendation necessary.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decides:

1. to thank the Committee on Translation and Revision of the Canons of Dort for presenting to Synod a revised draft of the Canons, including the Rejection of Errors;
2. to adopt provisionally the revised Canons of Dort as amended by Synod (see Consideration 4) and to have the entire text subjected to linguistic scrutiniza-

tion before publication in the *Book of Praise* (see mandate of the Standing Committee of the *Book of Praise Acts* 1983, Art. 123, Recommendation 13).

AFTERNOON SESSION — MONDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 1983

ARTICLE 172

Reopening — Belgic Confession

The Synod is reopened; roll call is held.

Committee II presents its report on the revision of the Belgic Confession. The discussion of this report is begun.

EVENING SESSION — MONDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 1983

ARTICLE 173

Reopening — Belgic Confession

The chairman requests to sing Psalm 68:1, 2, 12. Roll call is held.

The discussion on the revision of the Belgic Confession is continued. The revision of the Belgic Confession is adopted, as amended by Synod. The Recommendations D 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 are ADOPTED.

Committee II presents:

- A. **MATERIAL** — Agenda VIII, C.
1. Report from the Committee on the Belgic Confession
 2. Letter from the Church at Abbotsford re Belgic Confession
 3. Letter from the Church at Abbotsford re not to accept this new translation
 4. Letter from the Church at Brampton
 5. Letter from the Church at Burlington-East
 6. Letter from the Church at Burlington-South
 7. Letter from the Church at Chatham
 8. Letter from the Church at Cloverdale
 9. Letter from the Church at Langley
 10. Letter from the Church at Smithers

B. OBSERVATIONS

1. The Committee on Translation and Revision of the Confessional and Liturgical Forms appointed by Synod Coaldale 1977 presented a report, dated June 1979, to Synod Smithville 1980, in which it explained the basis and method of a new translation, and in which it made some remarks about changes in the content of the Belgic Confession (Art. 1, 4, 9 and 15).
2. The Committee repeats the remark of the previous Committee, that it will be proper to inform the sister Churches abroad of the slight emendations in Art. I, IV, IX, X, XXXVI and XXXVII.
3. The Committee appointed by Synod Smithville 1980 received with respect to the Belgic Confession the following mandate:
 - a. to consider incorporating the emendations suggested to Synod 1980 into the draft to be presented to General Synod 1983;
 - b. to continue the revision of the remaining Articles XXIV-XXXVII of the Belgic Confession in accordance with the Textus Receptus (of Dort 1618/1619) and to submit a completed, linguistically corrected draft to the next Synod with copies to the Churches nine months prior to its convocation.

4. A great number of comments, received from Churches and Church members has to be evaluated by Synod, before the final report can be adopted.

C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. The Committee appointed by Synod Smithville 1980 continued to work on the basis explained in the report of June 1979 and presented to Synod 1980. In order to facilitate the study of the material the Committee asks Synod to include the above mentioned report into the Appendices to its Acts.
2. The Committee considered the emendations suggested by Synod 1980 as far as the Articles I-XXIII of the Belgic Confession are concerned. Result of this work has been laid down in a revised copy of these articles which copy, however, has not been sent to the Churches.
3. The Committee continued and completed the translation and revision of the Articles XXIV-XXXVII of the Belgic Confession. The Committee left out the twenty words between brackets in Art. XXXVI, deleted by Synod 1905 of "De Gereformeerde Kerken" in The Netherlands, and the marginal note concerning these words, since these twenty words do not belong to the received text of the Confession anymore. The Committee therefore is of the opinion that they should not be printed either between brackets but be left out completely.
4. The Committee was apparently not able to meet the deadline of "nine months prior to" the convocation of this Synod in sending the Churches copies of the draft of these Articles.
5. After having taken note of the revised copy of the Art. I-XXIII and having considered the various comments which have been received from Churches and Church members, 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 Belgic Confession. The corrections are numbered according to the pertinent Articles of the Belgic Confession.

II The Church at Cloverdale proposes the following change "first" and "second" with "firstly" and "secondly."

V The Church at Cloverdale proposes the following change "they carry the evidence thereof in themselves" with "they contain the evidence thereof."

VI The Advisory Committee proposes they replace "I and II Esdras" by "III and IV Esdras" and to replace "power and efficacy" by "power and authority."

VII The Church at Cloverdale proposes to change "though he be an apostle" into "even for an apostle"; "because it is forbidden" into "since it is forbidden"; "whatsoever does not agree" into "whatever does not agree."

VIII The Committee proposes to keep the word "incommunicable" in the revised text.

VIII The Committee proposes to change "eternally equal in one and the same essence" into "equal in eternity and essence."

VIII The Church at Cloverdale proposes to change "each have His personal existence" into "each has His personal existence."

IX The Advisory Committee proposes to change "especially those towards us" into "especially those we feel in ourselves."

IX The Church at Cloverdale proposes to change "And for the baptism of all believers" into "For the baptism of all believers"; "we now believe it on the ground of the Word of God, and we expect hereafter to enjoy the perfect knowledge and fruit thereof in heaven" into "in this life we believe it on the ground of the Word of God, and we expect to enjoy its perfect knowledge and fruit hereafter in heaven"; "always been maintained in" into "always been affirmed and maintained by."

X The Church at Cloverdale proposes to change "likewise the apostle Paul that" into "likewise the apostle Paul says that."

- XII The Church at Cloverdale proposes to delete the word "other" in "all other creatures"; to change "He also still sustains and governs" into "He also continues to sustain and govern"; "some of those" into "some of these"; "and expect daily" into "and daily expect"; "we reject and detest" into "we detest and reject"; "who deny that there are spirits and angels" into "who deny the existence of spirits and angels."
- XIII The Committee proposes to change "righteous decisions" into "just judgments."
- XIII The Church at Cloverdale proposes to change "and who may not transgress these limits" into "without transgressing these limits"; "unspeakable comfort, when we learn to understand thereby" into "unspeakable consolation, for we learn thereby."
- XIV The Church at Cloverdale proposes to change "He lent his ears" into "He gave ear"; "He had nothing left but" into "He has nothing left but"; "For whatever light is in us" into "... was in us"; "Therefore we reject all contrary teaching" into "Therefore we reject all teaching contrary to this."
- XV The Advisory Committee proposes to change "that the believers may sleep in their sin" into "that the believers may sleep peacefully in their sin."
- XVI The Church at Cloverdale proposes to change "had plunged into perdition ... God has manifested Himself" into "plunged into perdition ... God manifested Himself."
- XXVII The Committee proposes to change "fleeing from Him in utter fright" into "trembling fled."
- XXVIII The Church at Cloverdale proposes to change "we confess, therefore, that God has fulfilled the promise which He had made to the fathers" into "we confess, therefore, that God has fulfilled the promise made to the fathers"; "it was necessary that He took both to save both" into "... that He assumed both to save both"; "Over against the heresy of the Anabaptists ... we therefore confess" into "Contrary to the Anabaptists ... we confess."
- XIX The Church at Cloverdale proposes to change "the reality of the same" into "its reality"; "Therefore, what He, dying committed into the hands of His Father" into "Therefore, what He committed into the hands of His Father"; "In the meantime His divinity" into "Meanwhile His divinity."
- XX The Church at Cloverdale proposes to change "in that very nature" into "in that same nature"; "God therefore demonstrated" into "God therefore manifested"; "showed His goodness" into "poured out His goodness"; "who are guilty" into "who were guilty."
- XX The Advisory Committee proposes to change "By a most perfect love" into "Out of most perfect love."
- XXI The Church at Cloverdale proposes to change the first four lines to read: "We believe that Jesus Christ was confirmed by an oath to be a Highpriest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek. He presented Himself on our behalf before His Father, appeasing God's wrath by His full satisfaction, offering Himself on the tree of the cross."
- XXI The Church at Burlington-East proposes to change "for the purification of our sins" into "to purge away our sins."
- XXI The Church at Burlington-South proposes to change "He paid back what we had stolen" into "He restored what He had not stolen (Ps. 69:4)."
- XXI The Church at Cloverdale proposes to change "As the righteous for the unrighteous ... for all times" into "He died as the righteous for the unrighteous. He suffered in body and soul feeling the horrible punishment caused by our sins and 'His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down upon the ground.' Finally, He exclaimed, 'My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?' All this He endured for the forgiveness of our sins. Therefore, we justly say, with Paul, that we know nothing 'except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.' We 'count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Jesus Christ' our 'Lord.' We find comfort in His wounds and have

- no need to seek or invent any other means of reconciliation with God, than this only sacrifice once offered by which the believers are perfected for all times.”
- XXII The Church at Cloverdale proposes to change “that Christ were only” into “that Christ is only.”
- XXIII The Church at Cloverdale proposes to change “and to give us confidence; It frees our conscience of fear, terror and dread to draw near to God, so that we do not follow the example of our first father Adam who trembling, tried” into “give us confidence in drawing near to God, freeing our conscience of fear, terror and dread, so that we do not follow the example of our first father Adam who, with trembling, tried.”
- XXIV The Church at Abbotsford proposes to change the title “**Sanctification and Good Works**” into “**Man’s Sanctification and Good Works.**”
- XXIV The Church at Cloverdale proposes to change “makes man indifferent for a good and holy life” into “makes man indifferent to live a good and holy life.”
- XXIV The Churches at Chatham, Smithers, Langley and Cloverdale propose to change “if they did not lean on . . .” into “if they did not rely on . . .”
- XXV The Church at Cloverdale proposes to change “let” in the fourth line to “yet.”
- XXVI The Church at Burlington-South proposes to change “joining together” into “having united together.”
- XXVI The Advisory Committee proposes to change “that we men might have access to the divine Majesty. We would otherwise not have any” into “that we men might not be barred from but have access to the divine Majesty”; “fantasy” into “fancy.”
- XXVII The Church at Abbotsford proposes to change the title “**The Catholic or Universal Church**” into “**The Catholic Christian Church.**”
- XXVII The Church at Cloverdale proposes to change “We believe and profess one catholic or universal Church, a holy congregation” into “. . . which is a holy congregation”; “the Church” into “this Church.”
- XXVII The Church at Burlington-South proposes to change “will last until the end” into “will be to the end.”
- XXVIII The Church at Abbotsford proposes to change the title “**Everyone’s Duty to Join the Church**” into “**Everyone’s Duty to Join the True Church.**”
- XXVIII The Church at Cloverdale proposes to change “It is therefore the duty of all believers” into “To observe this more effectively, it is the duty of all believers.”
- XXIX The Church at Cloverdale proposes to change “the true Church which is to be distinguished” into “the true Church which must be distinguished.”
- XXIX The Advisory Committee proposes to change “the true Church may be recognized” into “. . . is to be recognized.”
- XXIX The Church at Cloverdale proposes to change “they believe in Jesus Christ . . . loving . . . crucifying” into “. . . love . . . crucify”; “it persecutes those who live holy lives according to the Word of God and rebuke the false church” into “. . . and who rebuke . . .”
- XXX The Church at Cloverdale proposes to change “there should also be overseers and deacons to form together with the pastors the council of the Church” into “there should also be elders and deacons who together with the pastors form the council of the Church.”
- XXX The Advisory Committee proposes to change “By this means they preserve” into “by these means . . .”
- XXX The Church at Cloverdale proposes to change “By this means everything will be done” into “By these means . . .”
- XXXI The Advisory Committee proposes to change “not to impose by improper means” into “not to intrude by improper means.”
- XXXI The Advisory Committee proposes to change “have equal authority for they are” into “have equal authority and power for they are.”
- XXXII The Church at Langley proposes to change “to keep all in obedience” into “to keep all men in obedience.”
- XXXIII The Church at Cloverdale proposes to change “instituted for us: the sacrament

- of baptism" into "instituted for us, namely, the sacrament of baptism."
- XXXV The Advisory Committee proposes to change "He is eaten by them, that is spiritually appropriated" into "He is eaten by them, that is, spiritually appropriated."
- XXXV The Church at Cloverdale proposes to change "Yet we do not wrong when we say that that what is eaten and drunk is the true natural" into "Yet we do not err when we say that which we eat and drink is the true natural."
- XXXVI The Church at Brampton proposes to change "our good God has ordained" into "our gracious God"
- XXXVI The Church at Langley proposes to change "protect decent people" into "protect those who do well."
- XXXVII The Church at Smithers proposes to reinsert the conclusion of the article, namely: "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!" Rev. 22:20.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide:

1. To thank the Committee for the completion of its task. ADOPTED
2. To include the introductory remarks to report of the previous Committee, dated June 1979, in the Appendices to the Acts of this Synod. ADOPTED
3. To incorporate, besides the emendations which were suggested by the General Synod Smithville 1980 (Acts Art. 123, D, 3, a-k), the following emendations and amendments in the text of the Belgic Confession:

V Change "they carry the evidence thereof in themselves" with "they contain the evidence thereof."

VI Replace "I and II Esdras" by "III and IV Esdras."
Replace "power and efficacy" by "power and authority."

VII Change "though he be an apostle" into "even for an apostle."
Change "because it is forbidden" into "since it is forbidden."
Change "whatsoever does not agree" into "whatever does not agree."

DEFEATED

VIII Keep the word "incommunicable" in the revised text.

Change "eternally equal in one and the same essence" into "for these three, in one and the same essence, are equal in eternity."

Change "each have His personal existence" into "each has His personal existence."

IX Change "especially those towards us" into "especially those we perceive in ourselves."

Change "And for the baptism of all believers" into "For the baptism of all believers."

Change "we now believe it on the ground of the Word of God, and we expect hereafter to enjoy the perfect knowledge and fruit thereof in heaven" into "nevertheless in this life we believe it on the ground of the Word of God, and we expect to enjoy its perfect knowledge and fruit hereafter in heaven."

Change "always been maintained in" into "always been maintained and preserved."

X Change "likewise the apostle Paul that" into "likewise the apostle Paul says that."

XII Delete the word "other" in "all other creatures."

Change "He also still sustains and governs" into "He also continues to sustain and govern."

Change "some of those" into "some of these."

Change "and expect daily" into "and daily expect."

Change "we reject and detest" into "we detest and reject."

Change "who deny that there are spirits and angels" into "who deny that there are any spirits and angels."

- XIII Change "righteous decisions" into "just judgments."
 Change "and who may not transgress these limits" into "without transgressing these limits."
 Change "unspeakable comfort, when we learn to understand thereby" into "unspeakable consolation, for we learn thereby."
- XIV Change "He lent his ears" into "He gave ear."
 Change "He had nothing left but" into "He has nothing left but."
 Change "Therefore we reject all contrary teaching" into "Therefore we reject all teaching contrary to this."
- XV Change "that the believers may sleep in their sin" into "that the believers may sleep peacefully in their sin."
- XVI Change "had plunged into perdition . . . God has manifested Himself" into "plunged into perdition . . . God manifested Himself."
- XXVII Change "fleeing from Him in utter fright" into "trembling fled."
- XXVIII Change "we confess, therefore, that God has fulfilled the promise which He had made to the fathers" into "we confess, therefore, that God has fulfilled the promise made to the fathers."
 Change "it was necessary that He took both to save both" into ". . . that He assumed both to save both."
 Change "Over against the heresy of the Anabaptists . . . we therefore confess" into "Contrary to the heresy of the Anabaptists . . . we confess."
- XIX Change "the reality of the same" into "its reality."
 Change "Therefore, what He, dying committed into the hands of His Father" into "Therefore, what He when dying committed into the hands of His Father."
 Change "In the meantime His divinity" into "Meanwhile His divinity."
- XX Change "in that very nature" into "in that same nature."
 Change "God therefore demonstrated" into "God therefore manifested."
 Change "showed His goodness" into "poured out His goodness."
 Change "who are guilty" into "who were guilty."
 Change "By a most perfect love" into "Out of a most perfect love."
- XXI Change the first four lines to read "We believe that Jesus Christ was confirmed by an oath to be a Highpriest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek. He presented Himself in our place before His Father, appeasing God's wrath by His full satisfaction, offering Himself on the tree of the cross . . ."
 Change "for the purification of our sins" into "to purge away our sins."
 Change "He paid back what we had stolen" into "He restored what He had not stolen (Ps. 69:4)."
 Change "As the righteous for the unrighteous . . . for all times" into "He died as the righteous for the unrighteous. He suffered in body and soul feeling the horrible punishment caused by our sins and 'His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down upon the ground.' Finally, He exclaimed, 'My God, my God, why has Thou forsaken me?' All this He endured for the forgiveness of our sins. Therefore, we justly say, with Paul, that we know nothing 'except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.' We 'count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Jesus Christ our Lord.' We find comfort in His wounds and have no need to seek or invent any other means of reconciliation with God, than this only sacrifice once offered by which the believers are perfected for all time."
- XXII Change "that Christ were only" into "that Christ is only."
- XXIII Change "and to give us confidence; It frees our conscience of fear, terror and dread to draw near to God, so that we do not follow the example of our first father Adam who trembling, tried" into "give us confidence in drawing near to God, freeing our conscience of fear, terror and dread, so that we do not follow the example of our first father Adam who, trembling, tried."
- XXIV Change the title "**Sanctification and Good Works**" into "**Man's Sanctification and Good Works.**"
 Change "makes man indifferent for a good and holy life" into "makes man in-

- different to live a good and holy life.”
- Change “if they did not lean on . . .” into “if they did not rely on . . .”
- XXV Change “let” in the fourth line to “yet.”
- XXVI Change “joining together” into “uniting together.”
- Change “that we men might have access to the divine Majesty. We would otherwise not have any” into “that we men might not be barred from but have access to the divine Majesty.”
- Change “fantasy” into “fancy.”
- XXVII Change the title “**The Catholic or Universal Church**” into “**The Catholic Christian Church.**” DEFEATED
- Change “We believe and profess one catholic or universal Church, a holy congregation” into “. . . which is a holy congregation.”
- Change “the Church” into “this Church.”
- Change “will last until the end” into “will be to the end.”
- XXVIII Change the title “**Everyone’s Duty to Join the Church**” into “**Everyone’s Duty to Join the True Church.**” DEFEATED
- Change “It is therefore the duty of all believers” into “To observe this more effectively, it is the duty of all believers.”
- XXIX Change “the true Church which is to be distinguished” into “the true Church which must be distinguished.”
- Change “the true Church may be recognized” into “. . . is to be recognized.”
- Change “they believe in Jesus Christ . . . loving . . . crucifying” into “. . . love . . . crucify.”
- Change “it persecutes those who live holy lives according to the Word of God and rebuke the false church” into “. . . and who rebuke . . .”
- XXX Change “there should also be overseers and deacons to form together with the pastors the council of the Church” into “there should also be elders and deacons who together with the pastors form the council of the Church.”
- Change “By this means they preserve” into “By these means . . .”
- Change “By this means everything will be done” into “By these means . . .”
- XXXI Change “not to impose by improper means” into “not to intrude by improper means.”
- Change “have equal authority for they are” into “have equal power and authority for they are.”
- XXXIII Change “instituted for us: the sacrament of baptism” into “instituted for us, namely, the sacrament of baptism.”
- XXXV Change “He is eaten by them, that is spiritually appropriated” into “He is eaten by them, that is, spiritually appropriated.”
- Change “Yet we do not wrong when we say that what is eaten and drunk is the true natural” into “Yet we do not err when we say that that which we eat and drink is the true natural.”
- XXXVI Change “our good God has ordained” into “our gracious God . . .”
- Change “protect decent people” into “protect those who do well.”
- Synod decides to place the twenty words that were deleted from Article 36 in a footnote.
- XXXVII Reinsert the conclusion of the Article, namely “Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!” Rev. 22:20
4. To adopt provisionally the amended text of the Belgic Confession so that it can be included in the *Book of Praise*, after it has been linguistically scrutinized.
 5. To inform the Churches abroad of the emendations in the Articles I, IV, IX, X, XV, XXXVI, XXXVII.

Except for those marked DEFEATED, the Recommendations are ADOPTED.

ARTICLE 174

Preface Canons of Dort/Heidelberg Catechism

Synod decides to include the Preface to the Canons of Dort in the *Book of Praise*. The Standing Committee is asked to have the original Preface to the Heidelberg Catechism, if in existence and available, translated and also published in the *Book of Praise*.

PREFACE TO THE CANONS OF DORT

The Canons of Dort, being the Five Articles against the Remonstrants or Judgment of the National Synod of the Reformed Churches of the United Netherlands, held in Dordrecht in the year 1618 and 1619 concerning the well-known Five Heads of Doctrine about which controversy has arisen in the Reformed Churches of these United Netherlands.

Among the very many consolations which our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ has given to His Church Militant in this wretched pilgrimage, this is justly considered to be the most important one, which He left her when He was about to enter the heavenly sanctuary to go to the Father, saying, "I am with you always, to the close of the age." The truth of this kind promise is evident in the Church of all ages. For as she has been attacked from the beginning not only by the public force of enemies and the ungodly violence of heretics but also by the masked subtleties of seducers, truly, if the Lord had at any time denuded her of the salutary succour of His promised presence, she would long have been either oppressed by the force of tyrants or led to her ruin by the subtlety of deceivers. But the good Shepherd, who most steadfastly loves His flock, for which He gave His life, has always at the appropriate time and by His outstretched hand, often in a miraculous way, put down the raging of persecutors, and uncovered and destroyed the crooked ways and deceitful counsels of seducers; proving in both that He is truly present with His Church. Of this we have very clear proof in the histories of the godfearing Emperors, Kings, and Princes whom the Son of God raised up so oftentimes to the aid of His Church, kindled with holy zeal for His house, and by whose service He not only subdued the raging of tyrants, but also provided His Church, when she had to fight against false teachers, with means to healing, with holy Synods, in which faithful ministers of Christ, with combined prayers, counsel, and labour, placed themselves courageously in defence of the Church and truth of God over against the servants of Satan, even though these changed themselves into angels of light; and removed the seed of errors and of discord, preserved the Church in the concord of the pure religion, and conveyed the genuine religion inviolate to posterity.

With similar benefit our faithful Saviour proved His gracious presence in these times to the Church of The Netherlands, which was sore oppressed for some years. For this Church, having been delivered by God's mighty hand from the tyranny of the Romish Antichrist and the abominable idolatry of the Papacy, and having been saved so many a time in a miraculous way amidst the dangers of such a long war, and flourishing most marvellously in the concord of the true doctrine and discipline to the honour of God, to the wonderful growth of the commonwealth, and to the joy of the whole Reformed world, has been attacked, first secretly, then publicly, by Jacobus Arminius and his followers, bearing the name of Remonstrants, by means of various old as well as new errors and, being persistently disturbed by offensive disputes and schisms, having been brought into such grave peril that these thus flourishing Churches ultimately would have been consumed by a dreadful conflagration of discord and divisions, if not the compassion of our Saviour had interceded at the appropriate time. But praised be the Lord for ever who, after He had hidden His countenance for a moment from us (who in many ways had kindled His ire and wrath) proved before the whole world that He does not forget His covenant or despise the sighing of His own. For when it seemed that according to human opinion there was to be had hardly any hope of restoration, He put it into the hearts of their illustrious and High Mightinesses, the States General of the United

Netherlands, that, with the advice and direction of the illustrious Prince of Orange, they decided to meet these raging difficulties with legal means which have been generally well-known by the example of the Apostles themselves and of the Christian Church after them, and before this were also used with rich fruit in the Church of The Netherlands, and have by their authority convened a Synod at Dordrecht, out of all the Provinces of their territory, after previously having requested and, by the favour of the Great and Mighty King James, King of Great Britain, etc., and of Illustrious Princes, Illustrious Counts, and mighty Republics, having obtained many excellent theological men in order that by the joint judgment of so many theologians of the Reformed Church the teachings of Arminius and his followers might be considered maturely in a so renowned Synod and be judged from God's Word alone, the true doctrine be confirmed, the false doctrine rejected, and by God's blessing unity, peace, and tranquillity be restored to the Netherlands Churches. It is because of this blessing of God that the Netherlands Churches rejoice and humbly acknowledge and gratefully praise the faithful mercies of their Saviour.

This reverend Synod (after prior general fasting and prayer, called and conducted by authority of the High Magistrates in all the Netherlands Churches in order to deprecate God's wrath and to obtain His gracious assistance) gathered within Dordrecht, kindled in love to God and the well-being of the Church and, after calling upon God's Name, bound by a holy oath to judge only after the rule of Holy Scripture, and in the examination and judgment of this matter to act with a good conscience, has laboured most diligently and with great forbearance to move the main advocates of these teachings, summoned to appear before it, that they would fully explain their sentiments regarding the well-known Five Heads of Doctrine along with the arguments for them. However, when they rejected the judgments of the Synod and refused to answer to the points in question in a manner that was equitable, and, further, when no admonitions of the Synod, nor resolutions of the Well-born Noble Deputed States of the States General, yea when even the injunctions of their Illustrious and High Mightinesses the States General did not make any progress with them, the Synod was compelled to follow another course, by instruction of their High Mightinesses and in harmony with the customs of ancient Synods; and the examination of the aforesaid Five Heads of Doctrine was taken in hand out of the writings, confessions, and declarations, partly issued beforehand, partly delivered unto this Synod. Now that this, by the special grace of God has been completed with very great zeal, faithfulness, conscientiousness, and concord of all and everyone, this Synod has decided to the honour of God, to the preservation of the uprightness of the saving truth, the security of the consciences, the peace and well-being of the Netherlands Churches, to pronounce openly and proclaim to everyone the following judgment (in which the true sentiment which is in harmony with the Word of God regarding the Five aforesaid Heads of Doctrine is declared and the false sentiment which conflicts with God's Word is rejected).

ARTICLE 175

Appointments

Synod makes the following appointments:

1. Board of Governors

Ministers (Eastern Canada): Rev. P. Kingma, Rev. Cl. Stam, Rev. J. Mulder.

Substitutes: Rev. J. DeJong, Rev. M. Werkman, Rev. J. VanRietschoten, in that order.

Ministers (Western Canada): Rev. J. Geertsema, Rev. M. VanBeveren, Rev. J. Visscher.

Substitutes: Rev. M. VanderWel, Rev. B.J. Berends, Rev. C. VanSpronsen, in that order.

Non-ministers: A.L. VanderHout, H. Kampen, C.M. Loopstra, M. VanGrootheest, A. Hordijk.

- 2. Committee on Correspondence with Churches Abroad**
E.C. Baartman, A.C. Lengkeek, Rev. M. VanBeveren, *Rev. J. Visscher* (Convener).
- 3. Standing Committee for the *Book of Praise***
Rev. J. DeJong, *Dr. W. Helder* (Convener), Mr. M. Kampen, Prof. C. VanDam, Mrs. H. VanHalen, Mr. J. VanHuisstede.
- 4. Committee on Contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church**
J. Boot, Dr. J. Faber, Rev. W. Huizinga, Rev. P. Kingma, *Rev. J. Mulder* (Convener).
- 5. Committee on Bible Translations**
Rev. J. DeJong, Rev. P. Kingma, Prof. C. VanDam, *Rev. J. VanRietschoten* (Convener).
- 6. Churches for Days of Fasting and 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 General Archives**
The Church at Burlington-East.
- 9. Church for the Inspection of the General Archives**
The Church at Burlington-West.
- 10. Church to Audit the Finances of General Synod 1983**
The Church at Langley, BC.
- 11. Church to Audit the Finances of the Standing Committee for the *Book of Praise***
The Church at Brampton.
- 12. The Address Church**
For Canada: The Church at Burlington-East.
For the USA: The Church at Grand Rapids.
- 13. The Committee for the Printing of the Acts**
The chairman e.t. and the first clerk e.t. of Synod 1983.
- 14. The Convening Church for the next General Synod:**
The Church at Burlington-West, Synod to be convened in the fall of 1986.
Synod decides that the Committees shall have the right, in case a vacancy occurs, in order to fulfill their mandate to bring their membership up to its original strength.

ARTICLE 176

Question Period Art. 43. Church Order

The chairman gratefully notes that censure is not necessary.

ARTICLE 177

Acts

The Acts, Articles 168-178, are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 178

Press Release

The Moderamen of Synod is charged to approve the Press Release.

Closing of Synod

The vice-chairman, Rev. J. Geertsema, speaks some words of gratitude to the chairman, Rev. W.W.J. VanOene. He specially notes that the chairman was of great service to Synod by the manner in which he chaired the meetings. He expresses the gratitude of the members of Synod for the cordial leadership given. He mentions that this will be the last Synod which the Rev. W.W.J. VanOene will be attending as member, since he will soon be retiring, and wishes Rev. VanOene also for the future the blessing of the Lord.

The chairman addresses Synod with the following words:

The recently adopted Guidelines for Synodical Meetings provide that it is the task of the chairman to close Synod "with appropriate remarks and with prayer." Thus it is my task to do so now that we have arrived at the point at which we can say that the task has been completed: all the points of the agenda have been dealt with and in this manner we have outlived our usefulness, so to speak.

This is a reason for great gratitude. The Lord kept and sustained us during these past weeks. Not only were we all brought here safely, but also this was experienced: that no one was prevented from taking part in the work at any time: we received health and strength. Except for brother George Lodder — who had to return because of the sudden death of an infant grandson — no one had to miss even one session because of illness or worse. For this we are very grateful.

Another reason for gratitude is the unity which became evident in everything. Even when unanimity could not be reached in each and every instance, we were together and worked together in one mind and in one spirit. Is this not a great gift, bestowed upon us by our heavenly Father through His Holy Spirit? All around us people seek that which is their own; we were allowed to seek that which is our Lord's and therein we sought the well-being of His Church. In this manner we were allowed to benefit from it ourselves.

To a certain extent this Synod brought the conclusion of matters which were considered for many years.

Among these matters the *Book of Praise* takes not the least place.

This enormous undertaking, begun in 1954, of providing the Churches with a complete Psalter in the English language, with preservation of the Genevan tunes, at times seemed to be a hopeless undertaking. At this Synod, twenty-nine years after its beginning, the work was brought to its conclusion: Both Psalms and Hymns were scrutinized; the former as far as their rhyming is concerned, the latter as to rhyming and contents. From now on our children can learn the songs without having to be afraid that the words will be replaced by others.

Our Confessions have not necessarily received their final redaction: parts of their English text have been provisionally adopted. This does not mean that things are still uncertain or that another major revision of the English translation can be expected; it only means that it may appear necessary to change a word here, to replace a word there. If no such need becomes evident, the form in which they have now been adopted will be the definitive one. The new *Book of Praise* will no longer contain the text which has become so familiar to our Catechism students and to all others who made it their habit to acquaint themselves thoroughly with what we confess. This will be a small inconvenience when compared to the updated text which has been adopted. This updating refers only to the language as such, not to the contents. The contents have remained the same and will remain the same, for the truth of God does not change.

Our *Book of Praise* will also contain a revised Church Order. Already at the first Synod of the Canadian Reformed Churches it was realized that such a revision was necessary. Various general synods dealt with this matter, but it took until now to adopt an English text. Until the very moment of the adoption of our revised Church Order the only official text we had was the Dutch one, except for the odd article which general synods adopted in specific instances. Hereby we have cut one more of the apron strings.

That the bond with our Netherlands sister Churches was not weakened thereby was evident from the presence of two of our brothers from The Netherlands. We thank the

Lord for His grace in the bonds we may have and practise. Being small when compared to the large ecclesiastical bodies all around us, we are the more grateful for proofs of true unity and relations which express the oneness in faith.

Speaking of delegates from The Netherlands, we think especially of Dr. K. Deddens, our fourth full-time professor. It was good to have him in our midst and to become acquainted with him. It was good for him to be here and to taste the climate within the Canadian Reformed Churches in whose midst he will be working.

The Rev. J.J. Peterson was in our midst as well. Upon his return to his place and Church he will have been able to make known our will and desire to have bonds with others, as well as our conviction and determination to have only such bonds as permissible ties which are the bonds of faith and of faithfulness to our King and Saviour. Wherever we find such faith and faithfulness we shall gladly and wholeheartedly extend our hand of fellowship and clasp the one that is offered to us.

This desire is also expressed in the decision to join the International Conference of Reformed Churches.

Initially I had quite some doubts about this venture, but what I heard at this Synod both from our own Committee on Correspondence and from the Dutch delegates has convinced me that we should not stay away from this international effort. I am happy that we could decide to partake. The proposals which have been adopted regarding this matter are sufficient indication that broadening the circle of contacts is not intended to be a broadening — and thus a narrowing — of the basis on which we stand.

It was with this basis that we busied ourselves. When saying this, I refer not only to the examination and adoption of new translations of our Confessional Forms, but also to the need to judge certain statements made and to do so by what we say in our Confessions.

This Synod had to deal with appeals — is there *ever* a Reformed Synod which does *not* find any appeals on its agenda?? — appeals which concerned that which we confess concerning the Church.

Not every one will be happy with the decisions made. If one wishes to make every one feel happy for a limited time, the solution is easy: say to the one that he is right and say the same thing to the other; and if someone criticizes you for doing this, say to him that he is right in his criticism. However: in this manner no questions are answered, no difficulties solved, no directions pointed out.

We have, I am convinced, refrained from making extra- or super-confessional statements. We simply have examined certain statements and asked whether these are in agreement with what we confess. We did not judge *persons*, much less did we *condemn* them. Our discussions and findings were factual, not personal. If our decisions are abused, this is not our responsibility but the responsibility of the one doing so.

This brings me to the discussions as such.

Everyone who spoke about this Synod remarked that there was such an excellent harmony and cooperation. We ourselves experienced this as well. We thank our God who, by His Holy Spirit, so ruled our hearts and minds that this harmony was a reality among us. Then it does not matter that not all decisions were made unanimously. It still is so, as one of the brothers remarked during a discussion, that it is a good Reformed practice to accept a decision once it has been made and that there is no need for taking a second vote to make it unanimous.

As your chairman I wish to thank you all, brothers, for the manner in which you cooperated in working efficiently, speedily, thoroughly, yet without rushing or being superficial in preparation as well as in discussion and decision-making.

Our work was greatly facilitated by the excellent preparation by the convening Church, the Church at Cloverdale.

I must admit that, when I did not receive any document prior to the opening of Synod, I was quite critical of the preparations. Then we came here, saw the orderly way in which everything was presented, heard that most of the material had come in during the last two weeks — why, O why??? — and criticism had to yield to great admiration. Thank you, brothers, for it is also thanks to you that Synod can be closed four weeks to the

day after its opening.

Also in some other ways we experienced the good care and concern of the Cloverdale congregation. We were wined and dined — so to speak — daily. One of us said today, "I know what the first thing will be my wife says when she sees me: 'You have put on weight! That's what you get from all that eating and drinking!' " He said it in the dialect of Drenthe, and in the original, authorized text it sounds even better.

I would do injustice to many of our sisters if I tried to mention all the names of those who took part in this care. Many of our sisters were engaged in the preparation of our meals and desserts. We do not know where everything came from but we can assure you that it was prepared with care and dedication in an almost endless variety.

We wish to honour all these sisters in mentioning the two who had the supervision: sister Audrey Mostert and sister Effie Sikma. They watched over us like mothers and it was a correct statement when I sometimes answered a question with, "Yes, Mom," or "No, Mom." To show our appreciation to all who cooperated we present each of you with a plant, honouring all in you. Thank you both, thank you all.

At the same time we wish to show our appreciation to the Church at Cloverdale as a whole. I may therefore present you, Rev. Visscher, with a copper pot filled with dried flowers which — we hope — will be a lasting reminder of our gratitude.

Synod Cloverdale 1983 draws to a close.

The Lord has been with us and has used us.

It is not up to us to judge our work. We did it, as Rev. VanderBoom correctly pointed out in his sermon on the eve of Synod, without asking for praise and without fearing blame.

The future will show what it will be.

The LORD may bless us and keep us.

The LORD may make His face to shine upon us and be gracious to us.

The LORD may lift up His countenance upon us and give us peace.

Thank You.

He requests to sing Psalm 150, and leads in thanksgiving to the Lord.

Synod Cloverdale 1983 is closed.

By order of Synod,
W.W.J. VanOene, chairman
J. Geertsema, vice-chairman
Cl. Stam, first clerk
W. Pouwelse, second clerk

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APPENDIX IA

COMMITTEE ON TRANSLATION AND REVISION OF CONFSSIONAL AND LITURGICAL FORMS

THREE FORMS OF UNITY: THE CONFESSION OF FAITH. (Belgic Confession)

Introductory Remarks

- A. The Committee took as basis for a new translation *De Nederlandse Belijdenisgeschriften In Authentieke Teksten. Met Inleiding en Tekstvergelijkingen* door J.N. Bakhuizen van den Brink, 2nd ed. (Amsterdam: Ton Bolland, 1976). It gives the authentic French text, established by the Synod of Dordrecht 1619, the Latin text from the Acts of this National Synod, and the authentic Dutch text, also accepted by the Synod itself. We compared the new Dutch texts, nl. the text of the interdenominational Committee-Dankbaar and the text provisionally adopted by the Synod of Groningen-Zuid 1978 of our sister Churches in the Netherlands. Both texts are published in the Acts of this Synod, pp. 271-307.
- B. Our method, therefore, differed fundamentally from the method accepted by the Belgic Confession Translation Committee of the Christian Reformed Church (see Report 33, 1979 Agenda for Synod, pp. 360-430). This Committee recommended a.o. the following:
That Synod authorize the Belgic Confession Translation Committee to use the 1559/61 de Brès version of the Belgic Confession as the *textus receptus* for the new English Translation.

Grounds:

1. It is the earliest version available.
2. It was written in times more akin to our own vis-a-vis church-state relationships than were the later revisions.
3. Its theological nuances are, in general, preferable to those in the later revisions.

Over against this recommendation our Committee is of the opinion that the *textus receptus* is the authorized French and Dutch texts of Dordt 1619.

Grounds:

1. Not the earliest version available is the *textus receptus*. The situation of the text of a creed or confession (e.g. The Apostles' Creed) is different from the text of Holy Scripture. The Churches have revised their Confessions. As far as the Belgic Confession is concerned, a revision took place already at the Synod of May 1566 in Antwerp. This version found its counterpart in the Dutch text of 1583. The following important revision of the French and Dutch texts happened at the Synod of Dordt 1619. Not the original, personal version of De Brès is the authentic text, but the text established by the Churches in the Synod of Dordt.
2. If we return to the personal, original text of De Brès, we lose the important, officially made changes (e.g. the addition of "almighty" in Art. 1, the enumeration of the sixty-six Bible Books in Art. 4, etc.) The change in Art. 22, made at the Synod of Dordt, in order to underline the substitutionary significance of Christ's active obedience, would be undone.
3. While the main revision already was made by the Synod of 1566, the difference in church-state relationships was not great. The whole interpretation by the Christian Reformed Committee of the differences between the editions of 1561, 1566 and 1619 is debatable.
4. The Committee of the Christian Reformed Church states that we should not "try to 'patch up' either the statements of De Brès or the Revision. For by definition a creed, written at a certain time, is an historical document. In our view it should

not be rewritten or revised but only translated, at most, by later generations! (p. 429)"

This statement shows that the Reformed concept binding to an authentic text of the Confession established by a General Synod, is abandoned.

Acceptance of De Brès original version by the Christian Reformed Committee is nothing but acceptance of an *historical* document, without strict ecclesiastical binding in the present. Also for this reason we reject the method of the Christian Reformed Committee.

- C. It may be clear that our Committee did not literally follow the mandate "to submit a text of the Belgic Confession . . . in which such changes have been made in the text that a faithful rendering of the original is obtained and in which all quotations from Holy Writ are given in a correct and up-to-date translation." (Acts Coaldale 1977, Art. 60, p. 28.) For "the original" we read "the authentic texts," nl. the French and Dutch texts of the Synod of Dordrecht 1619.
- D. The Committee would like to draw your attention to the following details of our revision:
1. We chose as title: "TRUE CHRISTIAN CONFESSION OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES CONTAINING THE SUMMARY OF THE DOCTRINE OF GOD AND OF THE ETERNAL SALVATION OF SOULS." In references it will be mentioned as "Belgic Confession" or "Confession of Faith."
 2. Bible passages are presented in the RSV, unless some other translation was preferable. Scripture references are added in margin. The Committee has confined itself to the texts mentioned or quoted in the Confession itself. If the Churches would like to add more Scripture references in margin, the General Synod 1980 should be overtured.
 3. As far as changes in the content are concerned, the Committee proposes the following:
 - a. To change the beginning of Art. 1 in order to take away the expression "one only simple and spiritual Being, which we call God." The majority of the Committee felt that this formulation can give rise to the wrong idea that we call the LORD "God" in our own initiative. One member was of the opinion that the present text expresses well what the believers, taking into account the limitations of human language and mind, can say about God whose nature is inexpressible. The Committee proposes to read: "We all believe with the heart and confess with the mouth that there is only one God, who is a simple and spiritual Being; He is eternal"
 - b. To add in Art. 4 "Lamentations" and not to count the letter to the Hebrews among the Pauline epistles anymore. This is done in accordance with newer Bible translations.
 - c. To delete in Art. 9 the reference to 1 John 5:7 (A.V.), because of the testimony of the manuscripts (see newer Bible translations).
 - d. To replace in Art. 10 the Scripture proofs for the eternity of the Son of God, nl. Micah 5:2 and Heb 7:3, by John 8:58 and John 17:5.
The Committee shares the opinion that the first mentioned texts are no valid Scripture proofs for the truth concerned.

For the Committee,
H.M. OHMANN,
J. FABER, Reporters

June 1979

APPENDIX I B
TRUE CHRISTIAN CONFESSION
according to
THE BELGIC CONFESSION
containing the summary of the doctrine
of God and of the eternal salvation
of man.

ARTICLE I

THERE IS ONLY ONE GOD

We all believe with the heart and confess with the mouth that there is only one God, who is a simple and spiritual Being; He is eternal, incomprehensible, invisible, immutable, infinite, almighty, perfectly wise, just, good, and the overflowing fountain of all good.

ARTICLE II

HOW GOD MAKES HIMSELF KNOWN TO US

We know Him by two means: First, by the creation, preservation and government of the universe; which is before our eyes as a most beautiful book, wherein all creatures, great and small, are as so many letters leading us to *perceive clearly the invisible qualities of God* namely *His eternal power and deity*, as the apostle Paul says in Romans 1:20. All these things are sufficient to convict men and leave them without excuse. Second, He makes Himself more clearly and fully known to us by His holy and divine Word as far as is necessary for us in this life, to His glory and our salvation.

ARTICLE III

THE WORD OF GOD

We confess that this Word of God *did not come by the impulse of man*, but that *men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God*, as the apostle Peter says. Thereafter, in His special care for us and our salvation, God commanded His servants, the prophets and apostles, to commit His revealed word to writing and He Himself wrote with His own finger the two tables of the law. Therefore we call such writings holy and divine Scriptures.

2 Pet 1:21

Deut 10:4

ARTICLE IV

THE CANONICAL BOOKS

We believe that the Holy Scriptures consist of two parts namely the Old and the New Testament, which are canonical, against which nothing can be alleged. These books are listed in the Church of God as follows.

The books of the Old Testament: the five books of Moses, namely, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra,

Nehemiah, Esther; Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Songs; Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

The books of the New Testament: the four gospels, namely, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; the Acts of the Apostles; the thirteen letters of the apostle Paul, Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon; the letter to the Hebrews; the seven other letters, James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1, 2 and 3 John, Jude; and the Revelation to the apostle John.

ARTICLE V

THE AUTHORITY OF HOLY SCRIPTURE

We receive all these books, and these only, as holy and canonical, for the regulation, foundation and confirmation of our faith. We believe without any doubt all things contained in them, not so much because the Church receives and approves them as such, but especially because the Holy Spirit witnesses in our hearts that they are from God, and also because they contain the evidence thereof in themselves; for, even the blind are able to perceive that the things foretold in them are being fulfilled.

ARTICLE VI

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE CANONICAL AND APOCRYPHAL BOOKS

We distinguish these holy books from the apocryphal, namely: 3 and 4 Esdras, Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, Additions to Esther, Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Young Men in the Furnace, Susannah, Bel and the Dragon, the Prayer of Manasseh, 1 and 2 Maccabees. The Church may read and take instruction from these so far as they agree with the canonical books. They are however far from having such power and authority that we may confirm from their testimony any point of faith or of the Christian religion; much less may they be used to detract from the authority of the holy books.

ARTICLE VII

THE SUFFICIENCY OF HOLY SCRIPTURE

We believe that this Holy Scripture fully contains the will of God and that all that man must believe in order to be saved is sufficiently taught therein. The whole manner of worship which God requires of us is written in it at length. It is therefore unlawful for any one, even for an apostle, to teach otherwise than we are now taught in Holy Scripture: yes, *even if it be an angel from heaven*, as the apostle Paul says. Since it is forbidden to add to or take away anything from the Word of God, it is evident that the doctrine thereof is most perfect and complete in all respects.

Gal 1:8
Deut 4:2
Deut 12:32
Rev 22:19

We may not consider either any writings of men, however holy these men may have been, of equal value with the divine Scriptures, nor ought we to consider custom, or the great multitude, or antiquity,

Rom 3:9-18
Ps 62:9

1 Jn 4:1
2 Jn 1:10

or succession of times and persons, or councils, decrees or statutes, as of equal value with the truth of God since the truth is above all; for all men are of themselves liars, and *lighter than a breath*. We therefore reject with all our hearts whatsoever does not agree with this infallible rule as the apostles have taught us: *Test the spirits to see whether they are of God*. Likewise: *If any one comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house or give him any greeting*.

ARTICLE VIII

GOD IS ONE IN ESSENCE, YET DISTINGUISHED IN THREE PERSONS

According to this truth and this Word of God, we believe in one only God, who is one single essence, in which are three persons, really, truly, and eternally distinct according to their incommunicable properties; namely, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Father is the cause, origin, and beginning of all things visible and invisible. The Son is the Word, the wisdom, and the image of the Father. The Holy Spirit is the eternal power and might who proceeds from the Father and the Son. Nevertheless, God is not by this distinction divided into three, since the Holy Scriptures teach us that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit each has His personal existence, distinguished by Their properties; but in such a way that these three persons are but one only God.

It is, therefore, evident that the Father is not the Son, nor the Son the Father, and likewise the Holy Spirit is neither the Father nor the Son. Nevertheless, these persons thus distinguished are not divided, nor intermixed; for the Father has not assumed our flesh and blood, neither has the Holy Spirit, but the Son only. The Father has never been without His Son, or without His Holy Spirit. For these three, in one and the same essence, are equal in eternity. There is neither first nor last; for They are all three one, in truth, in power, in goodness, and in mercy.

ARTICLE IX

SCRIPTURE PROOF OF THIS DOCTRINE

All this we know both from the testimonies of Holy Scripture and from the respective works of the three Persons and especially those we perceive in ourselves.

Gen 1:26, 27

Gen 3:22

The testimonies of Scripture which lead us to believe this Holy Trinity are written in many places of the Old Testament. It is not necessary to mention them all, it is sufficient to select some with discretion. In the book of Genesis God says: *Let Us make man in our image after our likeness. . . . So God created man in His own image . . . ; male and female He created them*. Also: *Behold, the man has become like one of Us*. From God's saying: *Let Us make man in Our image*, it appears that there are more divine persons than one; and when He says, *God created*, He indicates that there is one God. It is true, He does not say how many persons there are, but what seems to be somewhat obscure in the Old Testament is very plain in the New Testament. For when our Lord was baptized in the river Jordan, the voice of the Father was heard, who said, *This is My beloved Son*; the Son was seen in the water, and the Holy Spirit descended upon

Luke 3: 21, 22

Mt 28:19
 Luke 1:35
 2 Cor 13:14

Him in bodily form as a dove. For the baptism of all believers Christ prescribed this formula: Baptize all nations into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. In the Gospel according to Luke the angel Gabriel thus addressed Mary, the mother of our Lord: *The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God.* Likewise: *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.* In all these places we are fully taught that there are three persons in one only divine essence. Although this doctrine far surpasses all human understanding, nevertheless in this life we believe it on the ground of the Word of God, and we expect to enjoy its perfect knowledge and fruit hereafter in heaven. Moreover, we must observe the distinct offices and works of these three Persons towards us. The Father is called our Creator by His power; the Son is our Saviour and Redeemer by His blood; the Holy Spirit is our Sanctifier by His dwelling in our hearts. The doctrine of the Holy Trinity has always been maintained and preserved in the true Church since the time of the apostles to this very day, over against Jews, Muslims, and against false Christians and heretics such as Marcion, Mani, Praxeas, Sabellius, Paul of Samosata, Arius, and such like, who have been justly condemned by the orthodox fathers. In this doctrine therefore, we willingly receive the three creeds, of the Apostles, of Nicea and of Athanasius; likewise that which in accordance with them, is agreed upon by the early fathers.

ARTICLE X

JESUS CHRIST TRUE AND ETERNAL GOD

Heb 1:3
 Gen 1:1
 Jn 1:1-3
 Heb 1:2
 Col 1:16
 Jn 8:58
 Jn 17:5

We believe that Jesus Christ according to His divine nature, is the only-begotten Son of God, begotten from eternity, not made, nor created — for then He would be a creature — but of the same essence with the Father, equally-eternal, *who reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of His nature*, equal to Him in all things. He is the Son of God, not only from the time that He assumed our nature but from all eternity, as these testimonies, compared with each other teach us. Moses says that God created the world; the apostle John says that all things were made by the Word which he calls God. The letter to the Hebrews says that God made the world through His Son; likewise the apostle Paul says that God created all things through Jesus Christ. Therefore it must necessarily follow that He who is called God, the Word, the Son, and Jesus Christ, did exist at that time when all things were created by Him. Therefore He could say, *Truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am* and He prayed, *Glorify Thou Me in Thy own presence with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was made.* And so He is true, eternal God, the Almighty, whom we invoke, worship and serve.

ARTICLE XI

THE HOLY SPIRIT TRUE AND ETERNAL GOD

We believe and confess also, that the Holy Spirit from eternity pro-

ceeds from the Father and the Son. He is neither made, created, nor begotten, but He can only be said to proceed from both. In order He is the third Person of the Holy Trinity, of one and the same essence, majesty, and glory with the Father and the Son, true and eternal God as the Holy Scriptures teach us.

ARTICLE XII

THE CREATION OF ALL THINGS, ESPECIALLY THE ANGELS

We believe that the Father through the Word, that is, through His Son, has created out of nothing the heaven, the earth, and all creatures, when it seemed good to Him, and that He has given every creature its being, shape and form and to each its specific task and function to serve its Creator.

We believe that He also continues to sustain and govern them according to His eternal providence and by His infinite power to serve man that man may serve his God.

He also created the angels good, to be His messengers and to serve His elect. Some of these have fallen from the exalted position in which God created them into everlasting perdition, but the others have by the grace of God remained steadfast and continued in their first state. The devils and evil spirits are so depraved that they are enemies of God and of all that is good. With all their might, they lie in wait like murderers to ruin the Church and all its members and to destroy everything by their wicked devices. They are therefore by their own wickedness sentenced to eternal damnation and daily expect their horrible torments.

Therefore we detest and reject the error of the Sadducees, who deny that there are any spirits and angels; and also the error of the Manichees who say that the devils were not created, but have their origin of themselves, and that without having become corrupted, they are wicked by their own nature.

ARTICLE XIII

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD

We believe that this good God, after He had created all things, did not abandon them or give them up to fortune or chance, but that according to His holy will He so rules and governs them that in this world nothing happens without His direction. Yet God is not the Author of the sins which are committed nor can He be charged with them. For His power and goodness are so great and beyond understanding that He ordains and executes His work in the most excellent and just manner, even when devils and wicked men act unjustly. And as to His actions surpassing human understanding we will not curiously inquire farther than our capacity allows us. But with the greatest humility and reverence we adore the just judgments of God, which are hidden from us and we content ourselves that we are pupils of Christ who have only to learn those things which He teaches us in His Word without transgressing these limits.

This doctrine gives us unspeakable consolation, for we learn thereby that nothing can happen to us by chance, but only by the direction of our gracious heavenly Father. He watches over us with fatherly care keeping all creatures so under His power that not one hair of

Mt 10: 29, 30 our head — for they are all numbered — nor one sparrow can fall to the ground without the will of our Father. In this we trust, because we know that He holds in check the devil and all our enemies so that they cannot hurt us without His permission and will. We reject therefore the damnable error of the Epicureans, who say that God does not concern Himself with anything but leaves all things to chance.

ARTICLE XIV

THE CREATION AND FALL OF MAN AND HIS INCAPABILITY OF DOING WHAT IS TRULY GOOD

Gen 1:26 We believe that God created man of dust from the ground and He made and *formed him after His own image and likeness*, good, righteous and holy. His will could conform to the will of God in every respect. But, when man was in this high position he did not appreciate it nor did he value his excellency. He gave ear to the words of the devil and wilfully subjected himself to sin and consequently to death and the curse. For he transgressed the commandment of life which he had received; by his sin he broke away from God, who was his true life; he corrupted his whole nature. By all this he made himself liable to physical and spiritual death.

Rom 1:20 Since man became wicked and perverse, corrupt in all his ways, he has lost all his excellent gifts which he once received from God. He has nothing left but some small traces, *which are sufficient to make man inexcusable*. For whatever light is in us has changed into darkness, as Scripture teaches us, *The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it*, where the apostle John calls mankind darkness.

Jn 1:5 Therefore we reject all teaching contrary to this concerning the free will of man, since *man is but a slave to sin and no one can receive anything except what is given him from heaven*. For who dares to boast that he of himself can do any good, when Christ says: *No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him*? Who will glory in his own will, when he understands that the *mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God*? Who can speak a word of his knowledge, since *the unspiritual man does not receive the gifts of the Spirit of God*? In short, who dares to claim anything, when he realizes that *we are not competent of ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but that our competence is from God*? Therefore what the apostle says must justly remain sure and firm: *God is at work in you both to will and to work for His good pleasure*. For there is no understanding or will conform to the understanding and will of God unless Christ has brought it about; as He teaches us: *Apart from me you can do nothing*.

Jn 8:34
Jn 3:27
Jn 6:44

Rom 8:7

1 Cor 2:14

2 Cor 3:5

Phil 2:13

Jn 15:5

ARTICLE XV

ORIGINAL SIN

We believe that by the disobedience of Adam original sin has spread throughout the whole human race. It is a corruption of the entire nature of man and a hereditary evil which infects even infants in their mothers' womb. As a root it produces in man all sorts of sin. It is, therefore, so vile and abominable in the sight of God that it is suffi-

cient to condemn the human race. It is not abolished nor eradicated even by baptism for sin continually streams forth like water welling up from this woeful source. Yet, in spite of all this, original sin is not imputed to the children of God to their condemnation but by His grace and mercy forgiven them. This does not mean, that the believers may sleep peacefully in their sin, but that the awareness of this corruption makes them often groan as they eagerly wait to be delivered from this body of death.

In this regard we reject the error of the Pelagians who say that this sin is only a matter of imitation.

ARTICLE XVI

DIVINE ELECTION

We believe that, when the entire offspring of Adam plunged into perdition and ruin by the transgression of the first man, God has manifested Himself to be as He is: merciful and just. *Merciful*, in rescuing and saving from this perdition those whom in His eternal and unchangeable counsel He has elected in Jesus Christ our Lord by His pure goodness, without any consideration of their works. *Just*, in leaving the others in the fall and perdition into which they have plunged themselves.

Eph 1:4, 5

ARTICLE XVII

THE RESCUE OF FALLEN MAN

We believe that, when He saw that man had thus plunged himself into physical and spiritual death and made himself completely miserable, our gracious God in His marvelous wisdom and goodness set out to seek man who trembling fled from Him. He comforted him with the promise that He would give him His Son, born of woman, *to bruise the head of the serpent*, and to make man blessed.

Gal 4:4

Gen 3:15

ARTICLE XVIII

THE INCARNATION OF THE SON OF GOD

We confess, therefore, that God has fulfilled the promise He had made to the fathers by the mouth of His holy prophets when, at the time appointed by Him, He sent His one and only eternal Son into the world. He took the form of a servant and was born in the likeness of men. He truly assumed a real human nature with all its infirmities, without sin, for He was conceived in the womb of the blessed virgin **Mary** by the power of the Holy Spirit and not by the act of a man. He not only assumed human nature as to the body, but also a true human soul, in order that He might be a real man. For since the soul was lost as well as the body, it was necessary that He assumed both to save both.

Phil 2:7

Contrary to the heresy of the Anabaptists, who deny that Christ assumed human flesh of His mother, we, therefore, confess that Christ partook of the flesh and blood of the children.

Heb 2:14

Acts 2:30

Rom 1:3

Luke 1:42

He is a fruit of the loins of David;

born of the seed of David according to the flesh;

a fruit of the womb of the virgin Mary;

Gal 4:4 born of woman;
 Jer 33:15 a branch of David;
 Is 11:1 a shoot from the stump of Jesse;
 Heb 7:14 sprung from the tribe of Judah;
 Rom 9:5 descended from the Jews according to the flesh;
 Heb 2:16, 17 of the seed of Abraham, since the Son was concerned with the de-
 Heb 4:15 scendants of Abraham. Therefore He had to be made like his brethren
 in every respect, yet without sin.
 Mt 1:23 In this way He is in truth our Immanuel, that is God with us.

ARTICLE XIX

THE TWO NATURES IN THE ONE PERSON OF CHRIST

We believe that by this conception the person of the Son of God is inseparably united and joined with the human nature so that there are not two sons of God, nor two persons, but two natures united in one single person. Each nature retains its own distinct properties: His divine nature has always remained uncreated, without beginning of days or end of life, filling heaven and earth; His human nature has not lost its properties; it has beginning of days and remains created. It is finite and retains all the properties of a true body. Even though, by His resurrection, He has given immortality to His human nature. He has not changed its reality, since our salvation and resurrection also depend on the reality of His body. However these two natures are so closely united in one person that they were not even separated by His death. Therefore, what He, when dying committed into the hands of His Father was a real human spirit that departed from His body. Meanwhile His divinity always remained united with His human nature, even when He was lying in the grave. And the divine nature always remained in Him just as it was in Him when He was a little child, even though it did not manifest itself as such for a little while. For this reason we profess Him to be true God and true man. True God in order to conquer death by His power; and true man that He might die for us according to the infirmity of His flesh.

Jer 23:24

Luke 23:46

ARTICLE XX

THE JUSTICE AND MERCY OF GOD IN CHRIST

We believe that God, who is perfectly merciful and just, sent His Son to assume that nature in which disobedience had been committed, to make satisfaction in that same nature; and to bear the punishment of sin by His most bitter passion and death. God therefore manifested His justice against His Son when He laid our iniquity on Him, and poured out His goodness and mercy on us who were guilty and worthy of damnation. Out of a most perfect love he gave His Son to die for us and He raised Him for our justification that through Him we might obtain immortality and life eternal.

Is 53:6

Rom 4:25

ARTICLE XXI

THE SATISFACTION OF CHRIST THE HIGH PRIEST

Heb 7:1 We believe that Jesus Christ was confirmed by an oath to be a

Heb 7:17, 21	High Priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek. He presented Himself in our place before His Father, appeasing God's wrath by His full satisfaction, offering Himself on the tree of the cross where He poured out His precious blood to purge away our sins, as the Prophets had foretold. For it is written, <i>Upon Him was the chastisement that made us whole and with His stripes we are healed;</i>
2 Pet 2:24	<i>Like a lamb He was led to the slaughter;</i>
Is 53:5, 7, 12	<i>He was numbered with the transgressors,</i> and condemned as a criminal by Pontius Pilate. though he had first declared Him innocent.
Ps 69:4	<i>He restored what He had not stolen.</i>
1 Pet 3:18	He died as the righteous for the unrighteous. He suffered in body and soul feeling the horrible punishment caused by our sins and <i>His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down upon the ground.</i> Finally,
Luke 22:44	He exclaimed, <i>My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?</i> All this He endured for the forgiveness of our sins.
Mt 27:46	Therefore we justly say, with Paul, that we know nothing <i>except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.</i> We count <i>everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Jesus our Lord.</i> We find comfort in His wounds and have no need to seek or invent any other means of reconciliation with God than this only sacrifice once offered by which the believers are perfected for all times.
1 Cor 2:2	This is also the reason why the angel of God called Him <i>Jesus</i> , that
Phil 3:8	is Saviour, <i>because He would save His people from their sins.</i>
Heb 10:14	
Mt 1:21	

ARTICLE XXII

OUR JUSTIFICATION THROUGH FAITH IN CHRIST

We believe that, in order that we may obtain the true knowledge of this great mystery, the Holy Spirit kindles in our hearts a true faith. This faith embraces Jesus Christ with all His merits, makes Him our own, and does not seek anything besides Him. For the dilemma is, either all we need for our salvation is not in Jesus Christ or, if it is all in Him, one who has Jesus Christ through faith, has complete salvation. It is, therefore, a terrible blasphemy to assert that Christ is not sufficient, but that something else is needed besides Him: For the conclusion would then be, that Christ is only half a Saviour.

Rom 3:28 Therefore we rightly say with Paul that *we are justified by faith alone, or by faith apart from works of law.* Meanwhile, strictly speaking, we do not mean that faith as such justifies us, for faith is only the instrument by which we embrace Christ our righteousness; He imputes to us all His merits, and as many holy works as He has done for us and in our place. Therefore Jesus Christ is our righteousness and faith is the instrument that keeps us with Him in the communion of all His benefits; When those benefits have become ours, they are more than sufficient to acquit us of our sins.

ARTICLE XXIII

OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS BEFORE GOD

We believe that our blessedness lies in the forgiveness of our sins for Jesus Christ's sake and that therein our righteousness before God consists, as David and Paul teach us. They pronounce a *bless-*

Ps 32:1
Rom 3:24

ing upon the man to whom God reckons righteousness apart from works. The apostle also says, that we are justified by His grace as a gift, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

Therefore we always hold to this firm foundation. We give all the glory to God, humble ourselves before Him, and acknowledge ourselves for what we are. We do not claim anything for ourselves or our merits, but rely and rest on the only obedience of Jesus Christ crucified; His obedience is ours when we believe in Him.

This is sufficient to cover all our iniquities and to give us confidence in drawing near to God, freeing our conscience of fear, terror and dread, so that we do not follow the example of our first father, Adam, who trembling tried to hide and covered himself with fig leaves. For indeed, if we had to appear before God, relying — be it ever so little — on ourselves or some other creature, woe to us, we would be consumed. Therefore everyone must say with David, *O LORD, enter not into judgment with Thy servant, for no man living is righteous before Thee.*

Gen 3:7

Ps 143:2

ARTICLE XXIV

MAN'S SANCTIFICATION AND GOOD WORKS

We believe that this true faith, worked in man by the hearing of God's Word and by the operation of the Holy Spirit, regenerates him and makes him a new man. It makes him live a new life and frees him from the slavery of sin. Therefore it is not true that this justifying faith makes man indifferent to live a good and holy life. On the contrary, without it no one would ever do anything out of love for God, but only out of self-love or fear of being condemned. It is therefore impossible for this holy faith to be inactive in man, for we do not speak of an empty faith but of what Scripture calls *faith working through love*. This faith induces man to apply himself to those works which God has commanded in His Word. These works, proceeding from the good root of faith are good and acceptable in the sight of God, since they are all sanctified by His grace. Nevertheless they do not count toward our justification. For through faith in Christ we are justified, even before we do any good works. Otherwise they could not be good any more than the fruit of a tree can be good unless the tree itself is good.

Therefore we do good works, but not for merit. For what could we merit? We are indebted to God rather than He to us for the good works we do, since it is He *who is at work in us, both to will and to work for His good pleasure*. Let us keep in mind what is written: *So you also, when you have done all that is commanded you, say, "We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty."* Meanwhile we do not deny that God rewards good works, but it is by His grace that He crowns His gifts.

Furthermore, although we do good works, we do not base our salvation on them. We cannot do a single work that is not defiled by our flesh and therefore deserves punishment. Even if we could show one good work, the remembrance of one sin is enough to make God reject it. We would then always be in doubt, tossed to and fro without any certainty, and our poor consciences would be constantly tormented, if they did not rely on the merit of the death and passion of our Saviour.

Gal 5:6

Phil 2:13

Luke 17:10

ARTICLE XXV

CHRIST, THE FULFILLMENT OF THE LAW

We believe that the ceremonies and symbols of the law have ceased with the coming of Christ, and that all shadows have been fulfilled, so that the use of them ought to be abolished among Christians. Yet their truth and substance remain for us in Jesus Christ, in whom they have been fulfilled.

In the meantime we still use the testimonies taken from the law and the prophets, both to confirm us in the doctrine of the gospel and to order our life in all honour according to God's will and to His glory.

ARTICLE XXVI

CHRIST'S INTERCESSION

- 1 Jn 2:1 We believe that we have no access to God except through the only Mediator and Advocate Jesus Christ the righteous. For this purpose He became man, uniting together the divine and human nature, that we men might not be barred from but have access to the divine majesty. This Mediator, however, whom the Father has ordained between Himself and us, should not frighten us by His greatness, so that we look for another according to our fancy. There is no creature in heaven or on earth who loves us more than Jesus Christ.
- Phil 2:6, 7
Heb 2:17
Jn 10:11
Rom 5:10
Rom 8:34
Mt 28:18
Though He was in the form of God, He emptied Himself, taking the form of man and of a servant for us, and was *made like his brethren in every respect*. If therefore, we had to look for another intercessor, could we find one who loves us more than He who laid down His life for us, even while we were His enemies? If we had to look for one who has authority and power, who has more than He who is seated at the right hand of the Father and who has all authority in heaven and on earth? Moreover, who will be heard more readily than God's own well-beloved Son?
- Therefore it was pure lack of trust which introduced the custom of dishonouring the saints rather than honouring them, doing what they themselves never did nor required. On the contrary they constantly rejected such honour according to their duty, as appears from their writings. Here one ought not to bring in our unworthiness, for it is not a question of offering our prayers on the basis of our own worthiness, but only on the basis of the excellence and worthiness of Jesus Christ, whose righteousness is ours by faith.
- Therefore with good reason, to take away from us this foolish fear or rather distrust, the author of Hebrews says to us that Jesus Christ was made *like His brethren in every respect, so that He might become a merciful and faithful High Priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people. For because He Himself has suffered and been tempted, He is able to help those who are tempted.*
- Heb 2: 17, 18
Further, to encourage us more to go to Him, He says: *Since then we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we have not a High Priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*
- Heb 4:14, 15
The same letter says: *Therefore brethren, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus . . . let us draw near with*
- Heb 10:19, 22

- Heb 7:24, 25 *a true heart in full assurance of faith, etc. Also, Christ holds His priesthood permanently, because He continues forever. Consequently He is able for all time to save those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. What more is needed? Christ Himself says: I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by Me. Why should we look for another advocate? It has pleased God to give us His Son as our Advocate. Let us then not leave Him for another, or even look for another, without ever finding. For when God gave Him to us, He knew very well that we were sinners.*
- Jn 14:6 *In conclusion, according to the command of Christ, we call upon the heavenly Father through Christ our only Mediator, as we are taught in the Lord's prayer. We rest assured that we shall obtain all we ask of the Father in His name.*
- Jn 14:13

ARTICLE XXVII

THE CATHOLIC OR UNIVERSAL CHURCH

We believe and profess one catholic or universal Church, which is a holy congregation and assembly of the true Christian believers who expect their entire salvation in Jesus Christ, are washed by His blood, and are sanctified and sealed by the Holy Spirit.

This Church has existed from the beginning of the world and will be to the end, for Christ is an eternal King who cannot be without subjects. This holy Church is preserved by God against the fury of the whole world, although for a while it may look very small and as extinct in the eyes of man. Thus during the perilous reign of Ahab, the Lord kept for Himself seven thousand persons who had not bowed their knees to Baal.

1 Kings 19:18

Moreover, the holy Church is not confined or limited to one particular place or to certain persons, but is spread and dispersed throughout the entire world. However, it is joined and united with heart and will, in one and the same Spirit, by the power of faith.

ARTICLE XXVIII

EVERYONE'S DUTY TO JOIN THE CHURCH

We believe, since this holy assembly and congregation is the assembly of the redeemed and there is no salvation outside it, that no one ought to withdraw from it, content to be by himself, no matter what his state or quality may be. But all and everyone are obliged to join it and unite with it, maintaining the unity of the Church. They must submit themselves to its instruction and discipline, bend their necks under the yoke of Jesus Christ and serve the edification of the brothers and sisters, according to the talents which God has given them as members of the same body.

To observe this more effectively, it is the duty of all believers, according to the Word of God, to separate from those who do not belong to the Church and to join this assembly wherever God has established it. They should do so even though the rulers and edicts of princes were against it, and death or physical punishment might follow.

All therefore who draw away from the Church or fail to join it act contrary to the ordinance of God.

ARTICLE XXIX

THE MARKS OF THE TRUE AND THE FALSE CHURCH

We believe that we ought to discern, diligently and very carefully from the Word of God, what is the true Church, for all sects which are in the world today claim for themselves the name of Church. We are not speaking here of the hypocrites, who are mixed in the Church along with the good, and yet are not part of the Church, although they are outwardly in it. We are speaking of the body and the communion of the true Church which must be distinguished from all sects that call themselves the Church.

The true Church is to be recognized by the following marks. It practises the pure preaching of the gospel. It maintains the pure administration of the sacraments as Christ instituted them. It exercises church discipline for correcting and punishing sins. In short, it governs itself according to the pure Word of God, rejecting all things contrary to it and regarding Jesus Christ as the only Head. Hereby the true Church can certainly be known and no one has the right to separate from it.

Those who are of the Church may be recognized by the marks of Christians. They believe in Jesus Christ, the only Saviour, flee from sin and pursue righteousness, love the true God and their neighbour without turning to the right or left, and crucify their flesh and its works. Although great weakness remains in them, they fight against it by the Spirit all the days of their life. They appeal constantly to the blood, suffering, death and obedience of Jesus Christ in whom they have forgiveness of their sins through faith in Him.

The false church assigns more authority to itself and its ordinances than to the Word of God. It does not want to submit itself to the yoke of Christ. It does not administer the sacraments as Christ commanded in His Word, but adds to them and subtracts from them as it pleases. It bases itself more on men than on Jesus Christ. It persecutes those who live holy lives according to the Word of God and who rebuke the false church for its sins, greed and idolatries.

These two Churches are easily recognized and distinguished from each other.

ARTICLE XXX

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CHURCH

We believe that this true Church must be governed according to the Spiritual order which our Lord has taught us in His Word.

There should be ministers or pastors to preach the Word of God and to administer the sacraments; there should also be elders and deacons who together with the pastors form the council of the Church. By these means they preserve the true religion; they see to it that the true doctrine takes its course, that evil men are disciplined in a spiritual way and are restrained, and also that the poor and all the afflicted are helped and comforted according to their need. By these means everything will be done well and in good order when faithful men are chosen in agreement with the rule that the apostle Paul gave to Timothy.

ARTICLE XXXI

THE OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH

We believe that ministers of God's Word, elders and deacons ought to be chosen to their offices by lawful election of the Church, with prayer and in good order as stipulated by the Word of God. Therefore everyone shall take care not to intrude by improper means. He shall wait for the time that he is called by God so that he may have sure testimony and thus be certain that his call comes from the Lord. Ministers of the Word, in whatever place they are, have equal power and authority for they are all servants of Jesus Christ, the only universal Bishop and the only Head of the Church. In order that this holy ordinance of God may not be violated or rejected, we declare that everyone must hold the ministers of the Word and the elders of the Church in special esteem because of their work and as much as possible be at peace with them without grumbling or arguing.

ARTICLE XXXII

THE ORDER AND DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH

We believe that, although it is useful and good for those who govern the Church to establish a certain order to maintain the body of the Church, they must at all times watch that they do not deviate from what Christ, our only Master, has commanded. Therefore we reject all human inventions and laws introduced into the worship of God which bind and compel the consciences in any way. We accept only what is proper to preserve and promote harmony and unity and to keep all in obedience to God. To that end, discipline and excommunication ought to be exercised in agreement with the Word of God.

ARTICLE XXXIII

THE SACRAMENTS

We believe that our gracious God, mindful of our insensitivity and infirmity, has ordained sacraments to seal His promises to us and to be pledges of His good will and grace towards us. He did so to nourish and sustain our faith. He has added these to the Word of the gospel to represent better to our external senses both what He declares to us in His Word and what He does inwardly in our hearts. Thus He confirms to us the salvation which He imparts to us. Sacraments are visible signs and seals of something internal and invisible, by means of which God works in us through the power of the Holy Spirit. Therefore the signs are not void and meaningless so that they deceive us. For Jesus Christ is their truth; apart from Him they would be nothing. Moreover, we are satisfied with the number of two sacraments which Christ our Master has instituted for us, namely, the sacrament of baptism and the holy supper of Jesus Christ.

ARTICLE XXXIV

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Rom 10:4

We believe and confess that Jesus Christ, who is the end of the law, has by His shed blood put an end to every other shedding of blood

that one could or would make as an expiation or satisfaction for sins. He has abolished circumcision, which involved blood, and has instituted in its place the sacrament of baptism. By baptism we are received into the Church of God and set apart from all other peoples and false religions, to be entirely committed to Him, whose mark and emblem we bear. This serves as a testimony to us that He will be our God and gracious Father for ever.

Mt 28:19

For that reason He has commanded to baptize with plain water all those who are His *into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*. By this He signifies to us that, as water washes away the dirt of the body when poured on us, and as water is seen on the body of the baptized, when sprinkled on him, so the blood of Christ, by the Holy Spirit, does the same thing internally to the soul. It washes and cleanses our soul from sin and regenerates us from a child of wrath into a child of God. This is not brought about by the water as such but by the sprinkling of the precious blood of the Son of God, which is our Red Sea, through which we must pass to escape the tyranny of Pharaoh, that is the devil, and enter into the spiritual land of Canaan.

Thus the ministers on their part give us the sacrament and what is visible, but our Lord gives us what is signified by the sacrament, namely the invisible gifts and graces. He washes, purges and cleanses our souls of all filth and unrighteousness, renews our hearts and fills them with all comfort, gives us true assurance of His fatherly goodness, clothes us with the new nature and takes away the old nature with all its works.

We believe, therefore, that anyone who aspires to eternal life ought to be baptized only once. Baptism should never be repeated for we cannot be born twice. Moreover, baptism benefits us not only when the water is on us and when we receive it but throughout our whole life. For that reason we reject the error of the Anabaptists, who are not content with a single baptism received only once, and who also condemn the baptism of the little children of believers. We believe that these children ought to be baptized and sealed with the sign of the covenant, as infants were circumcized in Israel on the basis of the same promises which are now made to our children. Indeed, Christ has shed His blood to wash the children of believers just as much as He shed it for adults. Therefore they ought to receive the sign and sacrament of what Christ has done for them, as the Lord commanded in the law to offer a lamb shortly after children were born. This was a sacrament of the passion and death of Jesus Christ. Because baptism has the same meaning for our children as circumcision had for the people of Israel, Paul calls baptism *the circumcision of Christ*.

Lev 12:6-8

Col 2:11

ARTICLE XXXV

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

We believe and confess that our Saviour Jesus Christ has instituted the sacrament of holy supper to nourish and sustain those whom He has already regenerated and incorporated into His family which is His Church.

Those who are born anew have a twofold life. One is physical and temporal which they received in their first birth and it is common to all men. The other is spiritual and heavenly which is given them in

their second birth and is effected by the word of the gospel in the communion of the body of Christ. This life is not common to all but only to the elect of God.

Jn 6:51

For the support of the physical and earthly life God has ordained earthly and material bread. This bread is common to all just as life is common to all. For the support of the spiritual and heavenly life, which believers have, He has sent them a living bread which came down from heaven, namely Jesus Christ, who nourishes and sustains the spiritual life of the believers when He is eaten by them, that is, spiritually appropriated and received by faith.

To signify to us the spiritual and heavenly bread, Christ has instituted earthly and visible bread as a sacrament of His body and wine as a sacrament of His blood. He testifies to us: as certainly as we take and hold the sacrament in our hands and eat and drink it with our mouths by which our physical life is then sustained, so certainly do we receive by faith, as the hand and mouth of our soul, the true body and true blood of Christ, our only Saviour, in our souls for our spiritual life.

It is beyond any doubt that Jesus Christ did not commend His sacraments to us in vain. Therefore, He works in us all that He signifies to us by these holy signs. We do not understand the manner in which this is done, just as we do not comprehend the hidden activity of the Spirit of God. Yet we do not go wrong when we say that that which we eat and drink is the true natural body and the true blood of Christ. However, the manner in which we eat it is not by mouth but in the spirit by faith. In that way Jesus Christ always remains seated at the right hand of God His Father in heaven; yet He does not cease to communicate Himself to us by faith. This banquet is a spiritual table at which Christ makes us partakers of Himself with all His benefits and gives us the grace to enjoy both Himself and the merit of His suffering and death. He nourishes, strengthens and comforts our poor, desolate souls by the eating of His flesh and refreshes and renews them by the drinking of His blood.

Although the sacrament is joined together with that which is signified, the latter is not always received by all. The wicked certainly takes the sacrament to his condemnation but he does not receive the truth of the sacrament. Thus Judas and Simon the sorcerer both received the sacrament, but they did not receive Christ who is signified by it. He is exclusively communicated to the believers.

1 Cor 2:28, 29

Finally, we receive this holy sacrament in the congregation of the people of God with humility and reverence as we together commemorate the death of Christ our Saviour with thanksgiving and we confess our faith and Christian religion. Therefore, no one should come to this table without careful self-examination, lest by eating this bread and drinking from this cup, he eat and drink judgment upon himself. In short, we are moved by the use of this holy sacrament to a fervent love of God and our neighbours. Therefore we reject as desecrations all additions and damnable inventions which men have mixed with the sacraments. We declare that we should be content with the ordinance taught by Christ and His apostles and speak about it as they have spoken.

ARTICLE XXXVI

THE CIVIL GOVERNMENT

We believe that, because of the depravity of mankind, our gracious

Rom 13:4 God has ordained kings, princes and civil officers. He wants the world to be governed by laws and policies, in order that the licentiousness of men be restrained and that everything be conducted among them in good order. For that purpose He has placed the sword in the hand of the government to punish the wrongdoer and to protect those who do well. Their task of restraining and sustaining is not limited to the public order but includes the protection of the Church and its ministry in order that the kingdom of Christ may come, the Word of the gospel may be preached everywhere, and God may be honoured and served by everyone, as He requires in His Word.*

1 Tim 2:1, 2 Moreover everyone — no matter what quality, condition or rank — ought to be subject to the civil officers, pay taxes, hold them in honour and respect, and obey them in all things which do not disagree with the Word of God. We ought to pray for them, that God may direct them in all their ways and *that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, godly and respectful in every way.*

For that reason we condemn the Anabaptists and other rebellious people, and in general all those who reject the authorities and civil officers, subvert justice, introduce a communion of goods, and confound the decency that God has established among men.

*The following words were deleted here by the General Synod of 1905 of the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland: all idolatry and false worship may be removed and prevented, the kingdom of antichrist may be destroyed.

ARTICLE XXXVII

THE LAST JUDGMENT

Acts 1:11 Finally we believe, according to the Word of God, that when the time, ordained by the Lord but unknown to all creatures, has come and the number of the elect is complete, our Lord Jesus Christ will come from heaven, bodily and visibly, as He ascended, with great glory and majesty. He will declare Himself Judge of the living and the dead and set this old world afire in order to purge it. Then all people, men, women and children, who ever lived from the beginning of the world to the end, will appear in person before this great Judge. They will be summoned *with the archangel's call and with the sound of the trumpet of God.*

1 Thess 4:16 Those who died before that time will arise out of the earth, as their spirits are once again united with their own bodies in which they lived. Those who are still alive will not die as the others but will be changed in the twinkling of an eye from perishable to imperishable.

1 Cor 15:52 Then the books* will be opened and the dead will be judged according to what they have done in this world, whether good or evil.

Rev 20:12 Indeed, all people *will render account for every careless word they utter*, which the world regards as mere humour and amusement. The secrets and hypocrisies of men will then be publicly uncovered in the sight of all. And so for good reason the thought of this judgment is horrible and dreadful for the wicked and evildoers but it is a great joy and comfort for the righteous and elect. For then their full redemption will be completed and they will receive the fruits of their labour and of the trouble they have suffered. Their innocence will be known to all and they will see the terrible vengeance that God will bring upon the wicked who persecuted, oppressed, and tormented them in this world.

Mt 25:41 The wicked will be convicted by the testimony of their own consci-

Mt 10:32

Rev 21:4

Rev 22:20

ences and become immortal, but only to be tormented in *the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels*. On the other hand, the faithful and elect will be crowned with glory and honour. The Son of God will acknowledge their names before God His Father and His elect angels. God *will wipe away every tear from their eyes* and their cause — at present condemned as heretical and evil by many judges and civil authorities — will be recognized as the cause of the Son of God. As a gracious reward the Lord will make them possess such a glory as the heart of man could never conceive. Therefore we look forward to that great day with great longing to enjoy to the full the promises of God in Jesus Christ our Lord. "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!"

*Note: For exegetical reasons the addition, "that is to say the consciences," is left out.

APPENDIX II

Revised

THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

The Heidelberg Catechism, the second of our doctrinal standards, was written in Heidelberg at the request of Elector Frederick III, ruler of the most influential German province, the Palatinate, from 1559 to 1576. This pious Christian prince commissioned Zacharius Ursinus, twenty-eight years of age and professor of theology at the Heidelberg University, and Caspar Olevianus, twenty-six years old and Frederick's court preacher, to prepare a catechism for instructing the youth and for guiding pastors and teachers. Frederick obtained the advice and cooperation of the entire theological faculty in the preparation of the Catechism. The Heidelberg Catechism was adopted by a Synod in Heidelberg and published in German with a preface by Frederick III, dated January 19, 1563. A second and third German edition, each with some small additions, as well as a Latin translation were published in Heidelberg in the same year. The Catechism was soon divided into fifty-two sections so that a section of the Catechism could be explained to the churches in preaching each Sunday of the year.

In the Netherlands this Heidelberg Catechism became generally and favourably known almost as soon as it came from the press, mainly through the efforts of Petrus Dathenus, who translated it into the Dutch language and added this translation to his Dutch rendering of the Genevan Psalter, which was published in 1566. In the same year Peter Gabriel set the example of explaining this catechism to his congregation at Amsterdam in his Sunday afternoon sermons. The National Synods of the sixteenth century adopted it as one of the Three Forms of Unity, requiring office-bearers to subscribe to it and ministers to explain it to the churches. These requirements were strongly emphasized by the great Synod of Dort in 1618-19. The Heidelberg Catechism has been translated into many languages and is the most influential and the most generally accepted of the several catechisms of Reformation times.

The present translation, prepared for the Canadian Reformed Churches by a synodically appointed committee, was completed in 1983.

LORD'S DAY 1

1. Q. What is your only comfort
in life and death?
- A. I am not my own,¹
but belong with body and soul,
both in life and death,²
to my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ.³
He has fully paid for all my sins
with His precious blood,
and has set me free
from all the power of the devil.⁵
He also preserves me in such a way⁶
that without the will of my heavenly Father
not a hair can fall from my head;⁷
indeed, all things must work together
for my salvation.⁸
Therefore, by His Holy Spirit
He also assures me
of eternal life⁹
and makes me heartily willing and ready
from now on to live for Him.¹⁰

¹ I Cor. 6:19, 20.

² Rom. 14:7-9.

³ I Cor. 3:23; Tit. 2:14.

⁴ I Pet. 1:18, 19; I John 1:7; 2:2.

⁵ John 8:34-36; Heb. 2:14, 15; I John 3:8.

⁶ John 6:39, 40; 10:27-30; II Thess. 3:3; I Pet. 1:5.

⁷ Matt. 10:29-31; Luke 21:16-18.

⁸ Rom. 8:28.

⁹ Rom. 8:15, 16; II Cor. 1:21, 22; 5:5; Eph. 1:13, 14.

¹⁰ Rom. 8:14.

2. Q. What do you need to know
in order to live and die
in the joy of this comfort?
- A. First,
how great my sins and misery are;¹
second,
how I am delivered
from all my sins and misery;²
third,
how I am to be thankful to God
for such deliverance.³
- ¹ Rom. 3:9, 10; I John 1:10.
² John 17:3; Acts 4:12; 10:43.
³ Matt. 5:16; Rom. 6:13; Eph. 5:8-10; I Pet. 2:9, 10.

The First Part
OUR SIN AND MISERY
LORD'S DAY 2

3. Q. From where do you know
your sins and misery?
- A. From the law of God.¹
- ¹ Rom. 3: 20; 7:7-25.
4. Q. What does God's law require of us?
- A. Christ teaches us this in a summary in Matthew 22:
*You shall love the LORD your God
with all your heart,
and with all your soul,
and with all your mind.¹
This is the great and first commandment.
And a second is like it,
You shall love your neighbour as yourself.
On these two commandments depend
all the law and the prophets.²*
- ¹ Deut. 6:5.
² Lev. 19:18.
5. Q. Can you keep all this perfectly?
- A. No,¹ I am inclined by nature
to hate God and my neighbour.²
- ¹ Rom. 3:10, 23; 1 John 1:8, 10.
² Gen. 6:5; 8:21; Jer. 17:9; Rom. 7:23; 8:7; Eph. 2:3; Tit. 3:3.

LORD'S DAY 3

6. Q. Did God, then, create man
so wicked and perverse?
- A. No, on the contrary,
God created man good¹ and in His image,²
that is, in true righteousness and holiness,³
so that he might rightly know God His Creator,⁴
heartily love Him,
and live with Him in eternal blessedness
to praise and glorify Him.⁵
- ¹ Gen. 1:31.
² Gen. 1:26, 27.
³ Eph. 4:24.
⁴ Col. 3:10.
⁵ Ps. 8.
7. Q. From where, then, did man's depraved nature come?
- A. From the fall and disobedience of our first parents,

Adam and Eve, in Paradise,¹
for there our nature became so corrupt²
that we are all conceived and born in sin.³

¹ Gen. 3.

² Rom. 5:12, 18, 19.

³ Ps. 51:5.

8. Q. But are we so corrupt
that we are totally unable to do any good
and inclined to all evil?

A. Yes,¹ unless we are regenerated
by the Spirit of God.²

¹ Gen. 6:5; 8:21; Job 14:4; Is. 53:6.

² John 3:3-5.

LORD'S DAY 4

9. Q. Is God, then, not unjust
by requiring in His law
what man cannot do?

A. No, for
God so created man
that he was able to do it.¹
But man, at the instigation of the devil,²
in deliberate disobedience³
robbed himself and all his descendants
of these gifts.⁴

¹ Gen. 1:31.

² Gen. 3:13; John 8:44; 1 Tim. 2:13, 14.

³ Gen. 3:6.

⁴ Rom. 5:12, 18, 19.

10. Q. Will God allow such disobedience and apostasy
to go unpunished?

A. Certainly not.
He is terribly displeased
with our original sin
as well our actual sins.
Therefore He will punish them, by a just judgment,
both now
and eternally.¹
as He has declared:²
*Cursed be every one
who does not abide by all things
written in the book of the law,
and do them (Galatians 3:10).*

¹ Ex. 34:7; Ps. 5:4-6; 7:10; Nah. 1:2; Rom. 1:18; 5:12; Eph. 5:6; Heb. 9:27.

² Deut. 27:26.

11. Q. But is God not also merciful?
- A. God is indeed merciful,¹
but He is also just.²
His justice requires
that sin committed
against the most high majesty of God
also be punished with the most severe,
that is, with everlasting,
punishment of body and soul.³

¹ Ex. 20:6; 34:6, 7; Ps. 103:8, 9.

² Ex. 20:5; 34:7; Deut. 7:9-11; Ps. 5:4-6; Heb. 10:30, 31.

³ Matt. 25:45, 46.

The Second Part
OUR DELIVERANCE
LORD'S DAY 5

12. Q. Since, according to God's righteous judgment
we deserve temporal and
eternal punishment,
how can we escape this punishment
and be again received into favour?

- A. God demands that His justice be satisfied.¹
Therefore full payment must be made
either by ourselves or by another.²

¹ Ex. 20:5; 23:7; Rom. 2:1-11.

² Is. 53:11; Rom. 8:3, 4.

13. Q. Can we ourselves make this payment?

- A. Certainly not.
On the contrary, we daily increase our debt.¹

¹ Ps. 130:3; Matt. 6:12; Rom. 2:4, 5.

14. Q. Can any mere creature pay for us?

- A. No.
In the first place,
God will not punish another creature
for the sin which man has committed.¹
Furthermore,
no mere creature can sustain
the burden of God's eternal wrath against sin
and deliver others from it.²

¹ Ezek. 18:4, 20; Heb. 2:14-18.

² Ps. 130:3; Nah. 1:6.

15. Q. What kind of mediator and deliverer
must we seek?

- A. One who is a true¹ and righteous² man,

and yet more powerful than all creatures;
that is, one who is at the same time true God.³

¹ I Cor. 15:21; Heb. 2:17.

² Is. 53:9; II Cor. 5:21; Heb. 7:26.

³ Is. 7:14; 9:6; Jer. 23:6; John 1:1; Rom. 8:3, 4.

LORD'S DAY 6

16. Q. Why must He be a true and righteous man?

A. He must be a true man
because the justice of God requires
that the same human nature which has sinned
should pay for sin.¹

He must be a righteous man
because one who himself is a sinner
cannot pay for others.²

¹ Rom: 5:12, 15; I Cor. 15:21; Heb. 2:14-16.

² Heb. 7:26, 27; I Pet. 3:18.

17. Q. Why must He at the same time be true God?

A. He must be true God
so that by the power of His divine nature¹
He might bear in His human nature
the burden of God's wrath,¹
and might obtain for us
and restore to us
righteousness and life.³

¹ Is. 9:5.

² Deut. 4:24; Nah. 1:6; Ps. 130:3.

³ Is. 53:5, 11; John 3:16; II Cor. 5:21.

18. Q. But who is that Mediator
who at the same time is true God
and a true and righteous man?

A. Our Lord Jesus Christ,¹
*whom God made our wisdom,
our righteousness and sanctification
and redemption (I Corinthians 1:30).*

¹ Matt. 1:21-23; Luke 2:11; I Tim. 2:5; 3:16.

19. Q. From where do you know this?

A. From the holy gospel which
God Himself first revealed in Paradise.¹
Later, He had it proclaimed
by the patriarchs² and prophets,³
and foreshadowed
by the sacrifices and other ceremonies
of the law.⁴

Finally, He had it fulfilled
through His only Son.⁵

¹ Gen. 3:15.

² Gen. 12:3; 22:18; 49:10.

³ Is. 53; Jer. 23:5, 6; Mic. 7:18-20; Acts 10:43; Heb. 1:1.

⁴ Lev. 1:7; John 5:46; Heb. 10:1-10.

⁵ Rom. 10:4; Gal. 4:4, 5; Col. 2:17.

LORD'S DAY 7

20. Q. Are all men, then, saved by Christ
just as they perished through Adam?

A. No.

Only those are saved
who by a true faith
are grafted into Christ
and accept all His benefits.¹

¹ Matt. 7:14; John 1:12; 3:16, 18, 36; Rom. 11:16-21.

21. Q. What is true faith?

A. True faith is a sure knowledge

whereby I accept as true
all that God has revealed to us in His Word.¹
At the same time it is a firm confidence²
that not only to others, but also to me,³
God has granted forgiveness of sins,
everlasting righteousness, and salvation,⁴
out of mere grace,
only for the sake of Christ's merits.⁵
This faith the Holy Spirit works in my heart
by the gospel.⁶

¹ John 17:3, 17; Heb. 11:1-3; James 2:19.

² Rom. 4:18-21; 5:1; 10:10; Heb. 4:16.

³ Gal. 2:20.

⁴ Rom. 1:17; Heb. 10:10.

⁵ Rom. 3:20-26; Gal. 2:16; Eph. 2:8-10.

⁶ Acts 16:14; Rom. 1:16; 10:17; 1 Cor. 1:21.

22. Q. What, then, must a Christian believe?

A. All that is promised us in the gospel,¹
which the articles of our
catholic and undoubted Christian faith
teach us in a summary.

¹ Matt. 28:19; John 20:30, 31.

23. Q. What are these articles?

A. I. 1. *I believe in God the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth.*
II. 2. *I believe in Jesus Christ,
His only begotten Son, our Lord.*

3. *He was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary;*
 4. *suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried;
He descended into hell;*
 5. *On the third day He arose from the dead;*
 6. *He ascended into heaven,
and sits at the right hand
of God the Father almighty;*
 7. *from there He will come to judge
the living and the dead.*
- III.
8. *I believe in the Holy Spirit;*
 9. *I believe a holy catholic Christian church,
the communion of saints;*
 10. *the forgiveness of sins;*
 11. *the resurrection of the body;*
 12. *and the life everlasting.*

LORD'S DAY 8

24. Q. How are these articles divided?
- A. Into three parts:
the first is about God the Father and our creation;
the second about God the Son and our redemption;
the third about God the Holy Spirit
and our sanctification.
25. Q. Since there is only one God,¹
why do you speak of three persons,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?
- A. Because God has so revealed Himself in His Word²
that these three distinct persons
are the one, true, eternal God.

¹ Deut. 6:4; Is. 44:6; 45:5; I Cor. 8:4, 6.

² Gen. 1:2, 3; Is. 61:1; 63:8-10; Matt. 3:16, 17; 28:18, 19; I Luke 4:18;
John 14:26; 15:26; II Cor. 13:14; Gal. 4:6; Tit. 3:5, 6.

God the Father and Our Creation

LORD'S DAY 9

26. Q. What do you believe when you say:
*I believe in God the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth?*
- A. That the eternal Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who out of nothing created heaven and earth
and all that is in them,¹

and who still upholds and governs them
 by His eternal counsel and providence,²
 is, for the sake of Christ His Son,
 my God and my Father.³
 In Him I trust so completely
 as to have no doubt
 that He will provide me
 with all things necessary for body and soul,⁴
 and will also turn to my good
 whatever adversity He sends me
 in this life of sorrow.⁵
 He is able to do so as almighty God,⁶
 and willing also as a faithful Father.⁷

¹ Gen. 1 and 2; Ex. 20:11; Job 38 and 39; Ps. 33:6; Is. 44:24; Acts 4:24; 14:15.

² Ps. 104:27-30; Matt. 6:30; 10:29; Eph. 1:11.

³ John 1:12, 13; Rom. 8:15, 16; Gal. 4:4-7; Eph. 1:5.

⁴ Ps. 55:22; Matt. 6:25, 26; Luke 12:22-31.

⁵ Rom. 8:28.

⁶ Gen. 18:14; Rom. 8:31-39.

⁷ Matt. 6:32, 33; 7:9-11.

LORD'S DAY 10

27. Q. What do you understand by the providence of God?

A. God's providence is
 His almighty and ever present power,¹
 whereby, as with His hand, He still upholds
 heaven and earth and all creatures,²
 and so governs them that
 leaf and blade,
 rain and drought,
 fruitful and barren years,
 food and drink,
 health and sickness,
 riches and poverty,³
 indeed, all things,
 come not by chance⁴
 but by His fatherly hand.⁵

¹ Jer. 23:23, 24; Acts 17:24-28.

² Heb. 1:3.

³ Jer. 5:24; Acts 14:15-17; John 9:3; Prov. 22:2.

⁴ Prov. 16:33.

⁵ Matt. 10:29.

28. Q. What does it benefit us to know
 that God has created all things
 and still upholds them by His providence?

A. We can be patient in adversity,¹
 thankful in prosperity,²
 and with a view to the future
 we can have a firm confidence

in our faithful God and Father
that no creature shall separate us
from His love;¹
for all creatures are so completely in His hand
that without His will
they cannot so much as move.⁴

¹ Job. 1:21, 22; Ps. 39:10; James 1:3.

² Deut. 8:10; I Thess. 5:18.

³ Ps. 55:22; Rom. 5:3-5; 8:38, 39.

⁴ Job 1:12; 2:6; Prov. 21:1; Acts 17:24-28.

God the Son and Our Redemption

LORD'S DAY 11

29. Q. Why is the Son of God called *Jesus*,
that is, Saviour?
- A. Because He saves us from all our sins,¹
and because salvation is not to be sought or found
in anyone else.²
- ¹ Matt. 1:21; Heb. 7:25.
² Is. 43:11; John 15:4, 5; Acts 4:11, 12; I Tim. 2:5.
30. Q. Do those believe in the only Saviour Jesus
who seek their salvation and well-being
from saints, in themselves, or anywhere else?
- A. No.
Though they boast of Him in words,
they in fact deny the only Saviour Jesus.¹
For one of two things must be true:
either Jesus is not a complete Saviour,
or those who by true faith accept this Saviour
must find in Him all that is necessary
for their salvation.²

¹ I Cor. 1:12, 13; Gal. 5:4.

² Col. 1:19, 20; 2:10; I John 1:7.

LORD'S DAY 12

31. Q. Why is He called *Christ*,
that is, Anointed?
- A. Because He has been ordained by God the Father,
and anointed with the Holy Spirit,¹ to be
our chief Prophet and Teacher,²
who has fully revealed to us
the secret counsel and will of God
concerning our redemption;³
our only High Priest,⁴

who by the one sacrifice of His body
has redeemed us,⁵
and who continually intercedes for us
before the Father;⁶
and our eternal King,⁷
who governs us by His Word and Spirit,
and who defends and preserves us
in the redemption obtained for us.⁸

¹ Ps. 45:7 (Heb. 1:9); Is. 61:1 (Luke 4:18; Luke 3:21, 22.

² Deut. 18:15 (Acts 3:22).

³ John 1:18; 15:15.

⁴ Ps. 110:4 (Heb. 7:17).

⁵ Heb. 9:12; 10:11-14.

⁶ Rom. 8:34; Heb. 9:24; 1 John 2:1.

⁷ Zach. 9:9 (Matt. 21:5); Luke 1:33.

⁸ Matt. 28:18-20; John 10:28; Rev. 12:10, 11.

32. Q. Why are you called a Christian?

- A. Because I am a member of Christ by faith¹
and thus share in His anointing,² so that
I may as prophet confess His Name,³
as priest present myself
a living sacrifice of thankfulness to Him,⁴
and as king fight with a free and good conscience
against sin and the devil in this life,⁵
and hereafter reign with Him eternally
over all creatures.⁶

¹ 1 Cor. 12:12-27.

² Joel 2:28 (Acts 2:17); 1 John 2:27.

³ Matt. 10:32; Rom 10:9, 10; Heb. 13:15.

⁴ Rom. 12:1; 1 Pet. 2:5, 9.

⁵ Gal. 5:16, 17; Eph. 6:11; 1 Tim. 1:18, 19.

⁶ Matt. 25:34; 11 Tim. 2:12.

LORD'S DAY 13

33. Q. Why is He called God's *only begotten Son*,
since we also are children of God?

- A. Because Christ alone
is the eternal, natural Son of God.¹
We, however, are children of God by adoption,
through grace, for Christ's sake.²

¹ John 1:1-3, 14, 18; 3:16; Rom. 8:32; Heb. 1; 1 John 4:9.

² John 1:12; Rom. 8:14-17; Gal. 4:6; Eph. 1:5, 6.

34. Q. Why do you call Him *our Lord*?

- A. Because He has ransomed us,
body and soul,¹
from all our sins,
not with silver or gold
but with His precious blood,²

and has freed us
from all the power of the devil
to make us His own possession.³

¹ I Cor. 6:20; I Tim. 2:5, 6.

² I Peter 1:18, 19.

³ Col. 1:13, 14; Heb. 2:14, 15.

LORD'S DAY 14

35. Q. What do you confess when you say:
*He was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
and born of the virgin Mary?*

A. The eternal Son of God,
who is and remains true and eternal God,¹
took upon Himself true human nature
from the flesh and blood of the virgin Mary,²
through the working of the Holy Spirit.³
Thus He is also the true seed of David,⁴
and like His brothers in every respect,⁵
yet without sin.⁶

¹ John 1:1; 10:30-36; Rom. 1:3; 9:5; Col. 1:15-17; I John 5:20.

² Matt. 1:18-23; John 1:14; Gal. 4:4; Heb. 2:14.

³ Luke 1:35.

⁴ II Sam. 7:12-16; Ps. 132:11; Matt. 1:1; Luke 1:32; Rom. 1:3.

⁵ Phil. 2:7; Heb. 2:17.

⁶ Heb. 4:15; 7:26, 27.

36. Q. What benefit do you receive
from the holy conception and birth of Christ?

A. He is our Mediator,¹
and with His innocence and perfect holiness
covers, in the sight of God,
my sin, in which I was conceived and born.²

¹ I Tim. 2:5, 6; Heb. 9:13-15.

² Rom. 8:3, 4; II Cor. 5:21; Gal. 4:4, 5; I Pet. 1:18, 19.

LORD'S DAY 15

37. Q. What do you confess when you say
that He *suffered*?

A. During all the time He lived on earth,
but especially at the end,
Christ bore in body and soul
the wrath of God against the sin
of the whole human race.¹
Thus, by His suffering,
as the only atoning sacrifice,²
He has redeemed our body and soul
from everlasting damnation,³

and obtained for us
the grace of God, righteousness, and eternal life.⁴

¹ Is. 53; I Tim. 2:6; I Pet. 2:24; 3:18.

² Rom. 3:25; I Cor. 5:7; Eph. 5:2; Heb. 10:14; I John 2:2; 4:10.

³ Rom. 8:1-4; Gal. 3:13; Col. 1:13; Heb. 9:12; I Pet 1:18, 19.

⁴ John 3:16; Rom. 3:24-26; II Cor. 5:21; Heb. 9:15.

38. Q. Why did He suffer *under Pontius Pilate* as judge?

A. Though innocent, Christ was condemned
by an earthly judge,¹
and so He freed us
from the severe judgment of God
that was to fall on us.²

¹ Luke 23:13-24; John 19:4, 12-16.

² Is. 53:4, 5; II Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13.

39. Q. Does it have a special meaning
that Christ was crucified
and did not die in a different way?

A. Yes.
Thereby I am assured
that He took upon Himself
the curse which lay on me,
for a crucified one
was cursed by God.¹

¹ Deut. 21:23; Gal. 3:13.

LORD'S DAY 16

40. Q. Why was it necessary for Christ
to humble Himself even unto death?

A. Because of the justice and truth of God¹
satisfaction for our sins
could be made in no other way
than by the death of the Son of God.²

¹ Gen. 2:17.

² Rom. 8:3; Phil. 2:8; Heb. 2:9, 14, 15.

41. Q. Why was he *buried*?

A. His burial testified
that He had really died.¹

¹ Is. 53:9; John 19:38-42; Acts 13:29; I Cor. 15:3,4.

42. Q. Since Christ has died for us,
why do we still have to die?

A. Our death is not a payment for our sins,
but it puts an end to sin
and is an entrance into eternal life.¹

¹ John 5:24; Phil. 1:21-23; I Thess. 5:9, 10.

43. Q. What further benefit do we receive from Christ's sacrifice and death on the cross?
- A. Through Christ's death our old nature is crucified, put to death, and buried with Him,¹ so that the evil desires of the flesh may no longer reign in us,² but that we may offer ourselves to Him as a sacrifice of thankfulness.³
- ¹ Rom. 6:5-11; Col. 2:11, 12.
² Rom. 6:12-14.
³ Rom. 12:1; Eph. 5:1, 2.
44. Q. Why is there added: *He descended into hell?*
- A. In my greatest sorrows and temptations I may be assured and comforted that my Lord Jesus Christ, by His unspeakable anguish, pain, terror, and agony, which He endured throughout all His sufferings¹ but especially on the cross, has delivered me from the anguish and torment of hell.²
- ¹ Ps. 18:5, 6; 116:3; Matt. 26:36-46; 27:45, 46; Heb. 5:7-10.
² Is. 53.

LORD'S DAY 17

45. Q. How does Christ's resurrection benefit us?
- A. First,
 by His resurrection He has overcome death, so that He could make us share in the righteousness which He had obtained for us by His death.¹
- Second,
 by His power we too are raised up to a new life.²
- Third,
 Christ's resurrection is to us a sure pledge of our glorious resurrection.³
- ¹ Rom. 4:25; I Cor. 15:16-20; I Pet. 1:3-5.
² Rom. 6:5-11; Eph. 2:4-6; Col. 3:1-4.
³ Rom. 8:11; I Cor. 15:12-23; Phil. 3:20, 21.

LORD'S DAY 18

46. Q. What do you confess when you say,
He ascended into heaven?
- A. That Christ,
before the eyes of His disciples,
was taken up from the earth into heaven,¹
and that He is there for our benefit²
until He comes again
to judge the living and the dead.³
- ¹ Mark 16:19; Luke 24:50, 51; Acts 1:9-11.
² Rom. 8:34; Heb. 4:14; 7:23-25; 9:24.
³ Matt. 24:30; Acts 1:11.
47. Q. Is Christ, then, not with us
until the end of the world,
as He has promised us?¹
- A. Christ is true man and true God.
With respect to His human nature
He is no longer on earth,²
but with respect to
His divinity, majesty, grace, and Spirit
He is never absent from us.³
- ¹ Matt. 28:20.
² Matt. 26:11; John 16:28; 17:11; Acts 3:19-21; Heb. 8:4.
³ Matt. 28:18-20; John 14:16-19; 16:13.
48. Q. But are the two natures in Christ
not separated from each other
if His human nature is not present
wherever His divinity is?
- A. Not at all,
for His divinity has no limits
and is present everywhere.¹
So it must follow that His divinity
is indeed beyond the human nature
which He has taken on
and nevertheless is within this human nature
and remains personally united with it.²
- ¹ Jer. 23:23, 24; Acts 7:48, 49.
² John 1:14; 3:13; Col. 2:9.
49. Q. How does Christ's ascension into heaven benefit us?
- A. First,
He is our Advocate in heaven
before His Father.¹
Second,
we have our flesh in heaven
as a sure pledge that He, our Head,
will also take us, His members,
up to Himself.²

Third,

He sends us His Spirit as a counter-pledge,³
by whose power we seek
the things that are above,
where Christ is,
seated at the right hand of God,
and not the things that are on earth.⁴

¹ Rom. 8:34; I John 2:1.

² John 14:2; 17:24; Eph. 2:4-6.

³ John 14:16; Acts 2:33; II Cor. 1:21, 22; 5:5.

⁴ Col. 3:1-4.

LORD'S DAY 19

50. Q. Why is it added,
And sits at the right hand of God?
- A. Christ ascended into heaven
to manifest Himself there
as Head of His Church,¹
through whom the Father governs all things.²
- ¹ Eph. 1:20-23; Col. 1:18.
² Matt. 28:18; John 5:22, 23.
51. Q. How does the glory of Christ, our Head,
benefit us?
- A. First,
by His Holy Spirit
He pours out heavenly gifts
upon us, His members.¹
Second,
by His power
He defends and preserves us
against all enemies.²
- ¹ Acts 2:33; Eph. 4:7-12.
² Ps. 2:9; 110:1, 2; John 10:27-30; Rev. 19:11-16.
52. Q. What comfort is it to you
that Christ *will come to judge
the living and the dead?*
- A. In all my sorrow and persecution
I lift up my head
and eagerly await
as judge from heaven
the very same person
who before has submitted Himself
to the judgment of God
for my sake,
and has removed all the curse from me.¹
He will cast all His and my enemies
into everlasting condemnation,
but will take me and all His chosen ones

to Himself
into heavenly joy and glory.²

¹ Luke 21:28; Rom. 8:22-25; Phil. 3:20,21; Tit. 2:13, 14.

² Matt. 25:31-46; I Thess. 4:16, 17; II Thess. 1:6-10.

God the Holy Spirit and Our Sanctification

LORD'S DAY 20

53. Q. What do you believe
concerning *the Holy Spirit*?

A. First,

He is, together with the Father and the Son,
true and eternal God.¹

Second,

He is also given to me,²
to make me by true faith,
share in Christ and all His benefits,³
to comfort me,⁴
and to remain with me forever.⁵

¹ Gen. 1:1, 2; Matt. 28:19; Acts 5:3, 4; I Cor. 3:16.

² I Cor. 6:19; II Cor. 1:21, 22; Gal. 4:6; Eph. 1:13.

³ Gal. 3:14; I Pet. 1:2.

⁴ John 15:26; Acts 9:31.

⁵ John 14:16, 17; I Pet. 4:14.

LORD'S DAY 21

54. Q. What do you believe
concerning the *holy catholic church*
of Christ?

A. I believe that the Son of God,¹
out of the whole human race,²
from the beginning of the world to its end,³
gathers, defends, and preserves for Himself,⁴
by His Spirit and Word,⁵
in the unity of the true faith,⁶
a church chosen to everlasting life.⁷

I believe that I am⁸
and forever shall remain
a living member of it.⁹

¹ John 10:11; Acts 20:28; Eph. 4:11-13; Col. 1:18.

² Gen. 26:4; Rev. 5:9.

³ Is. 59:21; I Cor. 11:26.

⁴ Ps. 129:1-5; Matt. 16:18; John 10:28-30.

⁵ Rom. 1:16; 10:14-17; Eph. 5:26.

⁶ Acts 2:42-47; Eph. 4:1-6.

⁷ Rom. 8:29; Eph. 1:3-14.

⁸ I John 3:14, 19-21.

⁹ Ps. 23:6; John 10:27, 28; I Cor. 1:4-9; I Pet. 1:3-5.

55. Q. What do you understand by
the communion of saints?
- A. First,
that believers, all and everyone,
as members of Christ
have communion with Him
and share in all His treasures and gifts.¹
- Second,
that everyone is duty-bound
to use his gifts
readily and cheerfully
for the benefit and well-being
of the other members.²

¹ Rom. 8:32; I Cor. 6:17; 12:4-7, 12, 13; I John 1:3.

² Rom. 12:4-8; I Cor. 12:20-27; 13:1-7; Phil. 2:4-8.

56. Q. What do you believe
concerning *the forgiveness of sins?*
- A. I believe that God,
because of Christ's satisfaction,
will no more remember
my sins,¹
nor my sinful nature,
against which I have to struggle
all my life,²
but He will graciously grant me
the righteousness of Christ,
so that I may never come into condemnation.³

¹ Ps. 103:3, 4, 10, 12; Mic. 7:18, 19; II Cor. 5:18-21; I John 1:7; 2:2.

² Rom. 7:21-25.

³ John 3:17, 18; 5:24; Rom. 8:1, 2.

LORD'S DAY 22

57. Q. What comfort does
the resurrection of the body
offer you?
- A. Not only shall my soul
after this life
immediately be taken up
to Christ, my Head,¹
but also this my flesh,
raised by the power of Christ,
shall be reunited with my soul
and made like Christ's glorious body.²

¹ Luke 16:22; 23:43; Phil. 1:21-23.

² Job 19:25, 26; I Cor. 15:20, 42-46, 54; Phil. 3:21; I John 3:2.

58. Q. What comfort do you receive
from the article about
the life everlasting?
- A. Since I now already
feel in my heart
the beginning of eternal joy,¹
I shall after this life
possess perfect blessedness,
such as no eye has seen,
nor ear heard,
nor the heart of man conceived—
a blessedness in which to praise God forever.²
- ¹ John 17:3; Rom. 14:17; II Cor. 5:2, 3.
² John 17:24; I Cor. 2:9.

Our Justification

LORD'S DAY 23

59. Q. But what does it help you
now that you believe all this?
- A. In Christ I am righteous before God
and heir to life everlasting.¹
- ¹ Hab. 2:4; John 3:36; Rom. 1:17; 5:1, 2.
60. Q. How are you righteous before God?
- A. Only by true faith in Jesus Christ.¹
Although my conscience accuses me
that I have grievously sinned
against all God's commandments,
have never kept any of them,²
and am still inclined to all evil,³
yet God, without any merit of my own,⁴
out of mere grace,⁵
imputes to me
the perfect satisfaction,
righteousness, and holiness of Christ.⁶
He grants these to me
as if I had never had nor committed
any sin,
and as if I myself had accomplished
all the obedience
which Christ has rendered for me,⁷
if only I
accept this gift
with a believing heart.⁸
- ¹ Rom. 3:21-28; Gal. 2:16; Eph. 2:8, 9; Phil. 3:8-11.
² Rom. 3:9, 10.
³ Rom. 7:23.

⁴ Deut. 9:6; Ezek. 36:22; Tit. 3:4, 5.

⁵ Rom. 3:24; Eph. 2:8.

⁶ Rom. 4:3-5; II Cor. 5:17-19; I John 2:1, 2.

⁷ Rom. 4:24, 25; II Cor. 5:21.

⁸ John 3:18; Acts 16:30, 31; Rom. 3:22.

61. Q. Why do you say
that you are righteous
only by faith?

A. Not that I am acceptable to God
on account of the worthiness
of my faith,
for only the satisfaction, righteousness,
and holiness of Christ
is my righteousness before God.¹
I can receive this righteousness
and make it my own by faith only.²

¹ I Cor. 1:30, 31; 2:2.

² Rom. 10:10; I John 5:10-12.

LORD'S DAY 24

62. Q. But why can our good works not be
our righteousness before God,
or at least a part of it?

A. Because the righteousness
which can stand before God's judgment
must be absolutely perfect
and in complete agreement
with the law of God,¹ whereas
even our best works in this life
are all imperfect and defiled with sin.²

¹ Deut. 27:26; Gal. 3:10.

² Is. 64:6.

63. Q. But do our good works earn nothing,
even though God promises to reward them
in this life and the next?¹

A. This reward is not earned;
it is a gift of grace.²

¹ Matt. 5:12; Heb. 11:6.

² Luke 17:10; II Tim. 4:7, 8.

64. Q. Does this teaching not make people
careless and wicked?

A. No.
It is impossible
that those grafted into Christ
by true faith
should not bring forth
fruits of thankfulness.¹

¹ Matt. 7:18; Luke 6:43-45; John 15:5.

Word and Sacraments

LORD'S DAY 25

65. Q. Since then faith alone makes us share in Christ and all His benefits, where does this faith come from?
- A. From the Holy Spirit,¹ who works it in our hearts by the preaching of the gospel,² and strengthens it by the use of the sacraments.³
- ¹ John 3:5; 1 Cor. 2:10-14; Eph. 2:8; Phil. 1:29.
² Rom. 10:17; 1 Pet. 1:23-25.
³ Matt. 28:19, 20; 1 Cor. 10:16.
66. Q. What are the sacraments?
- A. The sacraments are holy, visible signs and seals. They were instituted by God so that by their use He might the more fully declare and seal to us the promise of the gospel.¹ And this is the promise that God graciously grants us forgiveness of sins and everlasting life because of the one sacrifice of Christ accomplished on the cross.²
- ¹ Gen. 17:11; Deut. 30:6; Rom. 4:11
² Matt. 26:27, 28; Acts 2:38; Heb. 10:10.
67. Q. Are both the Word and the sacraments then intended to focus our faith on the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross as the only ground of our salvation?
- A. Yes, indeed. The Holy Spirit teaches us in the gospel and assures us by the sacraments that our entire salvation rests on Christ's one sacrifice for us on the cross.¹
- ¹ Rom. 6:3; 1 Cor. 11:26; Gal. 3:27.
68. Q. How many sacraments has Christ instituted in the new covenant?
- A. Two: holy baptism and the holy supper.¹
- ¹ Matt. 28:19, 20; 1 Cor. 11:23-26.

Holy Baptism

LORD'S DAY 26

69. Q. How does holy baptism signify and seal to you that the one sacrifice of Christ on the cross benefits you?

A. In this way:
Christ instituted this outward washing¹
and with it gave the promise that,
as surely as water washes away
the dirt from the body,
so certainly His blood and Spirit
wash away the impurity of my soul,
that is, all my sins.²

¹ Matt. 28:19.

² Matt. 3:11; Mark 16:16; John 1:33; Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:3, 4; 1 Pet. 3:21.

70. Q. What does it mean to be washed with Christ's blood and Spirit?

A. To be washed with Christ's blood means
to receive forgiveness of sins from God,
through grace,
because of Christ's blood,
poured out for us
in His sacrifice on the cross.¹

To be washed with His Spirit means
to be renewed by the Holy Spirit
and sanctified to be members of Christ,
so that more and more
we become dead to sin
and lead a holy and blameless life.²

¹ Ez. 36:25; Zech. 13:1; Eph. 1:7; Heb. 12:24; 1 Pet. 1:2; Rev. 1:5; 7:14.

² John 3:5-8; Rom. 6:4; 1 Cor. 6:11; Col. 2:11, 12.

71. Q. Where has Christ promised that He will wash us with His blood and Spirit as surely as we are washed with the water of baptism?

A. In the institution of baptism, where He says:
*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations,
baptizing them in the name of the Father
and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19).*

*He who believes and is baptized
will be saved,*

but he who does not believe

will be condemned (Mark 16:16).

This promise is repeated where Scripture calls baptism

the washing of regeneration
and the washing away of sins (Titus 3:5; Acts 22:16).

LORD'S DAY 27

72. Q. Does this outward washing with water
itself wash away sins?

A. No, only the blood of Jesus Christ
and the Holy Spirit
cleans us from all sins.¹

¹ Matt. 3:11; 1 Pet. 3:21; 1 John 1:7.

73. Q. Why then does the Holy Spirit call baptism
the washing of regeneration
and the washing away of sins?

A. God speaks in this way for a good reason.
He wants to teach us
that the blood and Spirit of Christ
remove our sins
just as water takes away
dirt from the body.¹

But, even more important,
He wants to assure us
by this divine pledge and sign
that we are
as truly cleansed from our sins spiritually
as we are bodily washed with water.²

¹ 1 Cor. 6:11; Rev. 1:5; 7:14.

² Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:3, 4; Gal. 3:27.

74. Q. Should infants, too, be baptized?

A. Yes.
Infants as well as adults
belong to God's covenant and congregation.¹
Through Christ's blood
the redemption from sin
and the Holy Spirit, who works faith,
are promised to them
no less than to adults.²

Therefore, by baptism, as sign of the covenant,
they must be grafted into the Christian Church
and distinguished from the children of unbelievers.³
This was done in the old covenant by circumcision,⁴
in place of which baptism was instituted
in the new covenant.⁵

¹ Gen. 17:7; Matt. 19:14.

² Ps. 22:11; Is. 44:1-3; Acts 2:38, 39; 16:31.

³ Acts 10:47; 1 Cor. 7:14.

⁴ Gen. 17:9-14.

⁵ Col. 2: 11-13.

The Lord's Supper

LORD'S DAY 28

75. Q. How does the Lord's Supper
signify and seal to you
that you share in
Christ's one sacrifice on the cross
and in all His gifts?
- A. In this way:
Christ has commanded me and all believers
to eat of this broken bread
and drink of this cup
in remembrance of Him.
With this command He gave these promises:¹
First,
as surely as I see with my eyes
the bread of the Lord broken for me
and the cup given to me,
so surely was His body offered for me
and His blood poured out for me
on the cross.
Second,
as surely as I receive
from the hand of the minister
and taste with my mouth
the bread and the cup of the Lord
as sure signs of Christ's body and blood,
so surely does He Himself
nourish and refresh my soul
to everlasting life
with His crucified body and shed blood.
- ¹ Matt. 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19, 20; I Cor. 11:23-25.
76. Q. What does it mean
to eat the crucified body of Christ
and to drink His shed blood?
- A. First,
to accept with a believing heart
all the suffering and the death of Christ,
and so receive
forgiveness of sins and life eternal.¹
Second,
to be united more and more to His sacred body
through the Holy Spirit,
who lives both in Christ and in us.²
Therefore, although Christ is in heaven³
and we are on earth,
yet we are flesh of His flesh
and bone of His bones⁴

and we forever live and are governed
by one Spirit,
as the members of our body are
by one soul.⁵

¹ John 6:35, 40, 50-54.

² John 6:55, 56; I Cor. 12:13.

³ Acts 1:9-11; 3:21; I Cor. 11:26; Col. 3:1.

⁴ I Cor. 6:15, 17; Eph. 5:29, 30; I John 4:13.

⁵ John 6:56-58; 15:1-6; Eph. 4:15, 16; I John 3:24.

77. Q. Where has Christ promised
that He will nourish and refresh believers
with His body and blood
as surely as
they eat of this broken bread
and drink of this cup?

A. In the institution of the Lord's supper:
*The Lord Jesus on the night when He was betrayed
took bread, and when He had given thanks,
He broke it and said,
"This is my body which is for you.
Do this in remembrance of me."
In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying,
"Do this, as often as you drink it,
in remembrance of me."
For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup,
you proclaim the Lord's death
until He comes (I Corinthians 11:23-26).*

This promise is repeated by Paul where he says:
*The cup of blessing which we bless,
is it not a participation
in the blood of Christ?
The bread which we break,
is it not a participation
in the body of Christ?
Because there is one bread,
we who are many are one body,
for we all partake of the one bread
(I Corinthians 10:16, 17).*

LORD'S DAY 29

78. Q. Are then the bread and wine
changed into the real body and blood of Christ?

A. No.
Just as the water of baptism
is not changed into the blood of Christ
and is not the washing away of sins itself
but is simply God's sign and pledge,¹
so also the bread in the Lord's supper

does not become the body of Christ itself,²
although it is called Christ's body³
in keeping with the nature and usage of sacraments.⁴

¹ Eph. 5:26; Tit. 3:5.

² Matt. 26:26-29.

³ 1 Cor. 10:16, 17; 11:26-28.

⁴ Gen. 17:10, 11; Ex. 12:11, 13; 1 Cor. 10:3, 4; 1 Pet. 3:21.

79. Q. Why then does Christ call the bread His body
and the cup His blood,
or the new covenant in His blood,
and why does Paul speak of a participation
in the body and blood of Christ?

A. Christ speaks this way for a good reason:
He wants to teach us by His supper
that as bread and wine sustain us
in this temporal life,
so His crucified body and shed blood
are true food and drink for our souls
to eternal life.¹

But even more important,
He wants to assure us by this visible sign and pledge,
first,
that through the working of the Holy Spirit
we share in His true body and blood
as surely as we receive with our mouth
these holy signs in remembrance of Him,²
and second,
that all His suffering and obedience
are as certainly ours
as if we personally
had suffered and paid for our sins.³

¹ John 6:51, 55.

² 1 Cor. 10:16, 17; 11:26.

³ Rom. 6:5-11.

LORD'S DAY 30

80. Q. What difference is there
between the Lord's supper and the papal mass?

A. The Lord's supper declares to us,
first,
that we have complete forgiveness of all our sins
through the one sacrifice of Jesus Christ,
which He Himself accomplished on the cross
once for all;¹
and, second,
that through the Holy Spirit
we are grafted into Christ,²
who with His true body is now in heaven

at the right hand of the Father,³
and this is where He wants to be worshipped.⁴

But the mass teaches,
first,

that the living and the dead
do not have forgiveness of sins
through the suffering of Christ
unless He is still offered for them daily
by the priests;

and, second,

that Christ is bodily present
in the form of bread and wine,
and there is to be worshipped.

Therefore the mass is basically
nothing but a denial
of the one sacrifice and suffering of Jesus Christ,
and an accursed idolatry.

¹ Matt. 26:28; John 19:30; Heb. 7:27; 9:12, 25, 26; 10:10-18.

² 1 Cor. 6:17; 10:16, 17.

³ Joh. 20:17; Acts 7:55, 56; Heb. 1:3; 8:1.

⁴ John 4:21-24; Phil. 3:20; Col. 3:1; 1 Thess. 1:10.

81. Q. Who are to come
to the table of the Lord?

A. Those who are truly displeased with themselves
because of their sins
and yet trust that these are forgiven them
and that their remaining weakness is covered
by the suffering and death of Christ,
and who also desire more and more
to strengthen their faith
and amend their life.
But hypocrites and those who do not repent
eat and drink judgment upon themselves.¹

¹ 1 Cor. 10:19-22; 11:26-32.

82. Q. Are those also to be admitted to the Lord's supper
who by their confession and life
show that they are unbelieving and ungodly?

A. No, for then the covenant of God
would be profaned
and His wrath kindled
against the whole congregation.¹

Therefore,

according to the command of Christ and His apostles,
the Christian church is duty-bound
to exclude such persons
by the keys of the kingdom of heaven,
until they amend their lives.

¹ Ps. 50:16; Is. 1:11-17; 1 Cor. 11:17-34.

LORD'S DAY 31

83. Q. What are the keys of the kingdom of heaven?
- A. The preaching of the holy gospel
and church discipline.
By these two the kingdom of heaven
is opened to believers
and closed to unbelievers.¹
- ¹ Matt. 16:19; John 20:21-23.
84. Q. How is the kingdom of heaven
opened and closed
by the preaching of the gospel?
- A. According to the command of Christ,
the Kingdom of heaven is opened when
it is proclaimed and publicly testified
to each and every believer
that God has really forgiven
all their sins
for the sake of Christ's merits,
as often as they by true faith
accept the promise of the gospel.
The kingdom of heaven is closed when
it is proclaimed and testified
to all unbelievers and hypocrites
that the wrath of God
and eternal condemnation
rest on them
as long as they do not repent.
According to this testimony of the gospel,
God will judge
both in this life
and in the life to come.¹
- ¹ Matt. 16:19; John 3:31-36; 20:21-23.
85. Q. How is the kingdom of heaven
closed and opened
by church discipline?
- A. According to the command of Christ,
people who call themselves Christians
but show themselves to be unchristian
in doctrine or life
are first repeatedly admonished
in a brotherly manner.
If they do not give up
their errors or wickedness,
they are reported to the church,
that is, to the elders.
If they do not heed
also their admonitions,

they are forbidden the use of the sacraments,
and they are excluded by the elders
from the Christian congregation,
and by God Himself
from the kingdom of Christ.¹
They are again received
as members of Christ
and of the church
when they promise and show
real amendment.²

¹ Matt. 18:15-20; I Cor. 5:3-5; 11-13; II Thess. 3:14, 15.

² Luke 15:20-24; II Cor. 2:6-11.

The Third Part
OUR THANKFULNESS
LORD'S DAY 32

86. Q. Since we have been delivered
from our misery
by grace alone through Christ,
without any merit of our own,
why must we yet do good works?
- A. Because Christ,
having redeemed us by His blood,
also renews us by His Holy Spirit
to be His image,
so that with our whole life
we may show ourselves thankful to God
for His benefits,¹
and He may be praised by us.²
Further, that we ourselves
may be assured of our faith
by its fruits,³
and that by our godly walk of life
we may win our neighbours for Christ.⁴

¹ Rom. 6:13; 12:1, 2; I Pet. 2:5-10.

² Matt. 5:16; I Cor. 6:19, 20.

³ Matt. 7:17, 18; Gal. 5:22-24; II Pet. 1:10, 11.

⁴ Matt. 5:14-16; Rom. 14:17-19; I Pet. 2:12; 3:1, 2.

87. Q. Can those be saved
who do not turn to God
from their ungrateful and impenitent
walk of life?
- A. By no means.
Scripture says that no unchaste person,
idolater, adulterer,
thief, greedy person,

drunkard, slanderer,
robber, or the like
shall inherit the kingdom of God.¹

¹ I Cor. 6:9, 10; Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 5:5, 6; I John 3:14.

LORD'S DAY 33

88. Q. What is
the true repentance or conversion of man?
- A. It is the dying of the old nature
and the coming to life of the new.¹
- ¹ Rom. 6:1-11; I Cor. 5:7; II Cor. 5:17; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 3:5-10.
89. Q. What is the dying of the old nature?
- A. It is to grieve with heartfelt sorrow
that we have offended God by our sin,
and more and more to hate it
and flee from it.¹
- ¹ Ps. 51:3, 4, 17; Joel 2:12, 13; Rom. 8:12, 13; II Cor. 7:10.
90. Q. What is the coming to life
of the new nature?
- A. It is a heartfelt joy
in God through Christ,¹
and a love and delight
to live according to the will of God
in all good works.²
- ¹ Ps. 51:8, 12; Is. 57:15; Rom. 5:1; 14:17.
² Rom. 6:10, 11; Gal. 2:20.
91. Q. But what are good works?
- A. Only those which are done
out of true faith,¹
in accordance with the law of God,²
and to His glory,³
and not those based
on our own opinion
or precepts of men.⁴
- ¹ Joh. 15:5; Rom. 14:23; Heb. 11:6.
² Lev. 18:4; I Sam. 15:22; Eph. 2:10.
³ I Cor. 10:31.
⁴ Deut. 12:32; Is. 29:13; Ezek. 20:18, 19; Matt. 15:7-9.

The Ten Words

LORD'S DAY 34

92. Q. What is the law of the LORD?
- A. *God spoke all these words, saying:*

*I am the LORD your God,
who brought you out of the land of Egypt,
out of the house of bondage.*

1. *You shall have no other gods before Me.*
2. *You shall not make for yourself a graven image,
or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above,
or that is in the earth beneath,
or that is in the water under the earth;
you shall not bow down to them or serve them;
for I the LORD your God am a jealous God,
visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children
to the third and fourth generation
of those who hate Me,
but showing steadfast love to thousands of those
who love me and keep My commandments.*
3. *You shall not take the name of the LORD your God
in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless
who takes His name in vain.*
4. *Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy.
Six days you shall labour, and do all your work;
but the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God;
in it you shall not do any work,
you, or your son, or your daughter,
your manservant, or your maidservant,
or your cattle,
or the sojourner who is within your gates;
for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth,
the sea, and all that is in them,
and rested the seventh day;
therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day
and hallowed it.*
5. *Honour your father and your mother,
that your days may be long
in the land which the LORD your God gives you.*
6. *You shall not kill.*
7. *You shall not commit adultery.*
8. *You shall not steal.*
9. *You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.*
10. *You shall not covet your neighbour's house;
You shall not covet your neighbour's wife,
or his manservant, or his maidservant,
or his ox, or his ass,
or anything that is your neighbour's.¹*

¹ Ex. 20:1-17; Deut. 5:6-21.

93. Q. How are these commandments divided?
- A. Into two parts.
The first
teaches us how to live in relation to God.

The second
what duties we owe our neighbour.¹

¹ Matt. 22:37-40.

94. Q. What does the LORD require
in the first commandment?

A. That for the sake of my very salvation
I avoid and flee
all idolatry,¹ witchcraft, superstition,²
and prayer to saints or to other creatures.³

Further,
that I rightly come to know
the only true God.⁴
trust in Him alone,⁵
submit to Him
with all humility⁶ and patience,⁷
expect all good from Him only,⁸
and love,⁹ fear,¹⁰ and honour Him¹¹
with all my heart.

In short,
that I forsake all creatures
rather than do the least thing
against His will.¹²

¹ 1 Cor. 6:9, 10; 10:5-14; 1 John 5:21.

² Lev. 19:31; Deut. 18:9-12.

³ Matt. 4:10; Rev. 19:10; 22:8, 9.

⁴ John 17:3.

⁵ Jer. 17:5, 7.

⁶ 1 Pet. 5:5, 6.

⁷ Rom. 5:3, 4; 1 Cor. 10:10; Phil. 2:14; Col. 1:11; Heb. 10:36.

⁸ Ps. 104:27, 28; Is. 45:7; James 1:17.

⁹ Deut. 6:5; (Matt. 22:37).

¹⁰ Deut. 6:2; Ps. 111:10; Prov. 1:7; 9:10; Matt. 10:28; 1 Pet. 1:17.

¹¹ Deut. 6:13; (Matt. 4:10); Deut. 10:20.

¹² Matt. 5:29, 30; 10:37-39; Acts 5:29.

95. Q. What is idolatry?

A. Idolatry is
having or inventing something
in which to put our trust
instead of, or in addition to,
the only true God
who has revealed Himself in His Word.¹

¹ 1 Chron. 16:26; Gal. 4:8, 9; Eph. 5:5; Phil. 3:19.

LORD'S DAY 35

96. Q. What does God require
in the second commandment?

A. We are not to make an image of God in any way,¹
nor to worship Him in any other manner

than He has commanded in His Word.²

¹ Deut. 4:15-19; Is. 40:18-25; Acts 17:29; Rom. 1:23.

² Lev. 10:1-7; Deut. 12:30; I Sam. 15:22, 23; Matt. 15:9; John 4:23, 24.

97. Q. May we then not make
any image at all?

A. God cannot and may not
be visibly portrayed in any way.
Creatures may be portrayed,
but God forbids us
to make or have any images of them
in order to worship them
or to serve God through them.¹

¹ Ex. 34:13, 14, 17; Num. 33:52; II Kings 18:4, 5; Is. 40:25.

98. Q. But may images not be tolerated
in the churches
as “books for the laity”?

A. No, for we should not be wiser than God.
He wants His people to be taught
not by means of dumb images¹
but by the living preaching of His Word.²

¹ Jer. 10:8; Hab. 2:18-20.

² Rom. 10:14, 15, 17; II Tim. 3:16, 17; II Pet. 1:19.

LORD’S DAY 36

99. Q. What is required
in the third commandment?

A. We are not to blaspheme or to abuse the Name of God
by cursing,¹ perjury,² or unnecessary oaths,³
nor to share in such horrible sins
by being silent bystanders.⁴

In short, we must use the holy Name of God
only with fear and reverence,⁵
so that we may rightly confess Him,⁶
call upon Him,⁷
and praise Him in all our words and works.⁸

¹ Lev. 24:10-17.

² Lev. 19:12

³ Matt. 5:37; James 5:12.

⁴ Lev. 5:1; Prov. 29:24.

⁵ Ps. 99:1-5; Is. 45:23; Jer. 4:2.

⁶ Matt. 10:32, 33; Rom. 10:9, 10.

⁷ Ps. 50:14, 15; I Tim. 2:8.

⁸ Rom. 2:24; Col. 3:17; I Tim. 6:1.

100. Q. Is the blaspheming of God’s Name
by swearing and cursing
such a grievous sin

that God is angry also with those
who do not prevent and forbid it
as much as they can?

- A. Certainly,¹ for no sin is greater
or provokes God's wrath more
than the blaspheming of His Name.
That is why He commanded it to be punished
with death.²

¹ Lev. 5:1.

² Lev. 24:16.

LORD'S DAY 37

101. Q. But may we swear an oath
by the Name of God
in a godly manner?

- A. Yes, when the government demands it
of its subjects,
or when necessity requires it,
in order to maintain and promote
fidelity and truth,
to God's glory and for our neighbour's good.
Such oath-taking is based on God's Word¹
and was therefore rightly used
by saints in the Old and the New Testament.²

¹ Deut. 6:13; 10:20; Jer. 4:1, 2; Heb. 6:16.

² Gen. 21:24; 31:53; Josh. 9:15; I Sam. 24:23; I Kings 1:29, 30; Rom. 1:9;
II Cor. 1:23.

102. Q. May we also swear by saints
or other creatures?

- A. No.
A lawful oath is a calling upon God,
who alone knows the heart,
to bear witness to the truth,
and to punish me if I swear falsely.¹
No creature is worthy of such honour.²

¹ Rom. 9:1; II Cor. 1:23.

² Matt. 5:34-37; 23:16-22; James 5:12.

LORD'S DAY 38

103. Q. What does God require
in the fourth commandment?

- A. First,
that the ministry of the gospel and the schools be
maintained¹, and that, especially on the day of rest,
I diligently attend the church of God²

to hear God's Word,³
to use the sacraments,⁴
to call publicly upon the LORD,⁵
and to give Christian offerings for the poor.⁶

Second,

that all the days of my life
I rest from my evil works,
let the LORD work in me through His Holy Spirit,
and so begin in this life
the eternal sabbath.⁷

¹ Deut. 6:4-9; 20-25; I Cor. 9:13, 14; II Tim. 2:2; 3:13-17; Tit. 1:5.

² Deut. 12:5-12; Ps. 40:9, 10; 68:26; Acts 2:42-47; Heb. 10:23-25.

³ Rom. 10:14-17; I Cor. 14:26-33; I Tim. 4:13.

⁴ I Cor. 11:23, 24.

⁵ Col. 3:16; I Tim. 2:1.

⁶ Ps. 50:14; I Cor. 16:2; II Cor. 8 and 9.

⁷ Is. 66:23; Heb. 4:9-11.

LORD'S DAY 39

104. Q. What does God require
in the fifth commandment?

A. That I show all honour, love, and faithfulness
to my father and mother
and to all those in authority over me,
submit myself with due obedience
to their good instruction and discipline,¹
and also have patience with their weaknesses
and shortcomings²
since it is God's will
to govern us by their hand.³

¹ Ex. 21:17; Prov. 1:8; 4:1; Rom. 13:1, 2; Eph. 5:21, 22; 6:1-9; Col. 3:18-4:1.

² Prov. 20:20; 23:22; I Pet. 2:18.

³ Matt. 22:21; Rom. 13:1-8; Eph. 6:1-9; Col. 3:18-21.

LORD'S DAY 40

105. Q. What does God require
in the sixth commandment?

A. I am not to dishonour, hate, injure,
or kill my neighbour
by thoughts, words, or gestures,
and much less by deeds,
whether personally or through another;¹
rather, I am to put away
all desire for revenge.²
I am not to harm or recklessly endanger myself either.³

Therefore, also, the government bears the sword
to prevent murder.⁴

¹ Gen. 9:6; Lev. 19:17, 18; Matt. 5:21, 22; 26:52.

² Prov. 25:21, 22; Matt. 18:35; Rom. 12:19; Eph. 4:26.

³ Matt. 4:7; 26:52; Rom. 13:11-14.

⁴ Gen. 9:6; Ex. 21:14; Rom. 13:4.

106. Q. But does this commandment
speak only of killing?

A. By forbidding murder God teaches us
that He hates the root of murder,
such as envy, hatred, anger, and desire for revenge,¹
and that He regards all these as murder.²

¹ Prov. 14:30; Rom. 1:29; 12:19; Gal. 5:19-21; James 1:20; 1 John 2:9-11.

² 1 John 3:15.

107. Q. Is it enough, then,
that we do not kill our neighbour
in any such way?

A. No.
When God condemns envy, hatred, and anger,
He commands us
to love our neighbour as ourselves,¹
to show patience, peace, gentleness,
mercy, and friendliness toward him,²
to protect him from harm as much as we can,
and to do good even to our enemies.³

¹ Matt. 7:12; 22:39; Rom. 12:10.

² Matt. 5:5; Luke 6:36; Rom. 12:10, 18; Gal. 6:1, 2; Eph. 4:2; Col. 3:12;
1 Pet. 3:8.

³ Ex. 23:4, 5; Matt. 5:44, 45; Rom. 12:20.

LORD'S DAY 41

108. Q. What does the seventh commandment teach us?

A. That all unchastity is cursed by God.¹
We must therefore detest it from the heart²
and live chaste and disciplined lives,
both within and outside of holy marriage.³

¹ Lev. 18:30; Eph. 5:3-5.

² Jude 22, 23.

³ 1 Cor. 7:1-9; 1 Thess. 4:3-8; Heb. 13:4.

109. Q. Does God in this commandment
forbid nothing more than adultery
and similar shameful sins?

A. Since we, body and soul,
are temples of the Holy Spirit,
it is God's will
that we keep ourselves pure and holy.
Therefore He forbids all unchaste acts,

gestures, words, thoughts, desires,¹
and whatever may entice us to unchastity.²

¹ Matt. 5:27-29; I Cor. 6:18-20; Eph. 5:3, 4.

² I Cor. 15:33; Eph. 5:18.

LORD'S DAY 42

110. Q. What does God forbid
in the eighth commandment?
- A. God forbids not only outright theft and robbery¹
but also such wicked schemes and devices as
false weights and measures,
deceptive merchandising,
counterfeit money,
and usuary;²
we must not defraud our neighbour in any way,
whether by force or by show of right.³
In addition God forbids all greed⁴
and all abuse or squandering of His gifts.⁵

¹ Ex. 22:1; I Cor. 5:9, 10; 6:9, 10.

² Deut. 25:13-16; Ps. 15:5; Prov. 11:1; 12:22; Ezek. 45:9-12; Luke 6:35.

³ Mic. 6:9-11; Luke 3:14; James 5:1-6.

⁴ Luke 12:15; Eph. 5:5.

⁵ Prov. 21:20; 23:20, 21; Luke 16:10-13.

111. Q. What does God require of you
in this commandment?
- A. I must promote my neighbour's good
wherever I can and may,
deal with him
as I would like others to deal with me,
and work faithfully
so that I may be able to give
to those in need.¹

¹ Is. 58:5-10; Matt. 7:12; Gal. 6:9, 10; Eph. 4:28.

LORD'S DAY 43

112. Q. What is required
in the ninth commandment?
- A. I must not give false testimony against anyone,
twist no one's words,
not gossip or slander,
nor condemn or join in condemning anyone
rashly and unheard.¹
Rather, I must avoid all lying and deceit
as the devil's own works,

under penalty of God's heavy wrath,²
In court and everywhere else,
I must love the truth,
speak and confess it honestly,
and do what I can
to defend and promote
my neighbour's honour and reputation.³

¹ Ps. 15; Prov. 19:5, 9; 21:28; Matt. 7:1; Luke 6:37; Rom. 1:28-32.

² Lev. 19:11, 12; Prov. 12:22; 13:5; John 8:44; Rev. 21:8.

³ 1 Cor. 13:6; Eph. 4:25.

⁴ 1 Pet. 3:8, 9; 4:8.

LORD'S DAY 44

113. Q. What does the tenth commandment require of us?
- A. That not even the slightest thought or desire contrary to any of God's commandments should ever arise in our heart.
Rather, we should always hate all sin with all our heart,
and delight in all righteousness.¹
- ¹ Ps. 19:7-14; 139:23, 24; Rom. 7:7, 8.
114. Q. But can those converted to God keep these commandments perfectly?
- A. No.
In this life even the holiest have only a small beginning of this obedience.¹
Nevertheless, with earnest purpose they do begin to live not only according to some but to all the commandments of God.²
- ¹ Eccles. 7:20; Rom. 7:14, 15; 1 Cor. 13:9; 1 John 1:8.
² Ps. 1:1, 2; Rom. 7:22-25; Phil. 3:12-16.
115. Q. If in this life no one can keep the ten commandments perfectly, why does God have them preached so strictly?
- A. First,
that throughout our life we may more and more become aware of our sinful nature,
and therefore seek more eagerly the forgiveness of sins and righteousness in Christ.¹
Second,
that we may be zealous for good deeds and constantly pray to God

for the grace of the Holy Spirit,
that He may more and more renew us
after God's image,
until after this life we reach
the goal of perfection.²

¹ Ps. 32:5; Rom. 3:19-26; 7:7, 24, 25; I John 1:9.

² I Cor. 9:24; Phil. 3:12-14; I John 3:1-3.

Prayer

LORD'S DAY 45

116. Q. Why is prayer necessary for Christians?
- A. Because prayer is the most important part
of the thankfulness
which God requires of us.¹
Moreover, God will give
His grace and the Holy Spirit
only to those who constantly
and with heartfelt longing
ask Him for these gifts
and thank Him for them.²
- ¹ Ps. 50:14, 15; 116:12-19; I Thess. 5:16-18.
² Matt. 7:7, 8; Luke 11:9-13.
117. Q. What belongs to a prayer
which pleases God
and is heard by Him?
- A. First,
we must from the heart
call upon the one true God only,
who has revealed Himself in His Word,
for all that He has commanded us to pray.¹
Second,
we must thoroughly know
our need and misery,
so that we may humble ourselves
before God.²
Third,
we must rest on this firm foundation
that, although we do not deserve it,
God will certainly hear our prayer
for the sake of Christ our Lord,
as He has promised us in His Word.³
- ¹ Ps. 145:18-20; John 4:22-24; Rom. 8:26, 27; James 1:5; I John 5:14, 15;
Rev. 19:10.
² II Chron. 7:14; 20:12; Ps. 2:11; 34:18; 62:8; Is. 66:2; Rev. 4.
³ Dan. 9:17-19; Matt. 7:8; John 14:13, 14; 16:23; Rom. 10:13; James 1:6.

118. Q. What has God commanded us to ask of Him?
- A. All the things we need for body and soul,¹ as included in the prayer which Christ our Lord Himself taught us.
- ¹ Matt. 6:33; James 1:17.
119. Q. What is the Lord's prayer?
- A. *Our Father who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
And forgive us our debts,
As we also have forgiven our debtors;
And lead us not into temptation.
But deliver us from the evil one.
For Thine is the kingdom,
and the power,
and the glory, for ever.
Amen.*¹
- ¹ Matt. 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4.

LORD'S DAY 46

120. Q. Why has Christ commanded us to address God as *Our Father*?
- A. To awaken in us at the very beginning of our prayer that childlike reverence and trust toward God which should be basic to our prayer: God has become our Father through Christ and will much less deny us what we ask of Him in faith than our fathers would refuse us earthly things.¹
- ¹ Matt. 7:9-11; Luke 11:11-13.
121. Q. Why is there added, *Who art in heaven*?
- A. These words teach us not to think of God's heavenly majesty in an earthly manner,¹

and to expect from His almighty power
all things we need
for body and soul.²

¹ Jer. 23:23, 24; Acts 17:24, 25.

² Matt. 6:25-34; Rom. 8:31, 32.

LORD'S DAY 47

122. Q. What is the first petition?

A. *Hallowed be Thy name.*

That is:

Grant us first of all
that we may rightly know Thee,¹
and sanctify, glorify, and praise Thee
in all Thy works,
in which shine forth
Thy almighty power,
wisdom, goodness, righteousness,
mercy, and truth.²

Grant us also

that we may so direct our whole life—
our thoughts, words, and actions—
that Thy name is not blasphemed because of us
but always honoured and praised.³

¹ Jer. 19:23, 24; 31: 33, 34; Matt. 16:17; John 17:3.

² Ex. 34:5-8; Ps. 145; Jer. 32:16-20; Luke 1:46-55, 68-75; Rom. 11: 33-36.

³ Ps. 115:1; Matt. 5:16.

LORD'S DAY 48

123. Q. What is the second petition?

A. *Thy kingdom come.*

That is:

So rule us by Thy Word and Spirit
that more and more we submit to Thee.¹
Preserve and increase Thy church.²
Destroy the works of the devil,
every power that raises itself against Thee,
and every conspiracy against Thy holy Word.³
Do all this
until the fulness of Thy kingdom comes,
wherein Thou shalt be all in all.⁴

¹ Ps. 119:5, 105; 143:10; Matt. 6:33.

² Ps. 51:18; 122:6-9; Matt. 16:18; Acts 2:42-47.

³ Rom. 16:20; 1 John 3:8.

⁴ Rom. 8:22, 23; 1 Cor. 15:28; Rev. 22: 17, 20.

LORD'S DAY 49

124. Q. What is the third petition?

A. *Thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.*

That is:

Grant that we and all men
may deny our own will,
and without any murmuring
obey Thy will,
for it alone is good.¹

Grant also that everyone
may carry out the duties
of his office and calling²
as willingly and faithfully
as the angels in heaven.³

¹ Matt. 7:21; 16:24-26; Luke 22:42; Rom. 12:1, 2; Tit. 2:11, 12.

² I Cor. 7:17-24; Eph. 6:5-9.

³ Ps. 103:20, 21.

LORD'S DAY 50

125. Q. What is the fourth petition?

A. *Give us this day our daily bread.*

That is:

Provide us with all our bodily needs¹
so that we may acknowledge
that Thou art the only fountain of all good,²
and that our care and labour,
and also Thy gifts,
cannot do us any good
without Thy blessing.³

Grant, therefore, that we may
withdraw our trust
from all creatures,
and place it only in Thee.⁴

¹ Ps. 104:27-30; 145:15, 16; Matt. 6:25-34.

² Acts 14:17; 17:25; James 1:17.

³ Deut. 8:3; Ps. 37:16; 127:1, 2; I Cor. 15:58.

⁴ Ps. 55:22; 62; 146; Jer. 17:5-8; Heb. 13:5, 6.

LORD'S DAY 51

126. Q. What is the fifth petition?

A. *And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.*

That is:

For the sake of Christ's blood,
do not impute to us,

wretched sinners;
any of our transgressions,
nor the evil which still clings to us,¹
as we also find this evidence of Thy grace in us
that we are fully determined
wholeheartedly to forgive our neighbour.²

¹ Ps. 51:1-7; 143:2; Rom. 8:1; 1 John 2:1, 2.

² Matt. 6:14, 15; 18:21-35.

LORD'S DAY 52

127. Q. What is the sixth petition?

A. *And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one.*

That is:

In ourselves we are so weak
that we cannot stand even for a moment.¹
Moreover, our sworn enemies—
the devil,² the world,³ and our own flesh⁴—
do not cease to attack us.

Wilt Thou, therefore,
uphold and strengthen us
by the power of Thy Holy Spirit,
so that in this spiritual war⁵
we may not go down to defeat,
but always firmly resist our enemies,
until we finally obtain the complete victory.⁶

¹ Ps. 103:14-16; John 15:1-5.

² 11 Cor. 11:14; Eph. 6:10-13; 1 Pet. 5:8.

³ John 15:18-21.

⁴ Rom. 7:23; Gal. 5:17.

⁵ Matt. 10:19, 20; 26:41; Mark 13:33; Rom. 5:3-5.

⁶ 1 Cor. 10:13; 1 Thess. 3:13; 5:23.

128. Q. How do you conclude your prayer?

A. *For Thine is the kingdom,
and the power,
and the glory, for ever.*

That is:

All this we ask of Thee
because, as our King,
having power over all things,
Thou art both willing and able
to give us all that is good,
and because not we
but Thy holy Name
should so receive all glory
for ever.¹

¹ Rom. 10:11-13; 11 Pet 2:9.

² Ps. 115:1; Jer. 33:8, 9; John 14:13.

<i>Heidelberg Catechism</i> (Lord's Day) (Question & Answer)		<i>Belgic Confession</i> (Article)	<i>Canons of Dort</i> (Head & Article) (RE = Rejection of Errors)
15	37	20, 21	II, 2-4
	38	21	—
	39	20, 21	II, 2-4
	40	20, 21	II, 3, 4; RE II, 7
16	41	—	—
	42	—	—
	43	—	II, 8
	44	21	II, 4
	45	20	RE V, 1
17	46	26	—
	47	19, 26	—
	48	19, 26	—
	49	26	—
18	50	26	—
	51	—	II, 8; V, 1-15
	52	37	—
19	53	11, 24	III/IV, 11, 12; RE III/IV, 5-8; V, 6, 7
	54	16, 27, 28, 29	I, 1-18; II, 1-9; V, 9
20	55	28	—
	56	22, 23	II, 7, 8; V, 5
	57	37	—
	58	37	—
21	59	21, 22, 23	II, 7, 8
	60	21, 22, 23	II, 7, 8
	61	21, 22, 23	II, 7, 8; RE II, 4
	62	23, 24	II, 1; III/IV, 3-6; RE III/IV, 4, 5
22	63	24	—
	64	24	III/IV, 11; V, 12, 13; RE V, 6
	65	24, 33	III/IV, 17; RE III/IV, 7-9; V, 14
	66	33	—
	67	33	—
23	68	33	—
	69	15, 34	—
	70	15, 34	—
	71	15, 34	—
24	72	34	—
	73	34	—
	74	15, 34	I, 17
25	75	35	—
	76	35	—
	77	35	—
	78	35	—
26	79	35	—
	80	35	—
	81	35	—
27	82	35	—
	83	29, 30, 32	—
	84	29, 32	—
	85	29, 32	—
28	86	24	III/IV, 11, 12; V, 10, 12
	87	24	—
	88	24	III/IV, 11, 12; V, 5, 7
	89	24	III/IV, 11, 12; V, 5, 7
	90	24	III/IV, 11, 12; V, 5, 7
29	91	24, 25	—

<i>Heidelberg Catechism</i> (Lord's Day) (Question & Answer)		<i>Belgic Confession</i> (Article)	<i>Canons of Dort</i> (Head & Article) (RE = Rejection of Errors)
34	92	—	—
	93	—	—
	94	1	—
	95	1	—
35	96	32	—
	97	—	—
	98	7	III/IV, 17; V, 14
36	99	—	—
	100	—	—
37	101	36	—
	102	—	—
38	103	—	V, 14
39	104	36	—
40	105	36	—
	106	—	—
	107	—	—
41	108	—	—
	109	—	—
42	110	—	—
	111	—	—
43	112	—	—
44	113	—	—
	114	24, 29	V, 4
	115	25	III/IV, 17
45	116	—	—
	117	—	—
	118	—	—
	119	26	—
46	120	12, 13, 26	—
	121	13	—
47	122	2, 7	—
48	123	36, 37	—
49	124	12, 24	III/IV, 11, 16
50	125	13	—
51	126	15, 21, 22, 23	II, 7
52	127	26	V, 6-8
	128	26	—
	129	—	—

APPENDIX III

THE CANONS OF DORDT

APPENDIX III
THE CANONS OF DORDT
FIRST HEAD OF DOCTRINE
DIVINE ELECTION AND REPROBATION

ARTICLE I

ALL MANKIND CONDEMNABLE BEFORE GOD

Since all men have sinned in Adam, lie under the curse and deserve eternal death, God would have done injustice to no one if He had willed 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 every mouth may be stopped, and 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
Rom 3:23
Rom 6:23

ARTICLE II

THE SENDING OF THE SON OF GOD

But in this the love of God was made manifest, that He sent His only Son into the world, so that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

1 Jn 4:9
Jn 3:16

ARTICLE III

THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL

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?*

Rom 10:14
Rom 10:15

ARTICLE IV

A TWOFOLD OUTCOME

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.

Jn 3:36
Mark 16:16

ARTICLE V

THE CAUSE OF UNBELIEF, THE SOURCE OF FAITH

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 VI

GOD'S ETERNAL DECREE

Eph 1:11

That God in time confers the gift of faith on some, and not on others, proceeds from His eternal decree. For all His works He knows 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.

ARTICLE VII

ELECTION DEFINED

Eph 1:4-6
Rom 8:30

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 persons, neither better nor more worthy than others, but with them involved 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.*

ARTICLE VIII

ONE DECREE OF ELECTION

Eph 1:4, 5
Eph 2:10

There are not various decrees of this election, but it 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.

ARTICLE IX

ELECTION NOT BASED ON FORESEEN FAITH

Eph 1:4

This election is not based on foreseen faith, the obedience of faith, holiness, or any other good quality or 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.*

ARTICLE X

ELECTION BASED ON GOD'S GOOD PLEASURE

Rom 9:11-13
(Mal 1:2, 3)

Acts 13:48

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.*

ARTICLE XI

ELECTION UNCHANGEABLE

As God Himself is most wise, unchangeable, all-knowing, and almighty, so His election can neither be undone and redone, nor changed, revoked or annulled; neither can the elect be cast away, nor their number be diminished.

ARTICLE XII

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 un-failing 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 hungering and thirsting after righteousness.

ARTICLE XIII

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 true at all 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.

ARTICLE XIV

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

Rom 12:3

Rom 11:33, 34

ARTICLE XV

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, for the declaration of 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 an awesome, blameless and just judge and avenger thereof.

ARTICLE XVI

RESPONSES TO THE DOCTRINE OF REPROBATION

Some do not yet clearly discern in themselves a living faith in Christ, an assured confidence of heart, peace of conscience, a zeal for child-like 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 expect it reverently and humbly. 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.

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 are not seriously converted.

ARTICLE XVII

CHILDREN OF BELIEVERS WHO DIE IN INFANCY

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.

Gen 17:7
Acts 2:39
1 Cor 7:14

Therefore, godfearing parents ought not to doubt the election and salvation of their children whom God calls out of this life in their infancy.

ARTICLE XVIII

NO PROTEST BUT ADORATION

To those who argue against 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?*

Rom 9:20
Mt 20:15

Rom 11:33-36

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 seen His counsel? 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. In 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, John 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 persons and not others, but that He out of all possible conditions (like the works of the law) chose or selected the act of faith, which in itself is without merit as the condition for salvation. In His grace He would 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 depended 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 faith 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. They are necessary conditions and causes required and foreseen as accomplished in those who would be fully elected.

Refutation: This error militates against all of Scripture which constantly impresses 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*, John 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 John 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 Scripture: The elect can not 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*, John 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 which 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, Luke 10:20. They put the consciousness of their election over against the fiery 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 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 Chorasin! Woe to you, Bethsaida: for in thee 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.

SECOND HEAD OF DOCTRINE THE DEATH OF CHRIST AND THE REDEMPTION OF MAN BY IT

ARTICLE I

THE JUSTICE OF GOD REQUIRES PUNISHMENT

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 II

THE SATISFACTION MADE BY CHRIST

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 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 III

THE INFINITE VALUE OF THE DEATH OF CHRIST

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 IV

HIS DEATH HAD 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 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 V

THE UNIVERSAL PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Jn 3.16

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 VI

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 VII

WHY OTHERS DO BELIEVE

But to those who truly believe and are by the death of Christ 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 VIII

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 them alone justifying faith and thereby to bring them

Eph 5:27

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 were from eternity 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. He should cleanse them by His blood from all sins, both original and actual, both those committed after faith and before faith. He should guard them faithfully to the end *and at last present them to Himself in splendour without any spot or wrinkle.*

ARTICLE IX

THE FULFILLMENT 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 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 a bridegroom for his bride laid down His life for her on the cross) and celebrate His praises here and through all eternity.

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*, John 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*, Isaiah 53:10. Finally, this error contradicts the article of faith concerning the Church.

2.

Error: It was not the purpose of the death of Christ 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.

Refutation: This militates against 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, Hebrews 7:22, 9:15, 17.

3.

- Error:** 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 might happen that either no one or all men would fulfil them.
- Refutation:** Those who teach this error think contemptuously of the death of Christ, in no wise acknowledge its most important fruit or benefit and bring back out of hell the Pelagian error.

4.

- Error:** 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, in as much 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 reward of eternal life.
- Refutation:** 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 impious Socinus, a new and strange justification of man before God, against the consensus of the whole Church.

5.

- Error:** 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 militates against Scripture which teaches that we are *by nature children of wrath,* Eph 2:3.

6.

- Error:** As far as God is concerned, He has been minded to apply to all men equally the benefits acquired by the death of Christ; however, some obtain the pardon of sin and eternal life and others do not. This difference depends on their own free will which applies itself to the grace that is offered without distinction, 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 acquisition and 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 instill into the minds of people the pernicious poison of Pelagianism.

7.

- Error: 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 declare: 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: *I lay down My life for the sheep*, John 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*, John 15:12, 13.

**THIRD AND FOURTH HEADS OF DOCTRINE
THE CORRUPTION OF MAN, HIS CONVERSION TO GOD, AND ITS MANNER**

ARTICLE I

THE EFFECT OF THE FALL

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. 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, vanity and perverseness of judgment in his mind; malice, rebelliousness, and stubbornness in his will and heart; and impurity in all his affections.

ARTICLE II

CORRUPTION PROPAGATED

Since after the fall man became corrupt, as a corrupt father he 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 vicious nature, according to the righteous judgment of God.

ARTICLE III

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 IV

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 the difference between what is honourable and shameful and shows some regard for virtue and outward order. But he is so far 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 natural and civil matters. Rather, whatever this light may be, man wholly pollutes it in various ways and suppresses it by his wickedness. By doing this, he makes himself inexcusable before God.

ARTICLE V

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.

ARTICLE VI

THE NEED FOR THE GOSPEL

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 new dispensation.

ARTICLE VII

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 more. 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.

ARTICLE VIII

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 of soul and eternal life to all who come to Him and believe.

ARTICLE IX

WHY SOME OF THE 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 receive the word of life. Others do indeed receive it, but not into their hearts, and therefore, after a 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 pleasure of this world, and bring forth no fruit. This our Saviour teaches in the parable of the seed. (Mt 13)

ARTICLE X

WHY OTHERS WHO ARE CALLED DO COME

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 in 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 does that they may declare the wonderful deeds of Him who called them out of darkness into His marvelous light, and may boast not of themselves but of the Lord, according to the testimony of the apostles in various places.

Col 1:13
1 Pet 2:9
1 Cor 1:31

ARTICLE XI

HOW GOD BRINGS ABOUT CONVERSION

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 obedient. He moves and strengthens it so that, like a good tree, it may be able to produce the fruit of good works.

1 Cor 2:14

ARTICLE XII

THE DIVINE CHARACTER OF REGENERATION

This conversion is that regeneration, new creation, resurrection from the dead, 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 preaching, by moral persuasion, 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, marvelous, mysterious and inexpressible work. According to Scripture, inspired by the Author of this work, regeneration is not inferior in power to creation or the resurrection 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. Therefore the will so renewed is not only acted upon and moved by God but, acted upon by God, the will itself also acts. Hence also man himself, is rightly said to believe and repent through the grace he has received.

ARTICLE XIII

REGENERATION IS INCOMPREHENSIBLE

As long as they are 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.

ARTICLE XIV

FAITH A GIFT OF GOD

- Eph 2:8 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. It is not 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 brings about in man both the will to believe and the act of believing, and indeed all things in all.
- Phil 2:13

ARTICLE XV

CHRISTIAN ATTITUDE WITH RESPECT TO GOD'S UNDESERVED GRACE

- Rom 11:35 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. 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 towards them, as if we had distinguished ourselves.

ARTICLE XVI

MAN'S WILL NOT TAKEN AWAY BUT MADE ALIVE

Man through 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 stocks and blocks 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 unless the admirable Author of all good should deal with us in this way, man would have no hope of rising from his fall through his free will, by which he, when he was still standing, plunged himself into ruin.

ARTICLE XVII

THE USE OF MEANS

The almighty working of God whereby He brings forth and sustains this our natural life does not exclude but requires the use of means, by which He according to His infinite wisdom and goodness has willed to exercise His power. So also the aforementioned supernatural working of God whereby He regenerates us, in no way excludes or overthrows the use of the gospel, which the most wise God has ordained to be the seed of regeneration and the food of the soul. For this reason the apostles and the teachers who succeeded them, in the fear of the Lord, instructed the people concerning this grace of God, to His glory and to the abasement of all pride. In the meantime, however, 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 good pleasure has willed to be kept very close 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 the more directly His works proceed. To God alone all glory, both for the means and for their saving fruit and efficacy is due throughout eternity. Amen.

REJECTION OF ERRORS

Having explained the true doctrine of the corruption of man and his conversion to God, Synod rejects the following errors:

1.

Error: It is improper to say that original sin as such is sufficient to condemn the whole human race or to deserve temporal and eternal punishment.

Refutation: This contradicts the apostle, who 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*.

2.

Error: The spiritual gifts or the good qualities and virtues, such as goodness, holiness, righteousness could not belong to the will of man when he was first created, and can therefore not have been separated from his will either, when he fell.

Refutation: 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.

3.

Error: 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 through the darkness of the understanding and the unorderliness 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 not to will and not to choose all manner of good which may be presented to it.

Refutation: 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.

4.

Error: The unregenerate man is not really or totally dead in sins, or deprived of all powers to 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.

Refutation: These things militate against the express testimony of Scripture: *You were dead through the trespasses and sins*, Eph 2:1, 5. And *every imagination of the thought 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.

5.

Error: 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 efficiently the means necessary for the knowledge of Christ, for faith and repentance.

Refutation: Both the experience of all ages and Scripture testify 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.*

6.

Error: 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 said to be a gift, except with respect to the power to attain to this faith.

Refutation: 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 which has been given to us, Rom 5:5.* This also militates against 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.*

7.

Error: 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.

Refutation: 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.*

8.

Error: In regenerating man God does not use the powers of His omnipotence so as to forcefully and infallibly 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 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.

Refutation: This is nothing less than the denial of all the efficiency 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 fulfill 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.

9.

Error: 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 efficiently help the will of man unto conversion until the will of man moves itself and determines to do this.

Refutation: The ancient Church has 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.

**FIFTH HEAD OF DOCTRINE
THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS**

ARTICLE I

THE REGENERATE NOT FREE FROM INDWELLING SIN

Rom 7:24 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.

ARTICLE II

DAILY SINS OF WEAKNESS

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 for the goal of perfection until at last, delivered from this body of death, they reign with the Lamb of God in heaven.

ARTICLE III

GOD PRESERVES HIS OWN

Because of these remains of indwelling sin and also because of the temptations of the world and of satan, those who have been converted could not persevere 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.

ARTICLE IV

SAINTS MAY FALL INTO SERIOUS SINS

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.

ARTICLE V

THE EFFECTS OF SUCH SERIOUS SINS

By such gross sins, however, they greatly offend God, incur deadly guilt, grieve the Holy Spirit, suspend the exercise of faith, very grievously 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 VI

GOD WILL NOT PERMIT HIS ELECT TO BE LOST

But 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 VII

GOD WILL AGAIN RENEW HIS ELECT TO REPENTANCE

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 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, adore His mercies and faithfulness. And from now on they more diligently work out their own salvation with fear and trembling.

ARTICLE VIII

THE GRACE OF THE TRIUNE GOD PRESERVES

So it is not through their own merits or strength but through the undeserved mercy of God that they neither totally fall back from faith and grace nor persist in their backslidings and are finally lost. As far as they are concerned, this could not only easily happen but would undoubtedly happen. But as far as God is concerned, 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 IX

THE ASSURANCE OF THIS PRESERVATION

Believers themselves can be certain and are certain of this preservation of the elect to salvation and the perseverance of true believers in the faith. This assurance is according to the measure of their faith, by which they surely 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 X

THE GROUND OF THIS ASSURANCE

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 good 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 unfailing pledge of eternal glory, they would be of all men the most miserable.

Rom 8:16, 17

ARTICLE XI

THIS ASSURANCE NOT ALWAYS FELT

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 persevering. But God, the Father of all comfort, will not let them to be tempted beyond their strength, but with the temptation will also provide the way of escape and by the Holy Spirit again revive in them the certainty of persevering.

ARTICLE XII

THIS ASSURANCE DOES NOT LEAD TO COMPLACENCY

So far, however, is this certainty of perseverance from making true believers proud and complacent that, on the contrary, it is the true root of humility, childlike reverence, genuine godliness, patience in every conflict, fervent prayers, constancy in the cross 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 XIII

THIS ASSURANCE DOES NOT LEAD TO CARELESSNESS

Eph 2:10

This renewed confidence does not produce carelessness or neglect of godliness in those who have been restored after the fall; rather it renders them more careful and diligent to discern the ways of the Lord so that by walking in them they may retain the certainty of persevering. They do this lest, because of their abuse of His fatherly goodness, the reconciled God should again turn away His face from them, (the contemplation of which is to the godly sweeter than life, and the withdrawal of it more bitter than death) and they should fall into more severe torments of soul.

ARTICLE XIV

THE USE OF MEANS INCLUDED

As it has pleased God to begin this work of grace in us by the preaching of the gospel, so He maintains, continues and perfects it by the hearing and reading of His Word, by meditation upon it, by its exhortations, threatenings, and promises, and by the use of the sacraments.

ARTICLE XV

THIS DOCTRINE HATED BY SATAN BUT LOVED BY THE CHURCH

This doctrine of the perseverance of true believers and saints, and of the certainty of it, which God has most abundantly revealed in His Word for the glory of His Name and for the consolation of the godly, and which He impresses on the hearts of believers, the flesh does not really understand. Satan hates it, the world ridicules it, the

ignorant and hypocrites abuse it, and the heretics oppose it. The Bride of Christ, however, has always most tenderly loved and constantly defended it as a treasure of inestimable value, and God, against whom no counsel can avail and no strength can prevail, will see to it that she continues to do so to the end. To 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:

1.

Error: The perseverance of the true believers is not a fruit of election or a gift of God obtained by the death of Christ. It is a condition of the new covenant, which man before his so-called decisive election and justification must fulfil through his free will.

Refutation: Holy Scripture testifies that perseverance follows out of election and is given to the elect in 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.

2.

Error: God does indeed provide the believer with sufficient powers to persevere, and is ready to preserve these in him, if he will do his duty. But though all these things have been established which are necessary to persevere in faith and which God will use to preserve faith, even then it still always depends on the decision of the will whether he perseveres or not.

Refutation: This idea contains outright Pelagianism. While it wants to make men free, it makes them robbers of God's honour. It militates against the consistent consensus of the evangelical doctrine, which takes from man all cause of boasting, and ascribes all the praise for this benefit to the grace of God alone. It is also contrary to the apostle who declares that it is God *who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ,* 1 Cor 1:8.

3.

Error: 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.

Refutation: This opinion makes powerless the grace of justification and regeneration and the continuous preservation by Christ, contrary to the expressed 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 sin; for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot sin because he is born of God, 1 John 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, John 10:28, 29.

4.

Error: True regenerate believers can commit the sin unto death or the sin against the Holy Spirit.

Refutation: After the apostle John had spoken in the fifth chapter of his first letter, verses 16 and 17, of those who sin unto death and he had forbidden to pray for them, he immediately added verse 18: *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.*

5.

Error: Without a special revelation we can have no certainty of future perseverance in this life.

Refutation: By this doctrine the sure comfort of the true believers in this life is taken away, and the doubts of the followers of the pope are again introduced into the Church. The Holy Scriptures, however, always deduce this assurance, not from a special and extra-ordinary revelation, but from the very marks of 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 which He has given us, 1 John 3:24.*

6.

Error: 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.

Refutation: This doctrine 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 express words in his first letter: *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 John 3:2, 3.* Furthermore, it is refuted by the example of the saints both of the Old and New Testament who, although they were certain of their perseverance and salvation, nevertheless continued in prayer and other exercises of godliness.

7.

- Error:** The faith of those who believe for a time does not differ from justifying and saving faith except with respect to its duration.
- Refutation:** 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 on 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 various measures, constantly and steadfastly.

8.

- Error:** It is not absurd that one, having lost his first regeneration, is again and even often born anew.
- Refutation:** This doctrine denies that the seed of God, by which we are born again, is incorruptible. It is contrary to the testimony of the apostle Peter: *You have been born anew, not of perishable seed but of imperishable*, 1 Pet 1:23.

9.

- Error:** Christ has prayed nowhere that believers should infallibly continue in faith.
- Refutation:** 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 has not prayed for the apostles only, but also for all who through their word would believe: *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 upright declaration of the orthodox doctrine with respect to the five articles disputed in The Netherlands; and this is the rejection of the errors by which the Churches have for some time been disturbed. The Synod judges this declaration and rejection to be taken from the Word of God and to be in agreement with the Confessions of the Reformed Churches. Hereby it becomes evident that some acted very improperly and against all truth, fairness and love by wanting 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 the believers are torn from their mothers' breasts and tyrannically thrown into hell, so that neither baptism nor the prayers of the Church at their baptism can be of any help to them.

And there is much more of this kind which the Reformed Churches not only do not confess but even detest wholeheartedly.

Therefore, this Synod of Dordt 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. They are not to judge either 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 this declaration of the orthodox doctrine, confirmed by the unanimous consent of all and each of the members of the entire Synod.

Moreover, the Synod warns the slanderers themselves to consider the severe judgment of God which awaits them, for bearing false witness against the Confessions of so many Churches, for disturbing the consciences of the weak and for trying to make many suspicious of the community of the true believers.

Finally, this Synod exhorts all their fellow servants in the gospel of Christ to conduct themselves in a God-fearing and pious manner when they deal with this doctrine in schools and Churches.

In teaching it, both by the spoken and written word, 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 the Scripture, according to the analogy of faith. And they must abstain from all those phrases which exceed the prescribed limits of the genuine meaning of the Holy Scriptures and which may provide shameless sophists with a good opportunity to attack or even slander the doctrine of the Reformed Churches.

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, bring to the truth those who err, shut the mouths of the slanderers of the sound doctrine and equip the faithful ministers of His Word with the Spirit of wisdom and discretion, that whatever they say may tend to the glory of God and the edification of those who hear them.

AMEN.

APPENDIX IV REVISED PRAYERS

I. A GENERAL CONFESSION OF SINS AND PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON AND ON DAYS OF FASTING AND PRAYER

O eternal and merciful God and Father, we humble ourselves before Thy great majesty, for we have frequently and grievously sinned against Thee. We acknowledge that if Thou shouldst enter into judgment with us, we would deserve nothing but temporal and eternal death. We are deeply conscious of the fact that we are conceived and born in sin, and that all manner of evil desires against Thee and our neighbour fill our hearts. We continually transgress Thy commandments, failing to do what Thou hast commanded us, and doing that which Thou hast expressly forbidden. We all like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way. We acknowledge our waywardness, and are heartily sorry for all our sins. We confess that our transgressions are innumerable, and that we have nothing with which to repay our debt. Therefore we are not worthy to be called Thy children, nor to lift up our eyes to Thee in heaven.

Nevertheless, O Lord God and gracious Father, we know that Thou dost not desire the death of the sinner, but rather that he should turn to Thee and live. We know that Thy mercy toward those who turn to Thee is infinite; and so we take courage to call upon Thee from the depths of our hearts, trusting in our Mediator Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Have compassion on us and forgive us all our sins for Christ's sake. Wash us in the pure fountain of His blood, so that we may become clean and white as snow. Cover our nakedness with His righteousness, for the glory of Thy Name. Free our understanding from all blindness, and our hearts from all wilfulness and rebellion.

Open now the mouth of Thy servant, and fill it with Thy wisdom and knowledge, that he may boldly proclaim Thy Word in all its purity. Prepare our hearts to receive it, to understand it, and to preserve it. Inscribe Thy law, as Thou hast promised, upon the tablet of our hearts, and give us the desire and the strength to walk in the ways of Thy precepts, to the praise and glory of Thy Name, and to the edification of the Church.

All this, gracious Father, we implore in the Name of Jesus Christ.
(or: who taught us to pray, "Our Father . . .")

AMEN

II. A PRAYER FOR ALL THE NEEDS OF CHRISTENDOM

Almighty and merciful God, we confess that we are unworthy to come before Thee in prayer. Our consciences accuse us and our sins testify against us. We also know that Thou art a righteous judge who punishes the sins of those who transgress Thy commandments.

But Thou, LORD, hast commanded us to call upon Thee in all our needs and hast in mercy promised to listen to our petitions. We realize that this is not because of our merits, for we have none, but because of the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ whom Thou hast appointed as our Mediator and Advocate. Therefore we forsake all other help and refuse to take our refuge in anything but Thy mercy alone.

Heavenly Father, Thou hast showered upon us so many blessings that we are not able to comprehend them, much less to count them. We especially thank Thee that Thou hast led us to the light of Thy truth and to the knowledge of Thy holy gospel. Time and again, however, we have ungratefully forgotten Thy benefits, departed from Thee and followed the desires of our own heart. We have not honoured Thee as we should have done. We have grievously sinned against Thee. If Thou didst bring us into judgment,

we could expect nothing but condemnation and eternal death. But, LORD, look upon the face of Thy Anointed, hide Thy eyes from our sins and remove Thy wrath through His intercession. Work in us mightily by Thy Spirit, that He may daily put to death our sinful nature and work the daily renewal of our life.

As it pleases Thee that we pray for all mankind, we beseech Thee, bless the propagation of Thy holy gospel, that it may be proclaimed and received universally. May the whole world be filled with knowledge of Thee. Enlighten the ignorant, strengthen the weak; may everyone by word and deed magnify Thy holy Name. To this end send faithful servants into Thy harvest and equip them to discharge diligently the duties of their office. Destroy, we pray Thee, all false teachers, fierce wolves and hirelings who seek their own honour and profit rather than the honour of Thy holy Name and the salvation of men.

Graciously preserve and govern Thy Christian Churches throughout the world in the unity of the true faith and in godliness of life that Thy kingdom may come day by day. Destroy the kingdom of Satan until the perfection of Thy kingdom arrives when Thou wilt be all in all.

We pray for the mission among Jews, Moslems and heathen who live without hope and without Thee in the world. Grant Thy blessing upon the propagation of the gospel among those who still call themselves Christians but have deviated from Thy truth in doctrine and life.

Remember all Christian instruction and all who are engaged in it. Bless all societies which, in accordance with Thy holy Word, seek to hallow Thy Name, to further Thy kingdom and to fulfil Thy will. Be with all Christian institutions of mercy and grant those who work there the full measure of love.

We also pray for the civil government, for our queen and her house and for all national, provincial, and local authorities whom Thou hast set over us. Grant that they may perform their task in such a manner that the King of kings may rule over them and their subjects. May they as Thy servants more and more oppose the kingdom of Satan, which is a kingdom of lawlessness. Grant that under the shield of their government we may lead a quiet and peaceful life, godly and respectful in every way.

We pray Thee for all Thy children who suffer persecution for the sake of Thy Name and the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Comfort them with Thy Holy Spirit and deliver them from the hands of their enemies. Permit not the memory of Thy Name to be removed from the earth. Let not the enemies of Thy truth have occasion to dishonour and blaspheme Thy Name. But if it is Thy will that persecuted Christians by their death bear witness to the truth and glorify Thy Name, comfort them in their sufferings. May they accept their trials as from Thy fatherly hand and remain firm in life and death to the honour of Thy Name, to the edification of the Church and to their salvation.

We remember before Thee all those whom Thou art chastening with poverty, imprisonment, physical illness or spiritual distress. May it please Thee to heal the sick and to restore soundness of mind to the mentally ill. Surround those who are handicapped in body or mind with Thy care and bless all that is done to help them. Lift up those who are cast down. Be a Comforter to the widowers, a Protector to the widows, a Father to the orphans. Show Thy love to the lonely; Thy strength to the weak; Thy grace to the dying, Thy sustaining power to the bereaved. Grant that all trials may yield the peaceful fruit of righteousness. Glorify Thyself in the faith, love, and endurance of all those whom Thou hast called to Thy eternal glory in Christ.

O LORD, take us and our dear ones into Thy care and keeping. Watch over our families. Strengthen the expectant mothers and grant them a good delivery. Bless the bond between husbands and wives, parents and children. Be with those married couples whom Thou, in Thy wisdom, dost not give children. Bless them and cause them to be a blessing in the midst of Thy household.

Help us in our daily work, protect us when we travel. Bless also our endeavours for the

promotion of Thy kingdom, for the benefit of our country or for the advancement of honourable personal interests. Bless also the products of the soil. Grant favourable weather and fruitful increase.

Enable us in our respective callings to live according to Thy will. May we so use the talents which we have received from Thy hand that they may not hinder but rather promote our life in Thy kingdom. In all temptations strengthen us so that we fight the good fight of the faith, obtain the victory, and hereafter with Christ inherit eternal life.

We pray all this in the Name of our faithful Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

(or: who taught us to pray "Our Father . . .")

AMEN

III. A PUBLIC CONFESSION OF SINS AND PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON

Heavenly Father, eternal and merciful God, we acknowledge and confess before Thy divine majesty that we are poor wretched sinners. We were conceived and born in sin and corruption, and are inclined to all manner of evil and incapable by nature of doing any good. We also transgress Thy holy commandments continually. We grieve Thee by our sins and bring judgment on ourselves because of them. But, LORD, we are truly sorry for our sins which provoked Thee to anger. We accuse ourselves and acknowledge that we are to blame for our sinfulness and transgressions. Yet we plead for Thy mercy on the ground of the suffering of Thy dear Son, Jesus Christ. Have compassion on us, gracious God and Father, and forgive us our sins for the sake of His death. Grant us also the grace of Thy Holy Spirit that He teach us to confess our sins sincerely and to know our wretchedness. May He so lead us that we die to sin, rise up to a new life and bring forth fruits of holiness and righteousness acceptable to Thee through Jesus Christ.

May it please Thee to make us understand Thy holy Word in accordance with Thy divine will, so that we may learn to put our trust in Thee alone and not in any creature. May our old nature with all its lusts be put to death day by day and may we present ourselves a living sacrifice to Thee, to the honour of Thy Name and the benefit of our neighbour.

We also beseech Thee, gracious God, to bring back to Thyself in true repentance all who depart from Thy truth, that we all with one accord may serve Thee through Jesus Christ, our Lord (who taught us to pray, "Our Father . . .")

AMEN

IV. A BRIEF FORM OF PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON

We thank Thee, merciful God and Father, that Thou hast brought us to the knowledge of Thee and of Thy Son by Thy Spirit and Word and hast caused Thy Word to be proclaimed to us. Grant that, as we received Christ Jesus the Lord, we may so live in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, just as we were taught, abounding in thanksgiving. We beseech Thee, O Lord, since we do not obey Thy holy Word as we should, through ignorance, unthankfulness and discontent, remember Thy great mercy and have compassion on us. Teach us truly to know our sins, sincerely to repent and to amend our life. Strengthen the ministers of Thy Church in order that they may faithfully and steadfastly preach Thy holy Word. Likewise, Lord, give strength to all who rule over us that they may use the sword entrusted to them in justice and equity.

We pray Thee particularly for A.

Keep us, we beseech Thee, from all hypocrisy and unfaithfulness, and frustrate all evil and subtle designs against Thy Word and Thy Church. O Lord, do not withdraw from us Thy Word and Spirit, but grant us a strong faith, patience and steadfastness in all suffering and adversity. Help and sustain Thy Church, and deliver Thy people from

opposition, ridicule, and tyranny. Impart strength from on high to those that are weak and sorely burdened with sorrow. Grant us Thy peace through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who gave us this sure promise. *Truly, truly, I say to you, if you ask anything of the Father, He will give it to you in My Name.*

(He taught us to pray: "Our Father . . .")

AMEN

V. A PRAYER BEFORE THE EXPLANATION OF THE CATECHISM

Heavenly Father, Thy Word is perfect, reviving the soul; Thy testimony is sure, making wise the simple. Thy gospel is the power unto salvation to everyone who believes. We, however, are by nature blind and incapable of doing any good. We beseech Thee, therefore, that Thou wilt illumine our darkened minds by Thy Holy Spirit. Give us a humble heart, free from all conceit and worldly wisdom which is enmity against Thee, so that, hearing Thy Word, we may rightly understand it and let ourselves be governed by it. Confirm us in our catholic and undoubted Christian faith. Graciously bring back those who depart from Thy truth, that we all in unity serve Thee in true holiness and righteousness all the days of our life. We ask these things of Thee only for the sake of Christ.

(He taught us to pray, "Our Father . . .")

AMEN

VI. A PRAYER AFTER THE EXPLANATION OF THE CATECHISM

Gracious God and merciful Father, we thank Thee that Thou hast established Thy covenant with the believers and their seed. Thou hast not only sealed this by holy baptism, but also showest it daily by preparing unto Thyself praise out of the mouths of babes and infants whereby the wise and prudent of this world are put to shame. Thou revealest it too by teaching us Thy ways and will in Christ Jesus our Lord. Thou gavest pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for their service to Thee so that the body of Christ is built up. We beseech Thee that Thou wilt continue to work in the hearts of all the children of the covenant, both old and young, in order that we may grow in the knowledge of Thy grace in Christ until we all reach complete maturity in Him. May we, by Thy power, not be tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine. Bless our families and endow the parents by Thy Spirit with the wisdom which is from above, that they may bring up their children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. We pray Thee for all teaching which is based upon Thy holy Word, as we have summarized it in the Confessions of the Church. Be with all who labour in it and provide them with that knowledge and wisdom which is rooted in the fear of Thy Name. Put Thou to shame those who are high and mighty in their own eyes and in the estimation of the world, and may, by the godliness of Thy people, the kingdom of Satan be destroyed and the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ in this and in all Thy Churches be strengthened to the glory of Thy holy Name and unto our salvation.

All this we ask in the Name of Jesus Christ Thy Son.

(He taught us to pray, "Our Father . . .")

AMEN

VII. PRAYER BEFORE MEALS

Almighty God, faithful Father, Thou has made the world and dost uphold it by Thy powerful Word. Thou didst provide Israel in the desert with food from on high. Wilt Thou also bless us, Thy humble servants, and renew our strength by these gifts which, through

our Lord Jesus Christ. we have received from Thy bountiful Fatherly hand. Give that we may use them with moderation. Help us to put them to use in a life devoted to Thee and Thy service. May we thus acknowledge that Thou art our Father and the Source of all good things. Grant also that at all times we may long for the lasting food of Thy Word. May we thus be nourished to everlasting life which Thou hast prepared for us by the precious blood of Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Saviour. In His name we pray.

AMEN

VIII. THANKSGIVING AFTER MEALS

Lord God, our heavenly Father, we thank Thee for this food and drink which we have enjoyed in this meal, and for all Thy gracious gifts which we continually receive out of Thy hand. We thank Thee especially for Thy divine Word which we were allowed to read together. Thereby Thou hast caused us to be born anew to a living hope which Thou hast revealed in the holy gospel. We pray Thee, merciful God and Father, let our hearts not be weighed down by the cares of this life nor become too deeply attached to the earthly and perishable things. Grant us Thy grace that in our daily tasks we may seek the things which are above, expecting our Saviour Jesus Christ who is coming with the clouds for our deliverance.

We render our thanks and submit our prayer in His Name.

AMEN

IX. PRAYER FOR THE SICK AND THE SPIRITUALLY DISTRESSED

Merciful God and Father, Thou gavest eternal hope and salvation to the living and eternal life to the dying. Thou alone hast life and death in Thy hands, and Christ alone has the keys of death and of the grave. All things are so in Thy power that neither health nor sickness, good nor evil, life nor death can befall us without Thy will. We also know that by Thy power and direction all things are subservient to our salvation. Gracious Father, we beseech Thee to grant us the grace of Thy Holy Spirit, that He may teach us truly to know our misery and to bear patiently with Thy chastisements. If based on our merits, these chastisements should have been ten thousand times more severe. We believe that they are not evidence of Thy wrath but of Thy fatherly love that we may not be condemned with the world.

Strengthen, LORD, our faith by Thy Holy Spirit so that we become more and more united with Christ our Head, since it is Thy good pleasure to conform us to Him both in suffering and glory. Enable us to bear what is brought upon us by Thy fatherly wisdom. We submit ourselves entirely to Thy will, whether Thou leavest us on earth or whether Thou takest us home unto Thyself. We trust that with body and soul, both in life and death, we belong to Christ, whose resurrection is the guarantee of our blessed resurrection.

Grant that we may experience the comfort of the remission of sins through Jesus Christ. May His innocent blood wash away the uncleanness of our sins and may His righteousness cover our unrighteousness in Thy sight. Arm us with faith and hope that we overcome the assaults of Satan and are not put to shame by any fear of death. And when our eyes grow dim, let Thy eyes be open toward us. When Thou takest away from us the power of speech, hear Thou then the sighing of our hearts. When our hands have lost all their strength, continue to support us and to carry us upon everlasting arms.

Father, we commit our spirit into Thy hands. Deal with us according to Thy promise. Never forsake us, but always be with us, even in the hour of death.

Hear and answer us for the sake of Christ, our dear Saviour.

(He taught us to pray: "Our Father . . .")

AMEN

X. PRAYER FOR THE SICK AND SPIRITUALLY DISTRESSED

Righteous God and merciful Father. Thou art the Almighty, without whose will nothing occurs in heaven or on earth. Life and death are also in Thy hand.

We are not worthy to call upon Thee and, if Thou shouldst mark our iniquities and sins we could not hope that Thou wilt hear us and answer us. We pray, therefore, that Thou wilt look upon us according to Thy mercy in Christ Jesus who bore our griefs and was wounded for our transgressions. We acknowledge that of ourselves we are incapable of doing any good and are inclined to all evil. On account of this we are justly chastised and disciplined by Thee and we do not nearly receive what we deserve.

But, Lord, Thou hast made us Thy people and Thou art our God. Thy mercy which Thou hast never withheld from those who turn to Thee, is our only refuge. We pray, therefore, do not hold our sins against us but impute to us the satisfaction, righteousness and holiness of Christ so that in Him we may stand before Thee. Graciously grant us recovery, take this suffering and sickness away from us and bless the means provided by Thee. But, if it pleases Thee to prolong our trial, give us patience and strength to bear it all according to Thy will. Thou art wise and good. May, whatever Thou decidest, serve for our sanctification.

Rather chastise us here, Lord, than that we should perish with the world hereafter. Grant that we forsake the world, crucify our old nature; give that we are more and more renewed after the image of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let us never be separated from Thy love, but draw us closer to Thee from day to day. Grant that thus with joy we may attain to the end of our calling which is to die with Christ, to rise with Him triumphantly, and to live with Him eternally. We also believe that Thou wilt hear us through Jesus Christ our Lord.

(He taught us to pray: "Our Father . . .")

AMEN

XI. MORNING PRAYER

Merciful Father, we thank Thee that in Thy great faithfulness Thou didst keep watch over us during this past night. Strengthen us further also, we pray Thee, and guide us by Thy Holy Spirit, that we may use this new day as well as all the days of our life in holiness and righteousness. Grant us, we pray Thee, that in all our undertakings we may always have Thy glory foremost in our minds. May we always work in such a manner that we expect all results and fruits of our work from Thy generous hand alone.

In order that we may receive this grace from Thee, we beseech Thee that Thou wilt forgive all our sins according to Thy promise, for the sake of the passion and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Through Thy grace we are heartily sorry for all our transgressions. Illumine our hearts, we beseech Thee, that we may lay aside all works of darkness and as children of light may walk in the light and live a new life in all godliness.

Bless Thou the proclamation of Thy divine Word here and in the mission fields, and frustrate all the works of the devil. Strengthen all faithful labourers in Thy vineyard.

We pray for those whom Thou hast set over us that they may rule according to their calling as servants of Thee, the King of kings and the Lord of lords. Give endurance to all who are persecuted on account of their faith and deliver them from their enemies. Destroy all the works of the devil. Comfort the distressed and show Thy mercy and help to all who call upon Thy holy Name in sickness and other trials of life. Deal with us and with all Thy people according to Thy grace in Christ Jesus our Lord, who assured us that Thou wilt do whatever we ask in His Name.

AMEN

XII. EVENING PRAYER

Merciful God, in whom is no darkness at all, we draw nigh to Thee at the end of this day. We thank Thee that Thou hast given us strength for our daily work and hast guided us safely through this day. Bless what was good in our labour and conduct.

Since Thou hast ordained that man should labour during the day but rest when it is night, we pray that Thou wilt give us that rest and wilt cause it to be peaceful and undisturbed in order that we may be able to take up our daily task again. Command Thy angels to guard us and cause Thy face to shine upon us. We cast all our anxieties upon Thee, for Thou takest care of us.

Control our sleep and rule our hearts in order that we may not be defiled in any way but may glorify Thee even in our nightly rest. Defend and protect us against all assaults of the devil and take us into Thy divine protection.

We confess that we did not spend this day without grievously sinning against Thee. Be pleased to cover our sins in Thy mercy as Thou coverest the earth in the darkness of the night.

Bestow comfort and rest upon all that are ill, all who are bowed down with grief, or are afflicted with spiritual distress.

Thy steadfast love, O Lord, endures forever. Do not forsake the works of Thy hands. All this we ask in the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

AMEN

XIII. OPENING PRAYER FOR ECCLESIASTICAL ASSEMBLIES

Heavenly Father, merciful God, it has pleased Thee according to Thy infinite wisdom and lovingkindness to gather a Church unto Thyself out of the peoples of the earth through Thy Word and Spirit, and to govern her through the service of men. Thou hast graciously called us to be office-bearers in Thy Church and hast charged us to take heed to ourselves and to all the flock which Christ has bought with His precious blood.

In Thy Name we are now together in this place to deal with matters concerning the edification and welfare of Thy Churches and to do so in an ecclesiastical manner. We realize that we are unworthy and unable of ourselves to think, speak or accomplish any good. We beseech Thee, therefore, that Thy Holy Spirit may govern us in our deliberations and decisions and may lead us into Thy truth.

Keep all misunderstanding away from us and guard us against the sinful inclinations of our hearts. May Thy Word be our only rule and standard so that our work may be to the glory of Thy Name, serving the well-being of Thy Churches and bringing peace to our consciences.

We ask this in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, the great Shepherd of the sheep.

AMEN

XIV. CLOSING PRAYER FOR ECCLESIASTICAL ASSEMBLIES

Lord God, heavenly Father, we thank Thee that in the gathering and preservation of Thy Church in our country Thou art pleased to use our service. Thou hast graciously ordered all things so that Thy gospel is preached without hindrance and that we may engage in public worship and in ecclesiastical assemblies. At the close of this present meeting we humbly ask forgiveness for the shortcomings and sins which did not remain hidden from Thy eyes and we bring thanks for the good we received from Thy fatherly hand. Wilt Thou, O faithful God and Father, bless all decisions taken in agreement with Thy

holy Word and wilt Thou fulfill Thy purpose for Thy Churches. Preserve Thy Church by the purity of doctrine, by the proper administration and use of the sacraments and by the faithful exercise of Church discipline.

Destroy all wicked counsels conceived against Thy Word and church, and strengthen the ministers to preach Thy gospel boldly and steadfastly.

Give perseverance to the overseers and the deacons that they may be a blessing to Thy people through the faithful administration of their offices.

Bless our queen and her house that she may reign by Thy wisdom. So govern the civil authorities that they rule in justice and with wise restraint. May their rule be directed to the supremacy of Thee, the King of rulers and ruled alike. Let in this way the shameful and wicked dominion of Satan be increasingly broken down and may we lead a quiet and peaceful life, godly and respectful in every way.

Hear us, O God and Father, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

AMEN

XV. OPENING PRAYER FOR THE MEETINGS OF THE DEACONS

Merciful God and Father, Thou hast not only declared that we shall always have the poor with us, but hast also commanded us to support them in their need. Thou hast ordained the service of deacons for Thy Church in order that the needy members may receive the necessary support. Thou hast called us to the office of deacon in this congregation, and we are now assembled in Thy Name to deal with the matters pertaining to our office. We humbly beseech Thee to dwell among us with the Spirit of discretion. Grant us His help, that we may be able to establish who are the ones that are truly in need; may He lead us to them and help us to distribute the alms that have been collected as each one's need may render necessary, in a spirit of joy, fidelity, and liberality.

Kindle fervent love to the needy in the hearts of Thy people that they may generously contribute of the possessions entrusted to them as Thy stewards. Grant us sufficient means to bring relief to the needy. May we discharge the duties of our office as Christ's ministers of mercy.

Give us Thy grace to relieve the want by means of material gifts and to instil the comfort of Thy holy Word into the hearts of the afflicted, that they may put their trust in Thee alone. Bless, we pray Thee, our ministration and multiply the bread of the poor that both they and we may praise and thank Thee, while we await the blessed appearance of Thy Son, Jesus Christ, who became poor for our sakes that He might enrich us with eternal treasures.

In His Name we pray.

AMEN

APPENDIX V
LITURGICAL FORMS (revised text)
FORM FOR THE BAPTISM OF INFANTS

Doctrine of Baptism	Beloved congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, the doctrine of holy baptism is summarized as follows:
Eph 2:3 Jn 3:3, 5	First, we and our children are conceived and born in sin and are therefore by nature children of wrath, so that we cannot enter the kingdom of God unless we are born again. This is what the immersion in or sprinkling with water teaches us. It signifies the impurity of our souls, so that we may detest ourselves, humble ourselves before God, and seek our cleansing and salvation outside of ourselves.
Mt 28:19	Second, baptism signifies and seals to us the washing away of our sins through Jesus Christ. We are, therefore, baptized into the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
Rom 8:28	When we are baptized into the Name of the Father, God the Father testifies and seals to us that He establishes an eternal covenant of grace with us. He adopts us for His children and heirs, and promises to provide us with all good and avert all evil or turn it to our benefit.
Rom 6:5	When we are baptized into the Name of the Son, God the Son promises us that He washes us in His blood from all our sins and unites us with Him in His death and resurrection. Thus we are freed from our sins and accounted righteous before God.
Rom 8:5	When we are baptized into the Name of the Holy Spirit, God the Holy Spirit assures us by this sacrament that He will dwell in us and make us living members of Christ, imparting to us what we have in Christ, namely, the cleansing from our sins and the daily renewal of our lives,
Eph 5:27	till we shall finally be presented without blemish among the assembly of God's elect in life eternal.
Mt 22:37 1 Jn 2:15 Eph 4:22 Col 3:5	Third, since every covenant contains two parts, a promise and an obligation, we are, through baptism, called and obliged by the Lord to a new obedience. We are to cleave to this one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, to trust Him and to love Him with our whole heart, soul, and mind, and with all our strength. We must not love the world but put off our old nature and lead a God-fearing life. And if we sometimes through weakness fall into sins, we must not despair of God's mercy nor continue in sin, for baptism is a seal and trustworthy testimony that we have an eternal covenant with God.
Gen 17:7	Although our children do not understand all this, we may not therefore exclude them from baptism. Just as they share without their knowledge in the condemnation of Adam, so are they, without their knowledge, received into grace in Christ. For the LORD spoke to Abraham, the father of all believers, and thus also speaks to us and our children, saying, <i>I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you.</i>
Acts 2:39	Peter also testifies to this when he says, <i>For the promise is to you and to your children and to all that are far off, every one whom the Lord our God calls to Him.</i> Therefore, in the old dispensation God commanded that infants be circumcised. This circumcison was a seal of the covenant and of the righteousness of faith. Christ also <i>took them in His arms and blessed them, laying His hands upon them.</i>
Rom 4:13 Mk 10:16	In the new dispensation baptism has replaced circumcison. Therefore, infants must be baptized as heirs of the kingdom of God and of His covenant, and as
Col 2:11	

they grow up, their parents have the duty to instruct them in these things.

In order that we may now administer this holy sacrament of God to His glory, for our comfort and to the upbuilding of the congregation, let us call upon His holy Name.

**Prayer
before
Baptism**

Almighty, eternal God, in Thy righteous judgment Thou hast punished the unbelieving and unrepentant world with the flood, but in Thy great mercy hast saved and protected the believer Noah and his family. Thou hast drowned the obstinate pharaoh and all his host in the Red Sea, but led Thy people Israel through the midst of the sea on dry ground. Thus Thou hast signified baptism. We therefore pray Thee that Thou in Thy infinite mercy wilt graciously look upon this child of Thine and incorporate him (her) by Thy Holy Spirit into Thy Son Jesus Christ, so that he (she) may be buried with Him by baptism into death and raised with Him to walk in newness of life. We pray that he (she), following Him day by day, may joyfully bear his (her) cross and cleave to Him in true faith, firm hope and ardent love. Grant that he (she), comforted in Thee, may leave this life, which is no more than a constant death, and at the last day may appear without terror before the judgment seat of Christ Thy Son. All this we ask through Him, our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, who with Thee and the Holy Spirit, one only God, lives and reigns forever. Amen.

**Address to
the Parents**

Beloved in Christ the Lord, you have heard that baptism is an ordinance of the Lord our God to seal to us and our children His covenant; we must therefore use this sacrament for that purpose and not out of custom or superstition. That it may be clear, then, that you desire baptism for the right purpose, you are to answer sincerely the following questions:

First, do you confess that our children, though conceived and born in sin, and therefore subject to all sorts of misery, even to condemnation, are sanctified in Christ and thus as members of His Church ought to be baptized?

Second, do you confess that the doctrine of the Old and New Testament, summarized in the confessions and taught here in this Christian Church, is the true and complete doctrine of salvation?

Third, do you promise as father and mother to instruct your child in this doctrine, as soon as he (she) is able to understand, and to have him (her) instructed therein to the utmost of your power?

What is your answer?

Answer

I do (to be answered by each parent).

Baptism

_____, I baptize you into the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Prayer of
Thanksgiving**

Almighty, merciful God and Father, we thank and praise Thee that Thou hast forgiven us and our children all our sins through the blood of Thy beloved Son Jesus Christ. Thou hast received us through Thy Holy Spirit as members of Thy only Son Jesus Christ, and so adopted us to be Thy children. Thou hast sealed and confirmed this to us by holy baptism.

We pray Thee through Thy beloved Son that Thou wilt always govern this child by Thy Holy Spirit, that he (she) may be nurtured in the Christian faith and in godliness, and may grow and increase in the Lord Jesus Christ. Grant that he (she) thus may acknowledge Thy

fatherly goodness and mercy, which Thou hast shown to him (her) and to us all. May he (she) live in all righteousness under our only Teacher, King, and High Priest, Jesus Christ, and valiantly fight against and overcome sin, the devil, and his whole dominion. May he (she) forever praise and magnify Thee and Thy Son Jesus Christ together with the Holy Spirit, the one only true God. AMEN.

FORM FOR THE BAPTISM OF ADULTS

(Those who were not baptized in their infancy, and at a later age declare that they desire Christian baptism, must first be thoroughly instructed in the essentials of the Christian doctrine. After having confessed this doctrine before the overseers, they shall be admitted to the public profession of their faith and to baptism. For the administration of their baptism the following form shall be used.)

Doctrine of Baptism

Eph 2:3
Jn 3:3, 5

Beloved congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, the doctrine of holy baptism is summarized as follows:

First, we and our children are conceived and born in sin and are therefore by nature children of wrath, so that we cannot enter the kingdom of God unless we are born again. This is what the immersion in or sprinkling with water teaches us. It signifies the impurity of our souls, so that we may detest ourselves, humble ourselves before God, and seek our cleansing and salvation outside of ourselves.

Mt 28:19

Second, baptism signifies and seals to us the washing away of our sins through Jesus Christ. We are therefore baptized into the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Rom 8:28

When we are baptized into the Name of the Father, God the Father testifies and seals to us that He establishes an eternal covenant of grace with us. He adopts us for His children and heirs and promises to provide us with all good and avert all evil or turn it to our benefit. When we are baptized into the Name of the Son, God the Son promises us that He washes us in His blood from all our sins and unites us with Him in His death and resurrection. Thus we are freed from our sins and accounted righteous before God.

Rom 6:5

When we are baptized into the Name of the Holy Spirit, God the Holy Spirit assures us by this sacrament that He will dwell in us and make us living members of Christ, imparting to us what we have in Christ, namely, the cleansing from our sins and the daily renewal of our lives, till we shall finally be presented without blemish among the assembly of God's elect in life eternal.

Eph 5:27

Mt 22:37
1 Jn 2:15
Eph 4:25
Col 3:5

Third, since every covenant contains two parts, a promise and an obligation, we are, through baptism, called and obliged by the Lord to a new obedience. We are to cleave to this one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, to trust in Him and to love Him with our whole heart, soul, and mind, and with all our strength. We must not love the world but put off our old nature and lead a God-fearing life. And if we sometimes through weakness fall into sins, we must not despair of God's mercy nor continue in sin, for baptism is a seal and trustworthy testimony that we have an eternal covenant with God.

Mk 1:4, 5

Although the children of believers are not able to understand these things, they must be baptized by virtue of the covenant. Adults, however, may not be baptized unless they, conscious of their sins, repent and profess their faith in Christ. For this reason John the Baptist, following the command of God, preached a *baptism of repentance*

Lk 3:3

Mt 28:19

Mk 16:16

Acts 2:38

Acts 8:36, 37

Acts 10:47, 48

Acts 16:14, 15

Acts 16:31-33

for the forgiveness of sins and only those who confessed their sins were baptized. Our Lord Jesus Christ also commanded His apostles *to go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*, adding the promise, *He who believes and is baptized will be saved.*

According to this rule the apostles baptized only those adults who had repented and professed their faith. Therefore also today no other adults should be baptized than those who have learned to understand, by the preaching and instruction of the Gospel, the glorious contents of holy baptism, and are thus able to give account of their faith by personal profession.

In order that we may now administer this holy sacrament of God to His glory, for our comfort, and to the upbuilding of the congregation, let us call upon His holy Name.

**Prayer
before
Baptism**

Almighty, eternal God, in Thy righteous judgment Thou hast punished the unbelieving and unrepentant world with the flood, but in Thy great mercy hast saved and protected the believer Noah and his family. Thou hast drowned the obstinate pharaoh and his entire host in the Red Sea, but led Thy people Israel through the midst of the sea on dry ground. Thus Thou hast signified baptism.

We therefore pray Thee that Thou in Thy infinite mercy wilt graciously look upon this brother (sister), and incorporate him (her) by Thy Holy Spirit into Thy Son Jesus Christ, so that he (she) may be buried with Him by baptism into death and raised with Him to walk in newness of life.

We pray that he (she), following Him day by day, may joyfully bear his (her) cross and cleave to Him in true faith, firm hope, and ardent love. Grant that he (she), comforted in Thee, may leave this life, which is no more than a constant death, and at the last day may appear without terror before the judgment seat of Christ Thy Son.

All this we ask through Him, our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, who with Thee and the Holy Spirit, one only God, lives and reigns forever. Amen.

**Public
Profession
of Faith**

Beloved brother (sister) _____, you desire to receive holy baptism as a seal of your incorporation into the Church of God. You have been instructed by us in the Christian religion and have made profession of it before the overseers. It must become clear to all that you not only accept the Christian doctrine, but also intend, by the grace of God, to live according to it. Therefore, we ask you to answer sincerely the following questions before God and His Church.

First, do you believe in the one and only true God, distinct in three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who has created of nothing heaven and earth, with all that is in them, and still upholds and governs them so that nothing happens without His divine will?

Second, do you believe that you were conceived and born in sin and are therefore by nature a child of wrath, totally unable to do any good and inclined to all evil? Do you confess that you have often transgressed the commandments of the Lord in thought, word, and deed, and do you sincerely repent of these your sins?

Third, do you believe that Jesus Christ, who is both true and eternal God and true man, who assumed His human nature from the virgin Mary, is given by God as your Saviour? Believing in Him, do you confess that you receive the remission of sins in His blood and that by the power of the Holy Spirit you have become a member of Jesus Christ and His Church?

Fourth, do you wholeheartedly agree with the doctrine of the Word of God summarized in the confessions and taught here in this Christian Church? Do you promise to continue steadfastly in this doctrine to the end of your life, and do you reject all heresies and errors conflicting with this doctrine? Do you promise to persevere in the fellowship of this Christian Church and be diligent in the hearing of the Word of God and in the use of the holy sacraments?

Fifth, do you firmly resolve, as is proper for a member of Christ and His Church, always to lead a Christian life and not to love the world and its evil desires? Do you promise to submit willingly to the Christian admonition and discipline of the Church, if it should happen, and may God graciously prevent it, that you become delinquent either in doctrine or in conduct?

_____, what is your answer?

Answer

I do.

Our merciful God grant you His grace and blessing to fulfill this your holy intention through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Baptism

_____, I baptize you into the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Prayer of
Thanksgiving**

Almighty, merciful God and Father, we thank and praise Thee that Thou hast forgiven us and our children all our sins through the blood of Thy beloved Son Jesus Christ. Thou hast received us through Thy Holy Spirit as members of Thy only Son Jesus Christ and so adopted us to be Thy children. Thou hast sealed and confirmed this to us by holy baptism.

We beseech Thee through Thy beloved Son that Thou wilt always govern this brother (sister) by Thy Holy Spirit, that he (she) may live a truly Christian and godly life and grow in the Lord Jesus Christ. Grant that he (she) may acknowledge Thy fatherly goodness and mercy, which Thou hast shown to him (her) and to us all. May he (she) live in all righteousness under our only Teacher, King, and High Priest, Jesus Christ, and valiantly fight against and overcome sin, the devil, and his whole dominion. May he (she) forever praise and magnify Thee and Thy Son Jesus Christ together with the Holy Spirit, the one only true God. Amen.

FORM FOR THE PUBLIC PROFESSION OF FAITH

Address

Beloved in our Lord Jesus Christ, we thank the Lord our God for the grace given us by adopting us to be His children and receiving us into His covenant. We acknowledge His love and power, by which He instills in His children the desire publicly to profess their faith in Him in the presence of His holy Church so that they may receive admission to the holy supper.

Profession

Since you have now come here to make this profession before God and His holy Church, and hereby to receive admission to the holy supper, we ask you to answer sincerely to the following questions:

First, do you wholeheartedly believe the doctrine of the Word of God, summarized in the Confessions and taught here in this Christian Church? Do you promise by the grace of God steadfastly to continue in this doctrine in life and death, rejecting all heresies and errors conflicting with God's Word?

Second, do you acknowledge God's covenant promises, which have been signified and sealed to you in your baptism? Do you truly detest and humble yourself before God because of your sins and seek your life outside of yourself in Jesus Christ?

Third, do you declare that you love the Lord God and that it is your heartfelt desire to serve Him according to His Word, to forsake the world, and to crucify your old nature?

Fourth, do you firmly resolve to commit your whole life to the Lord's service as a living member of His Church? Do you promise to submit willingly to the admonition and discipline of the Church, if it should happen, and may God graciously prevent it, that you become delinquent either in doctrine or conduct?

_____, what is your answer?

Answer

I do.

1 Pet 5:10

After you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself restore, establish, and strengthen you. To Him be the dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

FORM FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Institution

1 Cor 11:23-29

Beloved in our Lord Jesus Christ, the holy supper has been instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ. Listen to the words of this institution as described by the apostle Paul in I Corinthians 11:23-29, *For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when He was betrayed took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said, "This is My body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of Me." In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes. Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a man examine himself, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For any one who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment upon himself.*

In order that we may now celebrate this holy supper of the Lord to our comfort, we must first rightly examine ourselves. Further, we must use it as Christ intended it, namely, to His remembrance.

Self-examination

True self-examination consists of the following three parts:

First, let everyone consider his sins and accursedness so that he, detesting himself, may humble himself before God. For the wrath of God against sin is so great that He could not leave it unpunished, but has punished it in His beloved Son Jesus Christ by the bitter and shameful death of the cross.

Second, let everyone search his heart whether he also believes the sure promise of God that all his sins are forgiven him only for the sake of the suffering and death of Jesus Christ and that the perfect righteousness of Christ is freely given him as his own, as if he himself had fulfilled all righteousness.

Third, let everyone examine his conscience whether it is his sincere desire to show true thankfulness to God with his entire life, and, laying aside all enmity, hatred and envy, to live with his neighbour in true love and unity.

**Invitation
and
Admonition**

1 Cor 6:9, 10

God will certainly receive in grace all who are thus minded and count them worthy to partake of the supper of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But those who do not feel this testimony in their hearts, eat and drink judgment upon themselves. Therefore, according to the command of Christ and of the apostle Paul, we admonish all those who know themselves to be guilty of the following offensive sins to abstain from the table of the Lord, and we declare to them that they have no part in the kingdom of Christ: all who refuse to trust in the LORD alone or serve Him in their own manner; all who abuse the Name of the LORD by cursing or in any other way; all who do not diligently attend the worship services and who despise the proclamation of God's Word or the sanctity of the sacraments; all who are disobedient to their parents or to others in authority over them; all who violate human life or cherish hatred against their neighbour and refuse to be reconciled to him; all who, either within or outside of holy wedlock, do not keep their bodies pure; all who by stealing, greed, or extravagance, lead a worldly life; all liars, backbiters, and slanderers; briefly, all who either in word or conduct show themselves to be unbelieving by leading an offensive life. While they persist in their sins, they shall not take of this food, which Christ has ordained only for His believers, otherwise their judgment and condemnation will be the heavier.

Ps 51:17

But all this, beloved brothers and sisters, is not meant to discourage broken and contrite hearts, as if only those who are without sin may come to the table of the Lord. For we do not come to this supper to declare that we are perfect and righteous in ourselves. On the contrary, we seek our life outside of ourselves in Jesus Christ and, in doing so, we acknowledge that we are dead in ourselves. We also are aware of our many sins and shortcomings. We do not have perfect faith and we do not serve God with such zeal as He requires. Daily we have to contend with the weakness of our faith and with the evil desires of our flesh. Yet, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, we are heartily sorry for these shortcomings and desire to fight against our unbelief and to live according to all the commandments of God. Therefore we may be fully assured that no sin or weakness which still remains in us against our will can prevent us from being received by God in grace and from being made worthy partakers of this heavenly food and drink.

**Remembrance
of Christ**

Lk 22:44

Col 2:14

Let us now consider for what purpose the Lord has instituted His supper; namely, that we are to use it in remembrance of Him. We remember Him in the following manner.

First of all, let us fully trust that the Lord Jesus Christ was sent by the Father into this world, according to the promises made from the beginning to the fathers in the Old Testament, and that He assumed our flesh and blood.

From the beginning of His incarnation to the end of His life on earth, He bore for us the wrath of God, under which we should have perished eternally. By His perfect obedience He has fulfilled for us all the righteousness of God's law. He did so especially when the weight of our sins and the wrath of God pressed out of Him the bloody sweat in the garden of Gethsemane. There He was bound that He might free us from our sins. He suffered countless insults that we might never be put to shame. He was innocently condemned to death that we might be acquitted at the judgment seat of God. He even let His blessed body be nailed to the cross that He might cancel the bond which stood against us because of our sins. By all this He has taken

Gal 3:13, 14	our curse upon Himself that He might fill us with His blessing. On the cross He humbled Himself, in body and soul, to the very deepest shame and anguish of hell. Then He called out with a loud voice,
Mt 27:46	<i>My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?</i> that we might be accepted by God and nevermore be forsaken by Him. Finally, by His death and the shedding of His blood, He confirmed the new and eternal testament, the covenant of grace, when He said, <i>It is finished.</i>
Jn 19:30	
Assurance	In order that we might firmly believe that we belong to this covenant of grace, the Lord Jesus Christ during His last Passover, instituted the holy supper. He gave the bread and the cup to His disciples in remembrance of Him, and He declared, saying: As often as you eat this bread and drink from this cup, you are reminded and assured of My hearty love and faithfulness towards you. It is a sure pledge that I have given My body and shed My blood for you: otherwise you would have suffered eternal death. I nourish and refresh your hungry and thirsty souls with My crucified body and shed blood to everlasting life as certainly as this bread is broken before your eyes and this cup is given to you and you eat and drink in remembrance of Me. From this institution of the holy supper of our Lord Jesus Christ we learn that He directs our faith and trust to His perfect sacrifice, once offered on the cross. It is the only ground for our salvation. Thereby He has become to our hungry and thirsty souls the true food and drink of life eternal. For by His death He has removed the cause of our eternal hunger and misery, which is sin, and obtained for us the life-giving Spirit. By this Spirit, who dwells in Christ as the Head and in us as His members, we have true communion with Him and share in all His riches, life eternal, righteousness, and glory.
Lk 22:19, 20	
Heb 9:12	
Acts 2:33	
Rom 8:11	
Fellowship	By the same Spirit we are also united in true brotherly love as members of one body. For the apostle Paul says, <i>Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.</i> As one bread is baked out of many grains and one wine is pressed out of many grapes, so we all, incorporated in Christ by faith, are together one body. For the sake of Christ, who so exceedingly loved us first, we shall now love one another, and shall show this to one another not just in words but also in deeds.
1 Cor 10:17	
1 Jn 4:10, 11, 19	
Expectation of Christ's Coming	Finally, Christ has commanded us to celebrate the holy supper until He comes. We receive at His table a foretaste of the abundant joy which He has promised and look forward to the marriage feast of the Lamb, when He will drink the wine new with us in the kingdom of His Father. Let us rejoice and give Him the glory, for the marriage feast of the Lamb is coming! May the almighty, heavenly God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ help us in this through His Holy Spirit. Amen.
Mk 14:25	
Rev 19:7	To receive all this, let us now humble ourselves before God in prayer and call upon Him in true faith.
Prayer	Merciful God and Father, we thank Thee that in this supper we cherish the blessed memory of the bitter death of Thy dear Son Jesus Christ. Work in our hearts through the Holy Spirit so that we may entrust ourselves more and more to Thy Son Jesus Christ. Grant that our contrite hearts may be nourished with His true body and blood, yes, with Him who is the only heavenly bread, that we may not live in our sins, but Christ in us and we in Him. Let us so truly be partakers of the new and everlasting testament, the covenant of grace, that we do not doubt that Thou wilt forever

be our gracious Father, nevermore imputing to us our sins but providing us with all things for body and soul as Thy dear children and heirs.

Grant us Thy grace that we may take up our cross joyfully, deny ourselves, and confess our Saviour. Let us in all tribulation await our Lord Jesus Christ who will come from heaven to change our lowly body to be like His glorious body and take us to Himself forever. Hear us through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

(or: through Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray,

Our Father who art in heaven,

Hallowed be Thy Name,

Thy kingdom come,

Thy will be done,

On earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;

And forgive us our debts,

As we also have forgiven our debtors;

And lead us not into temptation,

But deliver us from the evil one,

*For Thine is the kingdom and the power
and the glory, for ever. Amen.)*

**Profession
of Faith**

Let us now profess our catholic, undoubted Christian faith. (The Apostles' Creed may be recited by the minister, said in unison, or sung by the congregation).

Exhortation

Brothers and sisters, in order that we may now be nourished with Christ, the true heavenly bread, we must not cling with our hearts to the outward symbols of bread and wine, but lift our hearts on high in heaven, where Christ, our advocate, is, at the right hand of His heavenly Father. Let us not doubt that we shall be nourished and refreshed in our souls with His body and blood through the working of the Holy Spirit, as truly as we receive the holy bread and drink in remembrance of Him.

Rom 8:34

Communion

(When he breaks the bread, the minister shall say.)

The bread which we break is the communion of the body of Christ. Take, eat, remember and believe that the body of our Lord Jesus Christ was broken for the complete forgiveness of all our sins.

(And when he gives the cup:)

The cup of blessing, for which we give thanks, is the communion of the blood of Christ. Take, drink from it, all of you, remember and believe that the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ was poured out for the complete forgiveness of all our sins.

(During the communion some suitable portion of Scripture may be read and a psalm or hymn be sung.)

Doxology

(After the communion, the minister shall say:)

Beloved in the Lord, since the Lord has now nourished our souls at His table, let us together praise His holy Name. Let everyone say in his heart:

Ps 103:1-4

Ps 103:8-13

Bless the LORD, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy Name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits, who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the Pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy.

The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. He will not always chide, nor will He keep His anger

for ever. He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor requite us according to our iniquities. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His steadfast love toward those who fear Him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does He remove our transgressions from us. As a father pities his children, so the LORD pities those who fear Him.

Rom 8:32 *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?*

Rom 5:8-10 *But 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. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by His life. Therefore my heart and my mouth shall proclaim the praise of the Lord, from now on and for evermore. Amen.*

Thanksgiving Merciful God and Father, we thank Thee that in Thy boundless mercy Thou hast given us Thy only begotten Son as our Mediator. We praise Thee that He is the sacrifice for our sins and our food and drink to life eternal.

We thank Thee that Thou givest us a true faith, through which we may share in such great benefits.

Through Thy Son Thou has instituted the holy supper for the strengthening of our faith. We beseech Thee, faithful God and Father, that by Thy Holy Spirit this celebration may lead to our daily increase in true faith and fellowship with Christ, Thy beloved Son.

In His Name we pray. Amen.

ABBREVIATED FORM FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER (for the second service)

Institution Brothers and sisters, the apostle Paul describes the institution of the holy supper in 1 Corinthians 11:23-29.

1 Cor 11:23-29 *For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when He was betrayed took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said, "This is My body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of Me." In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes. Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a man examine himself, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For any one who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment upon himself.*

Self-examination If we are to celebrate the holy supper for the strengthening of our faith, we must first examine ourselves.

Let everyone consider his sins and accursedness that he may humble himself before God.

Let everyone examine his heart whether he believes the sure promise of God that all his sins are forgiven him only for the sake of the suffering and death of Jesus Christ and that the perfect righteousness of Christ is freely given him as his own. Finally, let everyone deter-

mine whether he intends gratefully to serve the Lord with his entire life and to live in true love and harmony with his neighbour.

**Invitation
and
Admonition**

All who by the grace of God repent of their sins, desiring to fight against their unbelief and live according to God's commandments, will certainly be received by God at the table of His Son Jesus Christ. They may be fully assured that no sin or weakness which still remains in them against their will shall keep God from accepting them in grace and granting them this heavenly food and drink. But to all who do not truly grieve over their sins and do not repent from them, we declare that they have no part in the kingdom of Christ. We admonish them to abstain from the holy supper, otherwise their judgment will be the heavier.

**Remembrance
of Christ**

Christ has commanded us to use this supper in remembrance of Him. At this table we remember that our Lord was sent by the Father into the world, assumed our flesh and blood, and from the beginning to the end of His life bore for us the wrath of God. He was bound that we might be set free. He was innocently condemned to death that we might be acquitted at the judgment seat of God. He let His blessed body be nailed to the cross and so took our curse upon Himself to fill us with His blessing. He was forsaken by God that we might nevermore be forsaken by Him. By His death and the shedding of His blood He confirmed the new and everlasting covenant of grace when He said, *It is finished.*

Jn 19:30

Assurance

Therefore, as often as we eat this bread and drink of this cup, we are reminded and assured of Christ's hearty love towards us. He died on the cross and shed His blood for us that He might feed our hungry and thirsty souls unto eternal life with His crucified body and shed blood, as truly as we receive this bread and drink in remembrance of Him.

Fellowship

Truly, by His suffering and death Christ has obtained for us the Spirit of life. By this Spirit we are united with Him and receive all His gifts. The same Spirit unites us in brotherly love as members of one body. Therefore we all, incorporated into Christ by true faith, are one body and shall show this to one another not just in words but also in deeds.

1 Cor 10:17

**Expectation
of Christ's
Coming**

Finally, Christ has commanded us to celebrate the holy supper until He comes. We receive at His table a foretaste of the abundant joy which He has promised and look forward to the marriage feast of the Lamb, when He will drink the wine new with us in the Kingdom of His Father.

Rom 19:7

Let us rejoice and give Him the glory, for the marriage feast of the Lamb is coming!
Let us pray.

Prayer

Gracious God and Father, we thank Thee that Thou hast given us Thy only Son as a sacrifice for our sins and as our food and drink unto eternal life. We pray Thee, work in our hearts by Thy Holy Spirit through this supper so that, entrusting ourselves more and more to Thy Son Jesus Christ, we may not live in our sins, but He in us and we in Him. Strengthen our faith that Thou wilt forever be our gracious Father, who gives us all things necessary for body and soul. Grant us Thy grace that we joyfully take up our cross, deny ourselves, and confess our Saviour. Teach us to expect our Lord Jesus Christ from heaven, who will

change our lowly body to be like His glorious body and take us to Himself in eternity. Amen.

Exhortation In order to be nourished with Christ, the true heavenly bread, let us not cling to the outward symbols of bread and wine, but lift up our hearts to Jesus Christ, our advocate at the Father's right hand. Let us firmly believe that we will be nourished with His body and blood as certainly as we receive this bread and drink in remembrance of Him.

Communion (When he breaks the bread, the minister shall say:)
The bread which we break is the communion of the body of Christ. Take, eat, remember and believe that the body of our Lord Jesus Christ was broken for the complete forgiveness of all our sins.
(And when he gives the cup:)
The cup of blessing, for which we give thanks, is the communion of the blood of Christ. Take, drink from it, all of you, remember and believe that the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ was poured out for the complete forgiveness of all our sins.
(During the communion some suitable portion of Scripture may be read and a psalm or hymn be sung.)

Doxology (After the communion the minister shall say:)
Beloved in the Lord, now that the Lord has nourished us at His table, let us together praise His Name with thanksgiving.
Ps 103:1-4: *Bless the LORD. O my soul: and all that is within me, bless His holy*
Ps 103:8-13 *Name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits, who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the Pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy.*
The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. He will not always chide, nor will He keep His anger for ever. He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor requite us according to our iniquities. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His steadfast love toward those who fear Him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does He remove our transgressions from us. As a father pities his children, so the LORD pities those who fear Him.

Therefore my heart and my mouth shall proclaim the praise of the Lord, from now on and for evermore. Amen.

Thanksgiving Merciful God and Father, We thank Thee for the opportunity to partake of the Supper of Thy Son Jesus Christ, by eating of the bread and drinking of the cup, and so proclaiming the death of our Lord as the only ground of our salvation.
We praise Thee that Thou givest us the privilege to rejoice in the communion of Thy Son, as well as in the fellowship with one another. We also beseech Thee that we, being strengthened in faith by the celebration of this sacrament, may bring forth fruits of thankfulness. Cause us to show in our whole life our heartfelt love towards Thee and towards each other.
Grant that with ardent expectation we may await the return of our Saviour who promised that He would drink with us of the fruit of the vine in the kingdom of His Father.
To Thee, Father, be all glory, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

AMEN

FORM FOR THE EXCOMMUNICATION OF NON-COMMUNICANT MEMBERS

First Announcement	Beloved in the Lord, the consistory has the sad duty of informing the congregation that a brother (sister), by baptism ingrafted into the Christian Church, is guilty of sin against the . . . commandment and that he (she), in spite of many earnest admonitions, did not show evidence of true repentance. Therefore the consistory, to its great sorrow, is obliged to deal further with this brother (sister), and, if he (she) persists in his (her) sin, to proceed to his (her) excommunication. The consistory is making this known to you for the first time and seriously exhorts you to pray for him (her) continually, that it might please the Lord to bring him (her) to repentance.
Second Announcement	Beloved in the Lord, the consistory, having taken the advice of Classis, has the sad duty of informing the congregation that _____, by baptism ingrafted into the Christian Church, in spite of continual earnest admonitions, obstinately persists in sinning against the . . . commandment. Unless he (she) within . . . shows repentance and amendment of life, the consistory will be obliged to exclude this brother (sister) from the communion of the Church because of his (her) wilful disobedience to the covenant of God. The congregation is exhorted to admonish this member with affection and to pray the Lord for his (her) conversion.
The Excom- munication	Beloved in the Lord, the consistory previously had the sad duty of informing the congregation that _____, by baptism ingrafted into the Christian Church, in spite of continual earnest admonitions, obstinately persisted in sinning against the . . . commandment, and that the consistory would be obliged to exclude this brother (sister) from the communion of the Church, unless he (she) showed repentance and amendment of life. The consistory must now inform the congregation that _____, in spite of many earnest admonitions, obstinately denies the communion with Christ and His Church, which was signified and sealed to him (her) in holy baptism. Therefore, we as the elders of the Church of God in this place, assembled in the Name and authority of Jesus Christ, our Lord, declare before you all that for these reasons we hereby excommunicate _____ from the Church of the Lord and that, as long as he (she) persists obstinately and impenitently in his (her) sins, he (she) is excluded from the fellowship of Christ and all the spiritual blessings and benefits which God promises to and bestows upon His Church; and that he (she) is therefore to be accounted by you as a <i>Gentile and an outcast</i> , according to the command of Christ, who says that whatsoever His ministers shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven. Further we exhort you, beloved Christians, not to associate with him (her) that he (she) may be ashamed. Do not look on him (her) as an enemy but warn him (her) as a brother (sister). In the meantime, take care lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, departing from the living God. <i>Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honour your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise). "that it may be well with you and that you may live long on the earth." Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. You that are younger be subject to the elders.</i> <i>Do not love the world or the things in the world. If any one loves the</i>
Mt 18:17, 18	
2 Thess 3:14, 15	
Heb 3:12 Eph 6:1-4	
1 Pet 5:5 1 Jn 2:15-17	

world, love for the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world passes away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides for ever.

Phil 2:13

But since it is God who works in us both to will and to work for His good pleasure, let us call upon His holy Name with confession of our sins.

Prayer

Righteous God and merciful Father, before Thy holy majesty we accuse ourselves because of our sins. We acknowledge that we have deserved the sorrow and grief caused by the excommunication of our brother (sister). Yes, we all are worthy to be excluded from Thy presence because of our many transgressions.

But, O Lord, be gracious to us for Christ's sake. We repent of our sins and ask for forgiveness. Work in us by Thy Spirit, so that we may endeavour to serve Thee more and more. Grant that we may shun the pollution by the world and by those who have strayed from Thee.

Grant that the excluded member may become ashamed of his (her) sins and return to Thee, for Thou hast no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Therefore we, Thy people, will always welcome those who return to Thee. Kindle in our hearts love and zeal that, by our admonitions as well as by our example, this excommunicated brother (sister) and others who live in unbelief may be brought back to Thee.

Bless our endeavours, that we may have reason to rejoice again over him (her) for whom we now must mourn, so that in this way Thy holy Name be praised, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

(or: through our Lord Jesus Christ who taught us to pray.

Our Father, who art in heaven,

Hallowed be Thy Name,

Thy kingdom come,

Thy will be done,

On earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;

And forgive us our debts,

As we also have forgiven our debtors;

And lead us not into temptation,

But deliver us from the evil one,

For Thine is the kingdom and the power

and the glory, for ever. Amen.)

FORM FOR THE EXCOMMUNICATION OF COMMUNICANT MEMBERS

First

Announcement

Beloved in the Lord, the consistory informs you with sorrow, that a brother (sister) of the congregation has become guilty of sin against the . . . commandment.

In spite of several earnest admonitions, there is no evidence of repentance. Therefore the consistory had to suspend him (her) from the communion of the table of the Lord.

However, this did not lead to repentance. Continuing admonitions also proved fruitless.

To its great sorrow the consistory is now obliged to exercise further discipline, and will have to proceed to the excommunication of this brother (sister) if he (she) persists in his (her) sin.

We make this known to you for the first time, and seriously exhort

you to pray the Lord that He may bring this member of the body to repentance.

**Second
Announcement**

Beloved in the Lord, with sorrow the consistory has informed you previously that a brother (sister) has become guilty of sin against the . . . commandment. You then heard that he (she) was suspended from the holy supper because he (she) refused to repent. In spite of continued discipline no true repentance has become apparent. On the contrary, all admonitions remained fruitless. The only result was a further hardening of heart.

We have asked the advice of Classis and now inform you with sorrow that we will proceed with the excommunication.

We seriously exhort you to admonish this sinner continually in love. His (her) name and address are _____

Pray the Lord that He may bring this brother (sister) to repentance, that this sin may be banned from the congregation and the sinner be saved.

**Third
Announcement**

Beloved in the Lord, the consistory had the sad duty to inform you already twice that brother (sister) _____ has become guilty of sinning against the . . . commandment. You also heard that he (she) refused to repent and further hardened his (her) heart, so that he (she) had to be suspended from the holy supper. Yet, no true repentance was shown. On the contrary, all admonitions remained fruitless. Therefore, to our great sorrow, we now inform you for the third time that we have to deal further with this brother (sister). If he (she) does not come to repentance, he (she) will be excluded from the communion of the Church of Christ on

For the last time we call upon you to admonish him (her) most urgently and in love.

Pray the Lord that it may please Him to lead this brother (sister) to repentance, so that he (she) may not harden himself (herself) to the utmost.

**The Excom-
munication**

Beloved in the Lord Jesus Christ, the consistory has informed you that brother (sister) _____ has persisted in a life of sin. The purpose of these announcements was that by your prayers and admonitions he (she) might turn to the living God and thus be delivered from the power of Satan, who has taken him (her) captive. But, to our deep sorrow, no one has informed us of the least evidence of true repentance, although he (she) was warned by many. His (her) guilt, which was already serious, has only become all the heavier because of his (her) persistence in sin.

We have shown much patience with him (her), but now we know ourselves bound to proceed to the ultimate remedy given us by the Lord in His Word, namely, exclusion from the communion of His Church. This excommunication is intended to make this brother (sister) ashamed of his (her) sins, and also to ensure that this corrupt member does not affect the whole body which is Christ's Church. Moreover, in this way the blaspheming of God's Name is prevented. Christ Jesus has assigned the exercise of discipline to His office-bearers with the words. *Truly I say to you, whatever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven.*

Mt 18:18

Therefore we, as the elders of the Church of God in this place, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ excommunicate _____ from the Church of the Lord, because he (she) obstinately persists in his (her) sin.

He (she) is now excluded from the fellowship of Christ and from His

	kingdom. He (she) may no longer use the sacraments. He (she) has no part any more in the spiritual blessings and benefits which Christ bestows upon His Church.
Mt 18:17	As long as he (she) persists in sin, <i>let him be to you as a Gentile and an outcast.</i>
Warning to the Congregation	We exhort you, beloved Christians, not to look on him (her) as an enemy. On the contrary, try to warn him (her) as a brother (sister). But do not associate with him (her), that he (she) may be ashamed and come to repentance.
2 Thess 3:14, 15	This excommunication, beloved, is a warning for us all. Let us fear the Lord and be cautious, for he who thinks he stands must take heed lest he fall. Continue in the true fellowship with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ, and also with all upright believers, so that we may obtain eternal salvation.
1 Cor 10:12	You have seen in what manner our excommunicated brother (sister) has lost the way: how he (she) began to fall and gradually came to ruin. Learn from this how subtle Satan is in bringing man to destruction, and how he causes him to despise God's Word and His sacraments.
2 Cor 2:11	Therefore, resist evil from the very beginning. <i>Lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.</i>
Heb 12:1, 2	<i>Be sober, be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking some one to devour.</i>
1 Pet 5:8	<i>Pray that you may not enter into temptation.</i>
Lk 23:46	<i>Today, when you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts.</i>
Heb 4:7	<i>Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. Let everyone repent of his sins lest our God humble us again and we have to grieve for another member of the body. Live with one accord in godliness; be our crown and joy in the Lord.</i>
Phil 2:13	Only the Lord, who <i>is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure</i> , is able to keep us in the way of His commandments. Let us, therefore, call upon His holy Name with confession of our sins.
Phil 2:12	
Prayer	Righteous God and merciful Father, before Thy holy majesty we accuse ourselves because of our sins. We acknowledge that we have deserved the sorrow and grief caused by the excommunication of our brother (sister). Yes, we all are worthy to be excluded from Thy presence because of our many transgressions.
	But, O Lord, be gracious to us for Christ's sake. We repent of our sins and ask for forgiveness. Work in us by Thy Spirit, so that we may endeavour to serve Thee more and more. Grant that we may shun the pollution by the world and by those who have strayed from Thee.
	Grant that the excluded member may become ashamed of his (her) sins and return to Thee, for Thou hast no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Therefore we, Thy people, will always welcome those who return to Thee. Kindle in our hearts love and zeal that, by our admonitions as well as by our example, this excommunicated brother (sister) and others who live in unbelief may be brought back to Thee.
	Bless our endeavours, that we may have reason to rejoice again over him (her) for whom we now must mourn, so that in this way Thy holy Name be praised, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.
	(or: through our Lord Jesus Christ who taught us to pray,

Our Father, who art in heaven,
 Hallowed be Thy Name,
 Thy kingdom come,
 Thy will be done,
 On earth as it is in heaven.
 Give us this day our daily bread;
 And forgive us our debts,
 As we also have forgiven our debtors;
 And lead us not into temptation,
 But deliver us from the evil one,
 For Thine is the kingdom and the power
 and the glory, for ever. Amen.)

FORM FOR THE READMISSION INTO THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

Announcement	<p>Beloved in the Lord, in the year . . . brother (sister) _____, was excommunicated from the Church of Christ.</p> <p>The consistory may now inform you with gratitude that this remedy has borne fruit. The Lord has blessed our admonitions and prayers, so that _____ has repented and has requested to be again received into the communion of the Church.</p> <p>It is the gracious will of God that we receive penitent sinners with joy. Since all things have to be done in good order, we inform you that at the next celebration of the holy supper we shall loose this man/woman from the bond of excommunication and readmit him (her) to the fellowship of the saints.</p> <p>If any of you should have valid reason against such readmission, he should give notice to the consistory within . . . week(s). Meanwhile let us thank the Lord, who has shown favour to this lost sheep, and let us beseech Him to perfect His work of conversion to eternal salvation.</p> <p>(If no lawful objection has been brought forward, the readmission shall take place with the following form.)</p>
1 Cor 14:40	
Readmission according to the Scriptures	<p>Beloved Christians, we have recently informed you of the conversion of _____, to the end that, with your approbation, he (she) might be received again into the Church of God.</p> <p>No one has brought forward any objection against this readmission, and therefore we will now receive him (her) again into the communion of saints.</p>
Mt 18:15-18	<p>The Lord Christ instructed His Church to excommunicate impenitent sinners and said, <i>Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven.</i> But He immediately added, <i>And whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.</i></p>
Ezek 33:11	<p>He taught us that excommunication does not take away all hope of salvation. For God has sworn by Himself, saying, <i>As I live, says the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live.</i></p>
2 Cor 2:5-7	<p>Therefore the Church keeps hoping and praying for the repentance and return of the lost sinner, always eager to receive the penitent. The apostle Paul commanded the congregation at Corinth to forgive and comfort the brother who had been reproved and had come to repentance, He exhorted them to reaffirm their love for him lest he should be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow.</p> <p>Christ also teaches us that the sentence of absolution, passed upon</p>

Mt 16:19 a repentant sinner according to the Word of God, is counted binding by the Lord. *Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.*

Jn 20:23 For this reason no one who truly repents needs to doubt in the least that he is certainly received by God in grace, as Christ has declared, saying: *If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven.*

Questions Before we proceed to the act of loosing the bond of excommunication and readmit you, _____, to the Church of Christ, we request you to answer the following questions.

_____ do you declare with all your heart, here before God and His Church, that you are sincerely sorry for the sin and stubbornness on account of which you were justly excluded from the Church? Do you also truly believe that God has forgiven all your sins for the sake of Christ's blood and now receives you in grace?

Do you, therefore, desire to be readmitted to the Church of Christ and do you promise, by the grace of the Lord, to live from now on in all godliness according to the Word of God?

Answer I do.

Readmission Assembled in the name and authority of Christ Jesus, we as the elders of the Church of God in this place absolve you, _____, from the bond of excommunication.

We receive you again into the Church of the Lord with joy and gratitude and declare that you share in the fellowship of Christ, of the holy sacraments, and of all spiritual gifts and blessings of our Saviour, which God promises to and bestows upon His Church. May the eternal God preserve you in this grace to the end, through His only Son Jesus Christ.

1 Thess 5:24 *He who calls you is faithful and He will do it. Amen.*

Charge Beloved brother (sister), be assured in your heart that the Lord Himself has received you in grace. Be diligent to guard yourself against the subtleties of Satan, the wickedness of the world, and the fallacies of the flesh, lest you again become entangled in sin. The love of Christ has brought you back; love Him for He has forgiven you much. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit again, who has promised in your baptism to dwell in you and to sanctify you to be a member of Christ. Beloved Christians, receive this brother (sister) in love. Rejoice and be thankful, for this brother (sister) was dead and is alive; he (she) was lost and is found.

Lk 15:32 Rejoice with the angels, for Christ said, *I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.* Look on him (her) no longer as a stranger but as a fellow citizen with the saints and a member of the household of God.

Eph 2:19 Since there is no good in ourselves, let us, with praise and thanksgiving, implore the Lord Almighty for His grace.

Prayer Gracious God and Father, we thank and praise Thee through Jesus Christ that Thou hast granted this brother (sister) godly grief and repentance unto life and hast caused us to rejoice in this.

We pray Thee, show him (her) Thy grace, that he (she) may become more and more assured of the complete remission of all sins, and may derive from that assurance unspeakable joy and delight to serve Thee.

Since for a time he (she) has grieved many by his (her) sins, grant

that he (she) now may edify many by his (her) conversion. Grant that he (she) may walk steadfastly in Thy ways till the end.

Teach us, Father, by this example that with Thee there is forgiveness, that Thou mayest be praised. Grant that we now with our brother (sister) may together serve Thee with childlike fear and obedience all the days of our life. through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with Thee and the Holy Spirit is the one only true God. Amen.

(or: through Jesus Christ our Lord, in whose Name we conclude our prayer:

Our Father, who art in heaven,

Hallowed be Thy Name,

Thy kingdom come,

Thy will be done,

On earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;

And forgive us our debts,

As we also have forgiven our debtors;

And lead us not into temptation,

But deliver us from the evil one,

*For Thine is the kingdom and the power
and the glory, for ever. Amen.)*

FORM FOR THE ORDINATION (OR INSTALLATION) OF MINISTERS OF THE WORD

Beloved in our Lord Jesus Christ, the consistory has now twice published the name of our brother _____, to learn if anyone had objections against his ordination to the ministry of the Word (or: installation as minister in this Church). Since no one has brought forward anything lawful against his doctrine and life, we will now in the Name of the Lord proceed to his ordination (or: installation).

Let us first hear what Holy Scripture teaches about the office of ministers of the Word.

Institution by Christ

Eph 4:11, 12

1 Pet 5:4

Acts 6:4

2 Cor 5:18-20

The exalted Christ gathers His Church through His Word and Spirit, and in His grace uses the ministry of man. The apostle Paul indicates this when he says, *And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.* As the Chief Shepherd, who unceasingly cares for His flock, He appoints shepherds to take heed to the flock in His Name. They are to take care of the sheep of Christ by means of the proclamation of the Word, by the administration of the sacraments, and by prayers and pastoral supervision. In this way the flock is tended and led in the right paths.

In the early Christian Church this task was fulfilled by the apostles. They, in turn, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, appointed elders in every Church. According to I Timothy 3:17 there were elders who ruled the congregation. Some of them were also called to labour in preaching and teaching. The latter are now called ministers of the Word. They have received the ministry of reconciliation, of which Paul speaks, saying, *All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to Himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. So we are ambassadors for Christ, God making His appeal*

through us. We beseech you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

Duties of the minister

The task of the minister of the Word can be described as follows:

Acts 20:27

First, he must declare the whole counsel of God to his congregation, proclaiming the Word according to the command of the apostle Paul: *I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word, be urgent in season and out of season, convince, rebuke and exhort, be unfailing in patience and in teaching.* After

Acts 20:20

the example of the apostle he is to perform this duty in public and from house to house. He shall expose all errors and heresies as unfruitful works of darkness, and exhort the membership to walk as children of the light. He shall teach the Word of God to the youth of the Church and to others whom God calls, for the holy Scriptures are able to instruct them for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. It is also his duty to visit the members of the congregation and to comfort the sick and sorrowing. Thus comforting and admonishing, he shall call the whole congregation to the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

2 Tim 3:15

Second, he is called to administer the sacraments, because Christ has joined this administration to the preaching of the gospel. It is therefore the duty of the minister of the Word to administer holy baptism according to the command of Christ, *Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.* He also is to administer the holy supper as instituted by Christ when He said, *Do this in remembrance of Me.*

Mt 28:19

1 Cor 11:24

Third, it is his duty as pastor and teacher of the congregation to call upon the Name of the Lord in public worship, *with supplications, prayers, intercessions and thanksgivings.*

1 Tim 2:1, 2

Fourth, it is the duty of the minister of the Word, with the elders as stewards of the house of God, to see to it that in the congregation all things are done in peace and good order. Together they shall supervise the doctrine and life of the membership and *tend the flock of God, not as domineering over those in their charge but being examples to the flock.* In so doing they are to shut and open the kingdom of God by Christian discipline, according to the charge given them by Christ. From all this we see what glorious work the ministers of the Word may perform. When the Chief Shepherd is manifested they as faithful servants will obtain the unfading crown of glory.

1 Cor 14:33

1 Pet 5:2, 3

1 Pet 5:4

Ordination (or: Installation)

Beloved brother _____, you are now about to enter upon your office. We ask you to answer the following questions before God and His holy Church.

First, do you feel in your heart that God Himself, through His congregation, has called you to this holy ministry?

Second, do you believe the Old and the New Testament to be the only Word of God and the complete doctrine of salvation? Do you reject all doctrines conflicting with it?

Third, do you promise faithfully to discharge the duties of your office and to adorn the doctrine of God with a godly life? Do you also promise to submit to the discipline of the Church in case you should become delinquent in doctrine or life?

What is your answer?

Answer

I do with all my heart.

***Laying on of Hands**

God, our heavenly Father, who has called you to this holy office, enlighten you with His Spirit and so govern you in your ministry, that you may fulfill it obediently, and that it may bear fruit to the honour of His Name and the expansion of the kingdom of His Son Jesus Christ. Amen.

Charge to the minister

Jn 21:6

1 Pet 5:2

1 Tim 4:12-16

1 Tim 5:17

1 Tim 2:3

1 Tim 4:14

1 Tim 4:16

Beloved brother in Christ, God our Father has obtained the Church for Himself with the blood of His own Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit has made you pastor and teacher of this congregation. Love Christ, *feed His lambs and tend His sheep, not by constraint but willingly, not for shameful gain but eagerly.* Take heed to yourself, *set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. Preach the pure doctrine,* so that by your preaching and teaching the congregation may be kept in obedience to the Word of God. *Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. Do not neglect the gift you have,* with which the Lord has endowed you for this ministry. Devote yourself to your duties with all your strength and with perseverance, *for by so doing you shall save both yourself and your hearers.*

Charge to the Congregation
Is 52:7

1 Thess 2:13

Heb 13:17

Mt 10:12, 13

Beloved brothers and sisters, the Lord has granted you this servant. Receive him with all joy. *How beautiful are the feet of him who brings good tidings!* Take heed to receive the Word of God, which you shall hear from him, and accept his words, spoken according to the Holy Scriptures, not as the word of man, *but as what it really is, the Word of God.*

Obey your leaders and submit to them; for they are keeping watch over your souls, as men who will have to give account. Let them do this joyfully, and not sadly, for that would be of no advantage to you. If you thus receive this servant from the Lord, the peace of God will come upon you, and you will inherit eternal life through Christ. Since we of ourselves are not capable of all this, we will call upon the Almighty God.

Prayer

Merciful Father, Thou art pleased to gather to Thyself out of the whole human race a Church chosen to life eternal. We thank Thee that Thou wilt gather this Church by the ministry of men, and that Thou givest this minister of the Word to this congregation. We pray Thee, wilt Thou by Thy Spirit equip him to the ministry to which Thou hast called him. Enlighten his mind that he may understand the Scriptures, and open his mouth that he may proclaim the mysteries of the gospel with boldness. Grant him wisdom and faithfulness to guide the flock in the right path and to keep them in Christian peace, that by his ministry and under his good leadership Thy Church may be preserved and increased.

Encourage and comfort him by Thy Spirit, so that he may remain steadfast in troubles and temptations during his ministry, and, finally, with all Thy faithful servants, may enter into the joy of his Lord. Grant that those entrusted to his pastoral care may acknowledge this servant as sent by Thee. Give that they may receive the instruction and admonition of Christ which this shepherd shall bring to them and that they may joyfully submit to his direction. Grant that through his ministry all may believe in Christ and thus inherit eternal life. Hear us, O Father, through Jesus Christ Thy Son, who with Thee and the Holy Spirit, one only God, lives and reigns forever. Amen.

*The laying on of hands shall not take place in the case of those who are already in the ministry.

FORM FOR THE ORDINATION (OR INSTALLATION) OF MISSIONARIES

Mt 24:14	Beloved in our Lord Jesus Christ, the consistory has now twice published the name of our brother _____, to learn if anyone had objections against his ordination (or: installation) as a missionary. Since no one has brought forward anything lawful against his doctrine and life, we will now in the Name of the Lord proceed to his ordination (or: installation).
Office	Let us first hear what Holy Scripture teaches about the office of those ministers of the Word who are set apart for the preaching of the gospel to those who are outside.
Rev. 5:9	God, our heavenly Father, in His good pleasure, gathers a Church from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. He calls them out of the corrupt race of man unto life eternal.
Jn 3:16, 17	For this purpose God sent His only Son into the world, who came as the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for the sheep, that they may have life and have it abundantly. He calls His sheep not only from Israel, but also from all the nations, and leads them to His fold, that there shall be one flock, one Shepherd.
Jn 10:10, 11, 16	In order to gather His Church, Christ has sent the Spirit as He promised, saying, " <i>When the Counsellor comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, He will bear witness to Me.</i> " The apostles were also witnesses, sent by Christ as the Father had sent Him: they testified that the Father had sent His Son as the Saviour of the world.
Acts 2:30	It is the calling of the Church, through this testimony of the apostles,
Jn 15:26, 27	to move people to believe in Christ crucified.
Jn 20:21, 22	From the time of the apostles, the Holy Spirit has commanded the Church to set men apart for the work to which He has called them. In order that this command may be fulfilled, the Lord Christ has now given to this congregation a minister of the Word.
1 Jn 4:14	
Duties of the Missionary	According to the mandate of the Lord Jesus Christ and His apostles, a missionary shall first of all preach the Word of God to those who are without Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant of promise. Thus he brings hope to those who have no hope and are without God in the world, that they, being far off, may come near through the blood of Christ.
Rom 10:14, 15, 17	God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. He has entrusted the ministry of reconciliation to men whom He made ambassadors of Christ. Therefore the missionary shall beseech men in the Name of Christ: <i>be reconciled to God.</i>
Acts 13:2	He must hold firm to the reliable Word of God, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to refute those who contradict it.
Duties of the Missionary	Second, he ought to baptize believers and their children into the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that the Lord has commanded His Church.
Eph 2:12, 13	And since the Lord Jesus has commanded His Church to proclaim His death until He comes, he shall also prepare the table of the Lord in the midst of the believers. It shall also be his duty to admonish the believers when they sin in doctrine and life and to deny them the use of the sacraments if they do not heed his admonitions, for the apostle Paul warned, <i>You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons.</i>
2 Cor 5:19, 20	
Tit 1:9	
Mt 28:19	
1 Cor 11:23, 26	
1 Cor 10:21	

<p>Acts 14:23 Tit 1:5, 6 1 Tim 2:2 Acts 20:28 1 Tim 5:22</p>	<p>Third, as soon as it becomes feasible he shall, in good order, ordain overseers and deacons, according to the charge and example of the apostle Paul; so that they, as faithful men who are able to teach others also, may guide the flock of the Lord, which He obtained with the blood of His Son. He shall, however, not be hasty in the laying on of hands, according to the warning of Paul to Timothy.</p> <p>In order that the apostles would be able to fulfill this charge, the Lord Christ, to whom has been given all authority in heaven and on earth, comforted and encouraged them, and in them His whole Church. with the promise, <i>And lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.</i> This promise shall stand until the holy city, the new Jerusalem, has come down out of heaven from God. Then the promise will be fulfilled that the nations shall walk by its light and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it. Therefore the Lord Christ calls those blessed who wash their robes that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates.</p>
<p>Mt 28:20</p> <p>Rev. 21:10 Rev. 21:23b, 24 Rev. 22:14</p>	<p>And now, beloved brother _____, you are about to enter upon your office, as it has been described.</p> <p>Therefore you are to answer the following questions before God and His holy Church.</p> <p>First, do you feel in your heart that God Himself through His congregation has called you to this holy ministry?</p> <p>Second, do you receive the Old and the New Testament as the only Word of God and the complete doctrine of salvation and do you reject all doctrines conflicting with it?</p> <p>Third, do you promise faithfully to discharge the duties of your office and to adorn the doctrine of God with a godly life? Do you also promise to do your work under the direction of and in close cooperation with the consistory of this Church? Do you promise to submit to the discipline of the Church, in case you should become delinquent in doctrine or life?</p> <p>What is your answer?</p>
<p>Ordination (or Installation)</p>	<p>I do with all my heart.</p>
<p>Answer</p> <p>*Laying on of Hands</p>	<p>God, our heavenly Father, who has called you to this holy office, enlighten you with His Spirit, and so govern you in your ministry that you may fulfill it obediently, and that it may bear fruit to the honour of His Name and the expansion of the kingdom of His Son Jesus Christ. Amen.</p>
<p>Charge to the Missionary</p> <p>2 Tim 1:8, 9 1 Pet 5:4</p>	<p>Beloved brother, go then in the power of the Holy Spirit to the work to which God, through His Church, has called you as a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. Do not be ashamed then of testifying to our Lord and take your share of suffering for the gospel in the power of God, who saved us and called us with a holy calling.</p> <p><i>And when the Chief Shepherd is manifested you will obtain the unfading crown of glory.</i></p>
<p>Charge to the Congregation</p> <p>2 Thess 3:1</p>	<p>Beloved brothers and sisters, the Lord has granted you this servant. Receive him with all joy. Beseech the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that He may guard him (together with his family) in all his (their) ways. Pray for him, that the Word of the Lord may speed on and triumph, as it did among you.</p> <p>Since we of ourselves are not capable of all this, we will call upon the Almighty God.</p>
<p>Prayer</p>	<p>Merciful Father, Thou art pleased to gather to Thyself out of the whole</p>

human race a Church chosen to life eternal. We thank Thee that Thou wilt gather this Church by the ministry of man and that Thou hast graciously provided this congregation with a faithful servant who is to labour in the ministry of Thy Word to those who are outside. We beseech Thee, wilt Thou by Thy Spirit equip him to the ministry to which Thou hast called him. Enlighten his mind that he may understand the Scriptures, and open his mouth that he may boldly proclaim Thy gospel, so that through his preaching many may come to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Grant him wisdom and perseverance in all difficulties and oppression which may confront him in his ministry. Guard him in all his ways. Grant him Thy grace, that he may remain steadfast to the end and with all Thy faithful servants may enter into the joy of his Lord.

Grant this congregation (and the cooperating Churches) Thy grace, that they may see what Thou art doing in this ministry and continually remember Thy servant in their prayers, in order that they may rejoice in the propagation of the gospel to the ends of the earth. Hear us, O merciful Father, through Thy dear Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

*The laying on of hands shall not take place in the case of those who are already in the ministry.

FORM FOR THE ORDINATION OF ELDERS AND DEACONS

Beloved congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, the consistory has now twice published the names of the brothers who were elected and appointed to the office of elder and deacon in this Church, to learn if anyone had objections to their ordination.

Since no one has brought forward anything lawful against their doctrine and life, we shall now in the Name of the Lord proceed to their ordination.

Let us first hear what Holy Scripture teaches about the offices of elders and deacons.

Institution

Ex 3:16

Ex 17:5

Num 11:16

Deut 27:1

Deut 31:9

Josh 20:4

Judg 8:16

Already in the old dispensation the people of God enjoyed the leadership and guidance of elders. The Lord told Moses to gather the elders of Israel together in Egypt and to inform them of His promises to deliver them from bondage. While these elders were with Moses in the desert, the Lord told him to select from their midst seventy men to bear the burden of the people with him. Together with Moses these elders had authority to command the people. At the end of his ministry, Moses gave to all the elders of Israel the law to rule God's people. Once in the promised land, these elders fulfilled their calling in every city.

In His unceasing care for His flock the Good Shepherd called apostles to be the foundation of His catholic Church.

Acts 14:23

Acts 15:23

Acts 16:4

Acts 20:28

The apostles, in turn, appointed elders in every Church with the cooperation of the congregation. Apostles and elders gathered together to take decisions to which the Churches had to submit. Paul charged the overseers to take heed to the flock in which the Holy Spirit had made them guardians.

1 Pet 5:2

Peter admonished the elders to tend the flock of God that is their charge.

Phil 1:1

In his epistle to the Philippians, the apostle Paul addressed the saints together with the overseers and deacons. In order that these offices

1 Tim 3:1-13
Tit 1:5-9

might remain, he also gave his fellow workers detailed instructions for selecting brothers to these offices of overseers and deacons. He directed Titus to appoint elders in every town. The New Testament calls these office-bearers not only presbyters or elders but also bishops or overseers as well as shepherds and guardians. The office of elder is, therefore, one of authority given by Christ. They are to fulfill their duties by reminding God's people of His ordinances and by exercising discipline over the disobedient, by caring for the flock and defending the sheep against the dangers that threaten them.

Mandate

1 Thess 2:11, 12
Tit 1:9

As for their mandate, the task of the elders is, 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.

For this purpose they shall faithfully 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.

Mt 18:17, 18

They shall exercise Christian discipline, according to the command of Christ, against those who show themselves unbelieving and ungodly and refuse to repent. They shall watch that the sacraments are not profaned.

1 Tim 4:4

Second, being stewards of the house of God, they are to take care that in the congregation all things are done decently and in good order. For this purpose they form, together with the minister of the Word, the consistory of the Church.

1 Pet 5:1-4

Together they tend the flock of God which is in their charge. They must prevent that anyone serves in the Church without having been lawfully called.

Third, it is their duty to assist the ministers of the Word with good counsel and advice. They are also charged with the supervision over the doctrine and conduct of these fellow servants. They shall permit no strange teaching, so that in every respect the congregation is edified by the pure doctrine of the gospel.

Acts 20:29-31
Jn 20:7-13

Therefore they must watch diligently that no wolves enter the sheepfold of the Good Shepherd.

2 Tim 3:14-17

To do their work well as shepherds of God's flock, the overseers should train themselves in godliness and diligently search the Scriptures, which are profitable in every respect, that the man of God may be equipped for every good work.

The Ministry of Mercy

Deut 14:28, 29;
16:11, 14;
24:19-21;
26:12, 13;
27:19

Jn 14:9

Mk 10:45

Mt 4:23, 24

Jn 13:15

Acts 2:46

Acts 4:32-37

Concerning the ministry of mercy, assigned to the deacons, the Lord impressed upon His people Israel the obligation to show mercy to the needy. God repeatedly commanded that the sojourner, the fatherless and the widow might eat within their towns and be filled. In the old dispensation the needy and suffering were protected and provided for by God's fatherly love: His ordinances taught the covenant people to imitate that love as beloved children.

The Lord Jesus Christ, who has shown us the Father, came into the world to serve. In His mercy He fed the hungry, healed the sick and showed compassion to the afflicted. Thus He gave an example that His Church should do likewise. The ministry of mercy, as assigned to the deacons, proceeds, therefore, from this love of our Saviour.

After the example of her Lord, the first Christian congregation took care that no one in her midst suffered want. To each was contributed according to need.

Mt 25:31-46
Rom 12:13
Also today the Lord calls on us to show hospitality, generosity, and mercy, so that the weak and needy may share abundantly in the joy of God's people.

Heb 13: 2, 16
1 Pet 4:9
No one in the congregation of Christ may live uncomforted under the pressure of sickness, loneliness and poverty.

Phil 1:1
For the sake of this service of love Christ has given deacons to His Church.

Acts 6:1-7
The apostles realized that they would have to give up preaching the Word of God if they had to give their full attention to the daily support of the needy. Therefore they assigned this duty to seven brothers chosen by the congregation. It is the responsibility of the deacons to see to the good progress of this service of charity in the Church. They shall acquaint themselves with existing needs and difficulties, and exhort the members of Christ's body to show mercy. They shall gather and manage the offerings and distribute them in Christ's Name, according to need. They are called to encourage and comfort with the Word of God those who receive the gifts of Christ's love. They shall promote with word and deed the unity and fellowship in the Holy Spirit which the congregation enjoys at the table of the Lord. In this way God's children will increase in love to one another and to all men.

Gal 6:10
1 Thess 3:12
2 Pet 1:7

Ordination
Beloved brothers, you are about to enter upon your respective offices. We request you to answer the following questions before God and His holy Church.

First, do you feel in your hearts that God Himself, through His congregation, has called you to these offices?

Second, do you believe the Old and New Testament to be the only Word of God and the complete doctrine of salvation? Do you reject all doctrines conflicting with it?

Third, do you promise to discharge faithfully the duties of your office and to adorn it with a godly life — you elders in the government of the Church — and you deacons in the ministry of mercy? Do you also promise to submit to the discipline of the Church in case you should become delinquent in doctrine or life?

What is your answer?

Answer
I do with all my heart. (to be answered by each personally).

The almighty God and Father grant you His grace, that you may faithfully and fruitfully discharge your offices. Amen.

Charge
You, elders, as good shepherds of Christ's flock and faithful watchmen over the house of God, be diligent in governing the Church, in comforting the distressed, and in admonishing the wayward. Take heed that the congregation abide by the pure doctrine and lead a godly life. *Tend the flock of God that is your charge, not by constraint but willingly, not for shameful gain but eagerly, not as domineering over those in your charge but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd is manifested you will obtain the unfading crown of glory.*

1 Pet 5:2-4

You, deacons, be faithful and diligent in the gathering of gifts and distribute them cheerfully to those who need assistance, especially to the widows and orphans. Let us do good to all men, especially to those of the household of faith. Support those who are burdened with cares or who are lonely. Give in your ministry of mercy a good example to the congregation of the service to which all are called by Christ Jesus.

Gal 6:10

1 Tim 3:9 Be all with one accord faithful in your offices. Hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. If you serve well, you will gain a good standing for yourselves, always have great confidence in the faith which is in Christ Jesus, and finally enter into the joy of your Master.

1 Tim 3:13 On the other hand, beloved brothers and sisters, receive these men as servants of God. Respect the overseers who labour among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you; esteem them very highly in love because of their work. *Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as men who will have to give account.*

1 Thess 5:12, 13 Take care that the deacons have sufficient means to fulfill their ministry. Be good stewards of all that the Lord has entrusted to you. Remember Christ, your example in serving the Church of God.

Heb 13:17 Since we are unable of ourselves to do all this let us call upon the Lord our God.

Prayer

Lord God and heavenly Father, it has pleased Thee for the edification of Thy Church to ordain overseers and deacons besides the ministers of the Word. We thank Thee that Thou hast given us men who are endowed with Thy Holy Spirit. Grant them more and more the gifts they need — wisdom, courage, discretion, and mercy — so that each of them may fulfill his office as it is pleasing to Thee. Give Thy grace to both elders and deacons that they may persevere in faithful service, without being hindered by trouble and sorrow or by persecution of the world. Grant that this people, over whom Thou has set them, may submit willingly to the good exhortation of the overseers and esteem them in love because of their work. Give us ardent love for each other. Grant that we may cheerfully provide the deacons with sufficient means, so that the needy may be liberally supplied. We beseech Thee that by the faithful service of everyone the kingdom of Thy Son may come and Thy Name be glorified, for Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, for ever. Amen.

FORM FOR THE SOLEMNIZATION OF MARRIAGE

Announcement The consistory announces that _____ and _____ have indicated their intention to enter into the married state, according to the ordinance of God. They desire to begin this holy state in the Name of the Lord and to complete it to His glory. If no lawful objection is brought forward, the ceremony will take place, the Lord willing, on

Introduction _____ and _____, since the consistory has duly made known to the congregation your desire to enter into the married state, and no lawful objection has been presented, we may now proceed to the solemnization of your marriage in the Name of the Lord.

The Institution of Marriage Let us first listen to a summary of what the Word of God teaches us about marriage. We find there that marriage is an institution of God which pleases Him and must therefore be held in honour among all. Heb 13:4 After God our Father made heaven and earth, He created man in Gen 1:27

Gen 2:18-24 His own image. And the LORD God said, *It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.* When the man did not find a helper fit for him among the other creatures of God, *the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh; and the rib which the LORD God had taken from the man He made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh.*

We therefore believe that the LORD also today gives husband and wife to one another, and, united by His hand, nothing shall separate them in this life.

Jn 2:1-11 Also our Lord Jesus Christ honoured marriage when He revealed His glory at the marriage feast at Cana. He teaches us that marriage is an institution of God and should not be broken, and said, *What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder.*

Mt 19:6 Since God has made marriage such a strong bond. He hates divorce, as also our Lord Jesus Christ shows when He says, *Whoever divorces his wife, except for fornication, and marries another, commits adultery.*

Mal 2:16 As the Lord forbids immorality, *each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband,* so that our bodies may be preserved as temples of the Holy Spirit and we may glorify God in our bodies.

The Profound Mystery

Eph 5:22-33 The apostle Paul teaches us that the unity of husband and wife in marriage is a profound mystery, as reflecting the relationship between Christ and His Church. As Christ is the Head of the Church, so the husband is the head of his wife. Christ loved His Church to the end, and gave Himself up for her, that she might be holy and without blemish. Likewise the husband shall love his wife as his own body, take care of her, and cherish her, as Christ does the Church. As the Church is subject to Christ, so the wife shall be subject in everything to her husband, respect him, and entrust herself to his loving care, following the example of godly women who trusted in God and were subject to their husbands.

1 Pet 3:5 Husband and wife shall assist each other in all good things, heartily forgiving one another their sins and shortcomings. United in love, they will more and more reflect in their marriage the unity of Christ and His Church.

1 Cor 7:28 Although it is true, as the apostle says, that those who marry will face trouble in this state and because of sin will experience many difficulties and afflictions, yet they may also believe the promise of God that they, as heirs of the grace of life, will always receive His aid and protection, even when they least expect it.

The Purpose of Marriage

Gen 1:28 The Word of God also teaches us about the purpose of marriage. First, husband and wife shall live together in sincere love and holiness, helping each other faithfully in all things that belong to this life and to the life to come.

Eph 6:4 Second, by marriage the human race is to be continued and increased, and under the blessing of God, husband and wife will be fruitful and multiply. If it pleases God to give them children, they shall nurture these children in the true knowledge and fear of the Lord. (The minister shall ask them to rise.)

The Duties of Marriage

1 Pet 3:7

Eph 4:28

Ps 128:1, 2

Ps 124:8

Bridegroom and Bride, hear from the Word of God what the Lord requires of you in marriage.

Bridegroom, know that God has set you to be the head of your wife. You shall love her as your own body, as Christ loved His Church and gave Himself up for her; guide, protect, and comfort your wife. Live with her wisely and honour her, because she is an heir to eternal life together with you; then your prayers will not be hindered. Work faithfully in your daily calling, that you may support your family and also help those in need.

Bride, you shall love your husband and be subject to him, as the Church is subject to Christ. Accept his guidance and assist him in all good things. Take proper care of your family and household, and live modestly, in faith, love, and holiness.

Assist each other always and be faithful to each other. Diligently fulfill the calling which the Lord has given you in the Church and in this world. Believe God's sure promise, *Blessed is every one who fears the LORD, who walks in His ways! You shall be happy, and it shall be well with you.*

_____ and _____, you have now heard what the Lord requires of you and what He has promised you. May our gracious God give you the strength and the faithfulness to live together as husband and wife in this manner and may *your help be in the Name of the LORD who made heaven and earth.*

(Minister: Will you now join right hands?)

The Marriage Vows

To the Bridegroom:

_____, do you declare here before the Lord and these witnesses that you take as your lawful wife _____, here present? Do you promise to love and guide her faithfully, to maintain her, and to live with her in holiness, according to the holy Gospel? Do you also promise never to forsake her, but to be true to her always, in good days and bad, in riches and poverty, in health and sickness, for as long as you both shall live?

What is your answer?

Answer

Answer: I do

To the Bride:

_____, do you declare here before the Lord and these witnesses that you take as your lawful husband _____, here present? Do you promise to love and obey him, to assist him, and to live with him in holiness, according to the holy Gospel? Do you also promise never to forsake him, but to be true to him always, in good days and bad, in riches and poverty, in health and sickness, for as long as you both shall live?

What is your answer?

Answer

Answer: I do.

Pronouncement

(Minister:) I now pronounce you husband and wife. The Father of all mercies, who by His grace called you to this holy state of marriage, bind you together in true love and faithfulness, and grant you His blessing. Amen.

Bridegroom and Bride, since we cannot expect anything from ourselves, you shall kneel before the Lord and we shall pray with you and for you that He may enable you to fulfill your vows and will grant you His blessing.

Intercession

Almighty and heavenly Father, Thou hast said from the beginning that man should not be alone. We thank and praise Thee that Thou

has given this brother and sister to each other in marriage. that they may be one.

We pray Thee, grant them Thy Holy Spirit that they may live together according to Thy will in true faith. Help them to resist the power of sin, and to live in holiness before Thee. Lift up Thy countenance upon them, and guide them in prosperity and adversity by Thy fatherly hand. Grant them Thy blessing according to the covenant promises given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. If it pleases Thee to give them children, confirm Thy covenant to them and to their seed; and grant them that they may nurture these children in the fear of the Lord, to the glory of Thy Name, and to the edification of the Church.

Let them live in communion with Thy Son, Jesus Christ, in the harmony of true love, and to the benefit of their neighbour. Cause them to look forward with all the Church to the great day of the marriage feast of the Lamb.

Hear us, merciful Father, for the sake of Jesus Christ, Thy beloved Son, who with Thee and the Holy Spirit, the only true God, lives and reigns for ever, Amen.

(or add:

Our Father, who art in heaven,

Hallowed be Thy Name,

Thy kingdom come,

Thy will be done,

On earth as it is in heaven,

Give us this day our daily bread;

And forgive us our debts,

As we also have forgiven our debtors;

And lead us not into temptation,

But deliver us from the evil one,

For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, for ever,

Amen.)

Benediction

Brother and sister _____, our Lord God bless you richly and grant you a long and holy life together in all godliness, love, and unity, AMEN.

APPENDIX VI
CHURCH ORDER OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
I. INTRODUCTION

ARTICLE 1. Purpose and Division

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.

These matters will be dealt with in the above-mentioned order.

II. OFFICES AND SUPERVISION OF DOCTRINE

ARTICLE 2. The Offices

The offices are those of the Minister of the Word, of the Elder, and of the Deacon.

ARTICLE 3. The Calling to Office

No one shall take any office upon himself without having been lawfully called thereto. Only those male members shall be eligible for office who have made profession of faith and may be considered to meet the conditions as set forth in Holy Scripture, e.g. in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1.

The election to any office shall take place with the cooperation of the congregation, after preceding prayers, and according to the regulations adopted for that purpose by the consistory with the deacons.

The consistory with the deacons shall be free to give the congregation the opportunity beforehand to draw the attention of the consistory to brothers deemed fit for the respective offices.

The consistory with the deacons shall present to the congregation either as many candidates as there are vacancies to be filled, or at the most twice as many, from which number the congregation shall choose as many as are needed.

Those elected shall be appointed by the consistory with the deacons in accordance with the adopted regulations.

Prior to the ordination or installation the names of the appointed brothers shall be publicly announced to the congregation for its approbation on at least two consecutive Sundays.

The ordination or installation shall take place with the use of the relevant forms.

ARTICLE 4. Eligibility for the Ministry

A. ELIGIBILITY

Only those shall be called to the office of minister of the Word who

1. Have been declared eligible for call by the Churches;
2. Are already serving in that capacity in one of the Churches; or
3. Have been declared eligible in, or are serving in one of the Churches with which the Canadian Reformed Churches maintain a sister-Church relationship.

B. DECLARED ELIGIBLE

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. This 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. Served in the 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.
3. Have been examined according to the rule described in Article 8.

C. CALLING TWICE

For a second call to the same minister in the same vacancy the approval of classis shall be required.

D. COUNSELLOR

When a vacant Church extends a call, the advice of the counsellor shall be asked.

ARTICLE 5. Ordination and Installation of Ministers of the Word

A. Regarding those who have not served in the ministry before, the following shall be observed:

1. They shall be ordained only after classis has approved the call. Classis shall approve the call
 - a. Upon satisfactory testimony concerning the soundness of doctrine and conduct of the candidate, signed by the consistory of the Church to which he belongs;
 - b. Upon a peremptory examination of the candidate by classis with satisfactory results. This examination shall take place with the cooperation and concurring advice of deputies of the regional synod.
2. For the ordination they shall show also to the consistory good testimonials concerning their doctrine and conduct from the Church(es) to which they have belonged since their preparatory examination.

B. Regarding those who are serving in the ministry the following shall be observed: 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, from the Church only, in case he remains within the same classis.

C. For the classical approbation 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.

D. For the classical approbation of a call shall further be required a declaration by the calling Church that the proper announcements have been made and that the congregation has given its approval to the call.

ARTICLE 6. Bound to a Church

No one shall serve in the ministry unless he is bound to a certain Church, 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 is to be charged with some other special ministerial task.

ARTICLE 7. Recent Converts

No one who has recently come to the confession of the Reformed Religion shall be declared eligible for call within the Churches unless he has been well tested for a reasonable period of time and has been carefully examined by classis with the cooperation of the deputies of the regional synod.

ARTICLE 8. Exceptional Gifts

Persons who have not pursued the regular course of study shall not be admitted to the ministry unless there is assurance of their exceptional gifts of godliness, humility, modesty, good intellect, and discretion, as well as the gift of public speech.

When such persons present themselves for the ministry, classis, after the approval of regional synod, shall examine them in a preparatory examination and allow them to speak an edifying word in the Churches of the classis; and further deal with them

as it shall deem edifying, with observance of the general ecclesiastical regulations adopted for this purpose.

ARTICLE 9. From One Church to Another

A minister, once lawfully called, shall not leave the Church to which he is bound to take up the ministry elsewhere without the consent of the consistory with the deacons and the approval of classis.

On the other hand, no Church shall receive him unless he has presented a proper certificate of release from the Church and the classis where he served, of the Church only, if he remains within the same classis.

ARTICLE 10. Proper Support

The consistory with the deacons, as representing the congregation, shall be bound to provide for the proper support of its minister(s).

ARTICLE 11. Dismissal

If 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 with the deacons shall not dismiss him from his service within the congregation without the approbation of classis and the concurring advice of the deputies of regional synod, and not without proper arrangements regarding the support of the minister and his family for a reasonable period of time.

If no call is forthcoming in three years, he shall be declared released from his ministerial status by the classis in which he served last.

ARTICLE 12. Bound for Life

Inasmuch as a minister of the Word, once lawfully called, is bound to the service of the Church for life, he is not allowed to enter upon another vocation unless it be for exceptional and substantial reasons, of which the consistory with the deacons shall judge, and which shall receive the approval of classis with the concurring advice of deputies of regional synod.

ARTICLE 13. Retirement of Ministers

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 the minister of the Word. He shall also retain his official bond with the Church which he served last, and this Church shall provide honourably for his support. The same obligation exists towards a minister's widow and/or other dependents.

ARTICLE 14. Temporary Release

If a minister, because of illness or for other substantial reasons, requests a temporary release from his service to the congregation, he can receive the same only with the approval of the consistory with the deacons and shall at all times be and remain subject to the call of the congregation.

ARTICLE 15. Preaching in Other Places

No one shall be permitted to preach the Word or to administer the Sacraments in another Church without the consent of the consistory of that Church.

ARTICLE 16. The Office of the Ministers of the Word

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; to administer the sacraments; publicly to 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, to visit the members of the congregation in their homes, and to comfort the sick with the Word of God;

and further, with the elders, to keep the Church of God in good order, to exercise discipline, and to govern it in such a manner as the Lord has ordained.

ARTICLE 17. Equality among the Ministers of the Word

Among the ministers of the Word equality shall be maintained with respect to the duties of their office and in other matters as far as possible, according to the judgment of the consistory and, if necessary, of classis.

ARTICLE 18. Missionaries

When ministers of the Word are sent out as missionaries, they shall be and remain subject to the Church Order. They shall report and give account of their labours to the Church which sent them and shall at all times remain subject to its calling.

It shall be their task, in the specific region assigned to them or chosen by them in consultation with the Church that sent them, to proclaim the Word of God, to administer the sacraments to those who have come to the profession of their faith, teaching them to observe all that Christ has commanded His Church, and to ordain elders and deacons when this appears feasible, according to the rules given in the Word of God.

ARTICLE 19. Training for the Ministry

The Churches shall maintain an institution for the training for the ministry. The task of the professors of theology is to instruct the students of theology in those disciplines which have been entrusted to them, so that the Churches may be provided with ministers of the Word who are able to fulfill the duties of their office as these have been described before.

ARTICLE 20. Students of Theology

The Churches shall endeavour that there be students of theology, extending financial aid to those who are in need of it.

ARTICLE 21. An Edifying Word

Besides those who have been permitted, according to Article 8, to speak an edifying word, also others may be given such consent in accordance with general ecclesiastical regulations, for their own training and in order that they may become known to the congregations.

ARTICLE 22. The Office of Elder

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; 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; they shall watch that the sacraments are not profaned. They further are to take care, being stewards of the house of God, 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 their duty to assist the ministers of the Word with good counsel and advice and to supervise their doctrine and conduct.

ARTICLE 23. The Office of Deacon

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 to exhort the members of Christ's body to show mercy; further, to gather and manage the offerings and to distribute them in Christ's Name according to need. They shall encourage and comfort with the Word of God those who receive the gifts of Christ's love, and promote with word and deed the unity and fellowship in the Holy Spirit which the congregation enjoys at the table of the Lord.

ARTICLE 24. Term of Office

The elders and deacons shall serve two or more years according to local regulations, and a proportionate number shall retire each year. The place of the retiring office-bearers shall be taken by others, unless the consistory with the deacons judges that the circumstances and the benefit of the Church render it advisable to have them serve another term, or to extend their term, or to declare them immediately eligible for re-election.

ARTICLE 25. Equality to Be Maintained

Among the elders as well as among the deacons equality shall be maintained with respect to the duties of their office, and also, as far as possible, in other matters, of which the consistory shall judge.

ARTICLE 26. Subscription to the Confession

All ministers of the Word, elders, deacons, and professors of theology shall subscribe to the Confessions of the Canadian Reformed Churches by signing the form(s) adopted for that purpose. Anyone refusing to subscribe in that manner shall not be ordained or installed in office. 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; and if he obstinately persists in his refusal, he shall be deposed from office.

ARTICLE 27. False Doctrine

To ward off false doctrines and errors which could enter the congregation and constitute a danger to the purity of its doctrine or conduct, the ministers and elders shall use the means of instruction, of refutation, of warning, and of admonition, as well in the ministry of the Word as in Christian teaching and family visiting.

ARTICLE 28. Civil Authorities

As it is the office of the Civil Authorities to promote in every way the holy ministry, so all office-bearers are in duty bound to impress diligently and sincerely upon the whole congregation the obedience, love, and respect which are due to the Civil Authorities; they shall set a good example to the whole congregation in this matter, and endeavour by due respect and communication to secure and retain the favour of the authorities towards the Church, so that the Church of Christ may lead a quiet and peaceable life, godly and respectful in every way.

III. THE ASSEMBLIES**ARTICLE 29. The Ecclesiastical Assemblies**

Four kinds of ecclesiastical assemblies shall be maintained: The Consistory, the Classis, the Regional Synod, and the General Synod.

ARTICLE 30. Ecclesiastical Matters

These assemblies shall deal with no other than ecclesiastical matters and that in an ecclesiastical manner.

A major assembly shall deal with those matters only which could not be finished in the minor assembly or which belong to its Churches in common.

A new matter which has not previously been presented to that major assembly may be put on the agenda only when the minor assembly has dealt with it.

ARTICLE 31. Appeals

If anyone complains that he has been wronged by the decision of a minor assembly, he shall have the right to appeal to the major ecclesiastical assembly; and whatever may be agreed upon by a majority vote shall be considered settled and binding, unless it is proved to be in conflict with the Word of God or with the Church Order.

ARTICLE 32. Credentials

Delegates to the major assemblies shall bring with them their credentials, signed by those sending them; they shall have a vote in all matters except those in which either they themselves or their Churches are particularly involved.

ARTICLE 33. Proposals

Matters once decided upon may not be proposed again unless they are substantiated by new grounds.

ARTICLE 34. Proceedings

The proceedings of all assemblies shall begin and end with calling upon the Name of the Lord.

ARTICLE 35. President

In all assemblies there shall be a president whose task it is

- a. To present and explain clearly the matters to be dealt with;
- b. To ensure that every one observe due order in speaking;
- c. To deny the floor to those who argue about minor things or who let themselves be carried away and cannot control their strong emotions;
- d. To discipline those who refuse to listen.

In major assemblies the office of the president shall cease when the assembly has ended.

ARTICLE 36. Clerk

Also a clerk shall be appointed whose task it shall be to keep an accurate record of all things worthy to be recorded.

ARTICLE 37. Jurisdiction

The classis has the same jurisdiction over the consistory as the regional synod has over the classis, and the general synod over the regional synod.

ARTICLE 38. Consistory

In all Churches there shall be a Consistory composed of the ministers of the Word and the elders who, as a rule, shall meet at least once a month. As a rule the ministers of the Word shall preside. If a Church is served by more than one minister, they shall preside in turn.

ARTICLE 39. Consistory and the Deacons

Where the number of elders is small, the deacons may be added to the consistory by local arrangement; this shall invariably be done where the number of elders or the number of deacons is less than three.

ARTICLE 40. Constitution of a Consistory

In places where the consistory is to be constituted for the first time or anew, this shall be done only with the advice of classis.

ARTICLE 41. Places without a Consistory

Places where as yet no consistory can be constituted shall be assigned by classis to the care of a neighbouring consistory.

ARTICLE 42. Meetings of Deacons

When the deacons meet separately, as a rule once a month, to deal with the matters pertaining to their office, they shall do so with calling upon the Name of God. They shall give account of their labours to the consistory.

The ministers shall acquaint themselves with the work of the ministry of mercy and, if need be, also may visit these meetings.

ARTICLE 43. Archives

The consistories and the major assemblies shall ensure that proper care is taken of the archives.

ARTICLE 44. Classical Meetings

The classical meetings shall consist of neighbouring Churches that respectively delegate, with proper credentials, a minister and an elder, or, if a Church has no minister, two elders, at such a time and place as were determined by the previous classis. Such meetings shall be held at least once in three months, unless the convening Church, in consultation with the neighbouring Church, concludes that no matters have been sent in by the Churches which would warrant the convening of a classis. Cancellation of a classis shall, however, not be permitted to occur twice in succession. In these meetings the ministers shall preside in rotation, or one shall be chosen to preside; however, the same minister shall not be chosen twice in succession.

The president shall ask whether there is any matter in which the consistories need the judgment and help of classis for the proper government of their Church.

At the close of the classical and other 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.

At the last classis before regional synod delegates shall be chosen to that synod. If two or more ministers are serving a Church, those who have not been delegated shall have the right to attend the classical meetings in an advisory capacity.

ARTICLE 45. Counsellors

Each vacant Church shall request classis to appoint as counsellor the minister it desires as such, to the end that he may assist the consistory in maintaining good order and especially may lend his aid in the matter of the calling of a minister; he shall also sign the letter of call.

ARTICLE 46. Church Visitors

Each year classis shall authorize at least two of the more experienced and able ministers to visit the Churches in that year.

It shall be the task of these visitors to inquire whether all things are regulated and done in full harmony with the Word of God, whether the office-bearers fulfill the duties of their office faithfully as they have promised, and whether the adopted order is being observed and maintained in every respect; in order that they may in good time fraternally admonish those who are found negligent in any thing, and that by their good counsel and advice all things may be directed towards the edification and preservation of Christ's Church.

They shall submit a written report of their visits to classis.

ARTICLE 47. Regional Synod

Each year some neighbouring classes shall send delegates to meet in a regional synod. To this regional synod 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.

At the close of the regional as well as of the general synod the time and place of the next synod shall be determined and the convening Church for that meeting appointed.

In case it appears necessary to convene a regional or general synod before the appointed time, the convening Church shall determine the time and place with the advice of the classis or regional synod respectively.

At the last regional synod before the general synod delegates shall be chosen to that general synod.

ARTICLE 48. Deputies of Regional Synod

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.

These deputies shall keep proper record of their actions and submit a written report on them to synod, and, if so required, they shall give account of their actions.

They shall not be discharged from their task before and until synod itself discharged them.

ARTICLE 49. General Synod

The general synod shall be held once every three years. Each regional synod shall delegate to this synod four ministers and four elders.

A general synod shall be convened before the appointed time if, according to the judgment of a regional synod, such appears necessary.

ARTICLE 50. Churches Abroad

The relation with Churches abroad shall be regulated by general synod. With foreign Churches of Reformed confession a sister-Church relationship shall be maintained as much as possible. On minor points of the Church Order and ecclesiastical practice Churches abroad shall not be rejected.

ARTICLE 51. Mission

The Churches shall endeavour to fulfill their missionary task.

When Churches cooperate in this matter, they shall, as much as possible, observe the division into classes and regional synods.

IV. WORSHIP, SACRAMENTS, AND CEREMONIES

ARTICLE 52. Worship Services

The consistory shall call the congregation together for worship twice on the Lord's Day.

The consistory shall ensure that, as a rule, once every Sunday the doctrine of God's Word as summarized in the Heidelberg Catechism is proclaimed.

ARTICLE 53. Days of Commemoration

Each year the Churches shall, in the manner decided upon by the consistory, commemorate the birth, death, resurrection, and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ, as well as His outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

ARTICLE 54. Days of Prayer

In time of war, general calamities, and other great afflictions the presence of which is felt throughout the Churches, a day of prayer may be proclaimed by the Churches appointed for that purpose by general synod.

ARTICLE 55. Psalms and Hymns

In the worship services the Psalms will be sung in the rhyming adopted by general synod and the Hymns approved by general synod.

ARTICLE 56. Administration of Sacraments

The sacraments shall be administered only under the authority of the consistory, in a public worship service, by a minister of the Word, with the use of the adopted Forms.

ARTICLE 57. Baptism

The consistory shall ensure that the covenant of God is sealed by baptism to the children of believers as soon as feasible.

ARTICLE 58. Schools

The consistory shall ensure 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 Church has summarized it in her Confessions.

ARTICLE 59. Baptism of Adults

Adults who have not been baptized shall be engrafted into the Christian Church by holy baptism upon their public profession of faith.

ARTICLE 60. Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper shall be celebrated at least once every three months.

ARTICLE 61. Admission to the Lord's Supper

The consistory shall admit to the Lord's Supper only those who have made public profession of the Reformed faith and lead a godly life. Members of sister-Churches shall be admitted on the ground of a good attestation concerning their doctrine and conduct.

ARTICLE 62. Attestations

Communicant members who move to a sister-Church shall be given an attestation regarding their doctrine and conduct, after previous announcements to the congregation, signed on behalf of the consistory by two of its members.

In the case of non-communicant members such an attestation shall be sent directly to the consistory of the Church concerned.

ARTICLE 63. Marriage

The consistory shall ensure that the members of the congregation marry only in the Lord, and that the ministers — as authorized by the consistory — solemnize only such marriages as are in accordance with the Word of God.

The solemnization of a marriage may take place either in a private ceremony or in a public worship service. The adopted Form for the Solemnization of Marriage shall be used.

ARTICLE 64. Church Records

The consistory shall maintain Church records in which the names of the members, the dates of their birth, baptism, public profession of faith, marriage, and departure or death are properly recorded.

ARTICLE 65. Funerals

Funerals are not ecclesiastical but family affairs, and should be conducted accordingly.

V. CHRISTIAN DISCIPLINE**ARTICLE 66. Nature and Purpose**

Since Church discipline is of a spiritual nature and, as one of the keys of the kingdom of heaven, has been given to the Church to shut and to open that kingdom, the consistory shall ensure that it is used to punish sins against both the purity of doctrine and the piety of conduct, in order to reconcile the sinner with the Church and with his neighbour, and to remove all offence out of the Church of Christ — which can be done only when the rule given by our Lord in Matthew 18:15-17 is followed in obedience.

ARTICLE 67. Consistory Involvement

The consistory shall not deal with any matter pertaining to purity of doctrine or piety of life that is reported to it unless it has first ascertained that both private admonitions and admonitions in the presence of one or two witnesses have remained fruitless, or that the sin committed is of a public character.

ARTICLE 68. Excommunication

Anyone who obstinately rejects the admonition by the consistory or who has committed a public sin shall be suspended from the Lord's Supper. If he continues to harden himself in sin, the consistory shall inform the congregation of this by means of public

announcements, so that the congregation may be engaged in prayer and admonition, and the excommunication may not take place without its cooperation.

In the first public announcement the name of the sinner shall not be mentioned.

In the second public announcement — which shall be made only after the advice of classis has been obtained — the name and address of the sinner shall be mentioned.

In the third public announcement a date shall be set at which the excommunication of the sinner shall take place.

In case a non-communicant member hardens himself in sin, the consistory shall in the same manner inform the congregation by means of public announcements.

In the first public announcement the name of the sinner shall not be mentioned.

In the second public announcement — which shall be made only after the advice of classis has been obtained — the name and address of the sinner shall be mentioned and a date shall be set at which the excommunication of the sinner shall take place.

The time between the various announcements shall be determined by the consistory.

ARTICLE 69. Repentance

When someone repents of a public sin or of a sin which had to be reported to the consistory, the latter shall not accept his confession of sin unless he has shown real amendment.

The consistory shall determine whether the benefit of the congregation requires that this confession of sin shall be made publicly and — in case it is made before the consistory or before two or three office-bearers — whether the congregation shall be informed afterwards.

ARTICLE 70. Readmission

When someone who has been excommunicated repents and desires to be again received into the communion of the Church, the congregation shall be informed of his desire in order to see whether there are any lawful objections.

The time between the public announcement and the readmission of the sinner shall be not less than one month.

If no lawful objection is raised, the readmission shall take place with the use of the Form for that purpose.

ARTICLE 71. Suspension and Deposition of Office-bearers

When ministers, elders, or deacons have committed a public or otherwise gross sin, or refuse to heed the admonitions by the consistory with the deacons, they shall be suspended from office by the judgment of their own consistory and of the consistory with the deacons of the neighbouring Church. When they harden themselves in their sin or when the sin committed is of such a nature that they cannot continue in office, the elders and deacons shall be deposed by the judgment of the above mentioned consistories with the deacons. Classis, with the concurring advice of the deputies of regional synod, shall judge whether the ministers are to be deposed.

ARTICLE 72. Serious and Gross Sins on the Part of Office-bearers

As serious and gross sins which are grounds for the suspension or deposition of office-bearers the following are to be mentioned particularly: false doctrine or heresy, public schisms, blasphemy, simony, faithless desertion of office or intrusion upon that of another, perjury, adultery, fornication, theft, acts of violence, habitual drunkenness, brawling, unjustly enriching oneself; and further all such sins and serious misdemeanours that rate as ground for excommunication with respect to other members of the Church.

ARTICLE 73. Christian Censure

The ministers, elders, and deacons shall mutually exercise Christian censure and shall exhort and kindly admonish one another with regard to the execution of their office.

ARTICLE 74. No Lording It Over Others

No Church shall in any way lord it over other Churches. no office-bearer over other office-bearers.

ARTICLE 75. Property of the Churches

All property, both real and personal, which belongs to the Churches comprised respectively in classes, regional synods and general synods in common, shall be held in trust for such Churches in equal shares by deputies or trustees appointed for that purpose from time to time by the appropriate classis, regional synod, or general synod, and such deputies or trustees shall be bound by the terms of their appointment and instruction and are subject to being discharged by a subsequent classis, regional synod, or general synod.

ARTICLE 76. Observance and Revision of the Church Order

These articles, which regard the lawful order of the Church, have been adopted with common accord. If the interest of the Churches demand such, they may and ought to be changed, augmented, or diminished. However, no consistory, classis, or regional synod shall be permitted to do so, but they shall endeavour diligently to observe the articles of this Church Order as long as they have not been changed by a general synod.

APPENDIX VII A

Standing Committee for the *Book of Praise* of the Canadian Reformed Churches

REPORT TO THE SYNOD OF CLOVERDALE, 1983

Esteemed brethren,

Although Synod Smithville 1980 adopted the revised Psalm and Hymn sections and gave our Committee the mandate to prepare for the printing of the "definitive *Book of Praise*," the new edition has not yet appeared. After we began our work, it gradually became clear that we could not immediately proceed with publication. Time was needed to familiarize ourselves with all aspects of our instructions, especially since in a number of ways the new mandate to publish the *Book of Praise* lacked a precedent that we could follow. In 1980 for the first time a committee appointed by Synod was directly given the task to find the best way to arrange for the publication of the "final edition." At our meetings we explored several possible approaches and obtained both legal and professional advice from a variety of sources. More details are presented later in this report, but we are very pleased to state already at this point that as the outcome of our investigation we were able to accept a carefully formulated publishing contract tailor-made to the requirements of the Churches. We are now ready to proceed with the final steps of actual publication.

1. THE PSALM AND HYMN SECTIONS

While the above mentioned investigation was in progress, the Committee took advantage of the time made available by the postponement of publication and continued with some final changes and corrections. Most of these involved minor improvements in language, punctuation, and prosody as well as a few adjustments in the music of the Hymns. A list of the more significant of these changes is to be found in Appendix A.

Our mandate also included the instruction to take into account the following statement: "An alternate melody for Hymn 1 is desirable . . ." We have done so by including a rhymed version of the Apostles' Creed (numbered as Hymn 2 in the final edition). It is a three-stanza rendering in modern English, similar to the four-stanza version which has long been in use in our Dutch sister Churches and which has been retained in their new *Gereformeerde Kerkboek*. When the new rhyming was published last year, it received a favourable response, also from experts. The text of this Hymn is provided in Appendix B.

We were furthermore instructed to replace the new rhyming of *Te Deum* (Hymn 2 in the 1979 Hymn Section) with Hymn 46 in the old edition. Our Committee urgently requests Synod's permission not to implement this decision. The English used in old Hymn 46 does not meet the standard set for the rest of the revised *Book of Praise*. The previous committee spent many hours — indeed, years — in an attempt to eliminate flaws such as we find in this Hymn. It may be of interest in this connection that the Deputies Church Book of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia state in their report to Synod 1983 that the new version is an "improved rhyming of *Te Deum*." On their recommendation, the Synod of Kelmscott subsequently adopted it. For a substantiation of the charge that old Hymn 46 is replete with weaknesses, see Appendix C.

In March 1981, when we were still under the impression that the new *Book of Praise* could be published within a few months, we found ourselves in the difficult position of having to include in the final edition a Hymn which is grammatically and stylistically unacceptable. Because we could not make our predicament known to a general synod, we approached the consistories for advice. Almost all of them replied. Although many felt that nothing could be done to resolve the problem before Synod 1983, a large majority indicated their agreement with our view. Soon afterwards, as a result of the postponement of publication, the problem lost its urgency for the time being. We are pleased that Synod can now give the matter the attention it requires.

2. ASPECTS OF PUBLICATION

The publication of the *Book of Praise* has been planned in such a way that financing, production, and distribution have been delegated by legal agreement to Premier Printing Ltd.; however, the Committee, on behalf of the Churches, retains the ultimate control as required by our mandate. A copy of this agreement is attached as Appendix D, but its main points can here be summarized as follows:

- a. The agreement remains in force for five years from the date of the first printing.
- b. All ownership of and control over the compilation and publication or any aspect whatsoever of the *Book of Praise* will at all times be vested in the committee.
- c. The publisher is to keep the Churches supplied with as many copies as they will need.
- d. No changes are to be made in the text of the *Book of Praise* without the written consent of the committee.
- e. Premier Printing Ltd. is to publish the *Book of Praise* at its own expense. Thus the Committee will not need to borrow funds or be involved in administrative duties.
- f. The retail price of the *Book of Praise* is to be mutually agreed upon by the Committee and the Publisher.
- g. The Publisher agrees to make full disclosure of the cost of producing and publishing the *Book of Praise*. The Publisher is to provide the Committee with an annual statement showing the number of copies printed and sold.

The possibility of having the *Book of Praise* published and produced in The Netherlands was investigated but, after a careful weighing of all the pros and cons, rejected as not being in the best interest of the Churches. Other Canadian firms were considered as well, but they were not able to offer the advantages that we will enjoy with Premier.

The Psalm and Hymn sections have been typeset and proofread and are ready to be printed. As soon as Synod (a) informs the Committee of its decisions regarding the *Book of Praise*, (b) stipulates which new versions, if any, of creeds, forms, or Church Order should be included, and (c) provides the Committee with the text of such versions, the final steps can be taken and the new edition can appear early in 1984, D.V.

3. INCORPORATION

With the authorization of Synod Smithville, at the suggestion of the previous Committee, and on the advice of legal counsel, the present Committee became a corporation. Registered as #516 455 Ontario Ltd., it is officially known as the Standing Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise* of the Canadian Reformed Churches. By being incorporated the Committee, on behalf of the Churches, will be better able to protect the interests of the Churches in all matters concerning the *Book of Praise*.

4. MISCELLANEOUS

- a. The Committee invited the members of the previous Committee to a meeting to seek their advice in matters of publication. It was agreed that Mr. M.M. DeGroot and the Rev. G. VanDooren would continue to do the work formerly done by the so-called Publication Committee (i.e., the subcommittee which the previous Committee, in accordance with its synodical mandate, had appointed to serve as publisher and distributor of the old edition of the *Book of Praise*). These two brethren continued in this function until supplies were depleted. The transitional period mentioned in the *Acts* of Synod Smithville thus came to a natural conclusion.
- b. The work of preparing the music, especially of the hymns, for printing was delegated to two of the members of the Committee who formed a music subcommittee. They had the benefit of advice from several sources, including our musical adviser, Mr. M.M. DeGroot, as well as experts in The Netherlands.
- c. Since the Committee was not involved in financial transactions, no financial statement is included in this report and there was no need to ask the Church of Brampton to audit any books.
- d. It was not possible for any of the members of the Committee to represent the Churches at the Conference on Psalmody.

5. CONCLUSION

We are thankful that all our discussions and investigations were marked by a spirit of harmony and we hope that our work may be a blessing to the Churches.

Respectfully submitted,
J. DeJong
W. Helder
M. Kampen
C. van Halen-Faber
J.G. VanHuisstede

APPENDIX A

Changes in addition to those listed in the report to Synod Smithville:

Psalm Section

Ps. st. l.

- 9 4 1 For ever reigns the LORD alone;
10 2 7 Thy laws on high do not restrain or curb him.
46 1 8 The LORD is near, our fears He stills.
74 12 1 Nor for Thy covenant have, O LORD, regard,
13 1 Rise up, O God, rise and defend Thy cause:
87 2 4 With those who know Me as their LORD and Saviour.
121 1 2 From where comes all my aid
4 6 From this time forth, for ever.
127 1 2 Its builders toil in useless pain;
146 2 5 And his plans that very day
6 Waste when he returns to clay.
(changed back to old version)
133 1 2 When brothers live together in communion!
150 1 5 Sing and shout His praise uprightly.

Hymn Section

H. st. l.

- 9 3 3 And those who have no might He will
4 1 Though youths grow weary and may fall,
2 Though young men strive in vain,
5 3 They'll neither falter nor grow faint
23 3 1 To Thee be power divine ascribed,
2 For wondrous are Thy ways,
3 And Thine be wisdom, glory, might,
4 And everlasting praise.
7 1 Let all that dwell in heaven above
31 1 5 Lo, He went up, our glorious Head,
35 1 3 Rejoice, give thanks, and sing,
6 Again I say, Rejoice! Rejoice!
(refrain changed in all stanzas)
46 1 1 We thank Thee, Father, who hast planted
3 True knowledge, faith, and life immortal
(changes necessitated by new tune for Hymn 46)
2 6 Was in the broken bread made one,
47 6 4 Our debtors' trespasses forgive.
7 1 Into temptation lead us not,
54 4 1 We know that when our Lord appears,
5 4 As He, our Lord, is pure.

55 1 2 Before admiring eyes:

(Synod Smithville changed "John's" in 1. 2 to "our"; however, the use of "our" does not fit in with the use of the past and past perfect tenses in this hymn.)

It is further recommended that

- a. the tune of Hymn 37 be retained. It is the view of musical experts that this old Dutch melody is very suitable for inclusion in our *Book of Praise*. Also, the committee considers this tune appropriate for the text of the Hymn as a whole;
- b. the tune of Hymn 39 be replaced with that of Gezang 9 (Avondzang), which is the melody chosen by the authors and used for this Hymn in the Free Reformed Churches of Australia;
- c. the tune of Hymn 46 be replaced with that of "Daar is uit 's werelds duistre wolken," since the present tune is already used for three Psalms and one other Hymn.

In conclusion it is to be noted that

- a. aside from the improvements and corrections proposed in the present report, the Psalms and Hymns have already been adopted by Synod Smithville 1980;
- b. the committee has implemented the decision of Synod Smithville to use the *Liedboek voor de kerken* as an "example for lay-out and music notation."

APPENDIX B

A Rhymed Version of the Apostles' Creed

1. In God, our heavenly Father, I believe—
Almighty Ruler, all-victorious,
Creator of both heaven and earth,
Whose holy Name is great and glorious.
An I believe in Christ our Lord,
God's only Son, the incarnate Word;
I trust in Him, our faithful Saviour,
Sent to redeem a world forlorn;
Who was conceived by God the Spirit
And of the virgin Mary born.
2. Our Lord was under Pilate crucified;
The burden of God's wrath He carried.
Rejected and despised by men,
He died for us, and then was buried,
Descending into death's domain.
But He the third day rose again;
He to His heavenly throne ascended,
At God's right hand, and He, our Head,
Shall come again with power and glory
To judge the living and the dead.
3. In God the Holy Spirit I believe—
Through whom we are a new creation.
And I believe a catholic Church,
One holy Christian congregation;
The true communion of all those
Whom God once as His people chose;
The full forgiveness of transgressions,
Release from sin and mortal strife;
The resurrection of the body,
And glorious, everlasting life.

APPENDIX C

Part I: Critical Evaluation of Old Hymn 46

Stanza 1

We praise Thee, Lord our God, we magnify Thy name
That every creature here Thy splendour may proclaim.

According to these lines we magnify God's name *that* (i.e., so that, in order that) every creature may proclaim His splendour here. In stating this to be the primary reason for our praise, the opening sentence does not correctly announce the theme of the Hymn.

Sing, choir of angels, sing His mighty work and wonder.

Are the angels asked to sing and to wonder? Or are they to sing His work and wonder? The construction is awkward and ambiguous.

Yes, Thou art three times holy, Lord of our salvation.

It is doubtful whether "three times holy" is an adequate rendering of "holy, holy, holy."

May earth and heaven be Thy glory's revelation.

Can heaven and earth *be* that revelation? This line does not express what is apparently intended: "May heaven and earth reveal Thy glory." One may further object that in the original version both heaven and earth *do* reveal God's glory.

Stanza 2

From all the saints on high Thine shall the glory be.

The relationship between "*the* glory" and the saints "from" whom it "shall . . . be" remains vague because of the weak, unidiomatic English used in this line.

Martyrs and prophets shall in all eternity,
Together with Thy church of every tongue and nation:
Bring Thine immortal Name their boundless admiration.

The martyrs and prophets appear not to belong to "Thy church." More important, the expression "to bring admiration" is not idiomatic English. Besides, "admiration" is a rather inadequate term in this context. It is not reverent to say that one "admires" God.

Stanza 3

Father, to Thee we sing with high exultant voice,
Praise to Thine only Son, the Saviour of Thy choice;
Praise to Thy Spirit, whom Thy hand has sent to guide us
To be the Source of Light which on the road abides us.

- a. If we try to follow the faulty grammatical structure of this sentence, we arrive at the following pattern: "Father, to Thee we sing praise to Thy Son, praise to Thy Spirit." This awkward arrangement is not acceptable English.
- b. ". . . the Source of Light which on the road abides us." One may ask what "*the* road" is here. More important if "abides" is used transitively (i.e., with a direct object), it means "wait for." The Spirit is thus described as a Source of Light which waits for us on the road — obviously not the intended meaning.

Thy Church will sing Thy Name, where Thou hast called and bound her.

The word "bound" is somewhat ambiguous. It could be taken as a reference to captivity. Note also that according to the Belgic Confession the Church is "not confined, bound, or limited to a certain place."

Thine everlasting care bends like a wall around her.

Some have pointed out that a wall is not a very good wall if it bends, but we could perhaps overlook this as an example of poetic licence.

Stanza 4

Thee, Christ our Lord, be praise in all eternity
Hail Father's only Son, His glorious Majesty!

Since Christ is addressed in the first line, the same is probably intended in the second line. If so, a comma would have to be inserted: "Hail, Father's only Son," Unfortunately, then it is even less clear to whose Majesty the author is referring — the Father's or the Son's?

As we were lost in guilt and cursed with sin's damnation

One wonders what "cursed with sin's damnation" really means. At best, this expression is an example of redundancy, characteristic of the bombastic quality of the Hymn as a whole.

To conquer death and doom and agony infernal

This is another good example of the above-mentioned quality. Besides, the three nouns (death, doom, agony) are not presented in an order that makes sense.

Stanza 5

Now is Thy throne in splendour at Thy Father's side

The expression "Now is Thy throne in splendour" is weak, unidiomatic English.

Till Thou shalt call Thy flock, the faithful of all ages.

The author probably means, "Till Thou shalt call together, or assemble, Thy flock." The flock to which the faithful of all ages belong has already been called.

Conclusion: Some of the above listed objections obviously carry more weight than others, but it should be clear that from a grammatical and stylistic point of view old Hymn 46 is definitely not acceptable.

Part II: The Original *Te Deum* in English Translation

We praise Thee, O God, we confess Thee to be the Lord.

The whole earth worships Thee, the eternal Father.

To Thee all angels, heaven and all the powers, cherubim and seraphim cry aloud with unceasing voice,

"Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts;

Heaven and earth are full of the majesty of Thy glory."

The glorious company of the apostles, the praiseworthy band of the prophets, the white-robed army of the martyrs praise Thee.

The holy church throughout the whole world confesses Thee the Father of an infinite majesty; Thine adorable, true, and only Son; also the Holy Spirit, the Comforter.

Thou art the King of glory, O Christ. Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father.

Thou didst take upon Thee to set man free. Thou didst not abhor the Virgin's womb.

When Thou hadst overcome the sting of death, Thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to those who believe.

Thou sittest at the right hand of God in the glory of the Father: we believe that Thou shalt come as judge.

We therefore pray Thee, help Thy servants whom Thou hast redeemed with Thy precious blood.

Make them to be numbered with Thy saints in everlasting glory.

Save Thy people, O Lord, and bless Thine inheritance.

Govern them and lift them up forever.

Day by day we bless Thee and praise Thy Name world without end.

Deign, O Lord, to keep us this day without sin.

Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy on us.

Let Thy mercy be on us, O Lord, as we have trusted in Thee.

In Thee, O Lord, have I trusted; I shall never be confounded.

Attributed to Nicetas
(late fourth century)

APPENDIX VII B

APPENDIX D

THIS AGREEMENT made in duplicate this the 17th day of September, 1982.
BETWEEN:

516455 ONTARIO LTD., a corporation incorporated under the laws of the Province of Ontario, carrying on business as Standing Committee for the Publication of The Book of Praise of the Canadian Reformed Churches,
hereinafter referred to as "the Committee"

OF THE FIRST PART

and

PREMIER PRINTING LTD., a corporation incorporated under the laws of the Province of Manitoba,
hereinafter referred to as "the Publisher,"

OF THE SECOND PART

WITNESSES AS FOLLOWS:

WHEREAS the Committee has compiled material known as *The Book of Praise*, and is desirous of producing and publishing the said *Book of Praise*;

AND WHEREAS the Publisher has indicated a desire to provide for the printing and publishing of the said *Book of Praise*.

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual covenants and promises contained herein, IT IS MUTUALLY AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. Except as hereinafter expressly provided, all ownership and control in, to and over the compilation and publication or any aspect whatsoever of the *Book of Praise* shall at all times be vested in the Committee.
2. This Agreement is intended to provide only for the production and publication of the *Book of Praise* as a whole, and shall not apply in any way to the publication or production of portions only of the *Book of Praise*, and such partial production or publication shall be subject of further agreement between the Publisher and the Committee.
3. The laws of the Province of Ontario shall at all times apply to this Agreement in determining the respective rights and obligations of the parties to this Agreement, and irrespective of the parties' residence and the place of execution of this Agreement.
4. In the event of the insolvency, receivership, bankruptcy or assignment for the benefit of creditors or liquidation of the Publisher for any cause whatsoever, all rights granted herein shall revert to the Committee, and the Committee shall be entitled to receive free of charge, the paste-up, art work, and all masked negatives, or such other material as may be required for the printing of the *Book of Praise*.
5. a. The term "produce" or any form thereof, shall, for the purpose of this Agreement include typesetting, music engraving, printing and binding.
b. The term "publish" or any form thereof, shall, for the purpose of this Agreement include selling and distributing.

AUTHORITY TO PUBLISH AND PRODUCE

6. The Committee hereby grants to the Publisher, subject to the terms of this Agreement and any renewal thereof, the exclusive right to publish and produce the *Book of Praise* in book form in the English language.
7. The Publisher shall keep the Canadian Reformed Churches and their English-

speaking sister Churches supplied with copies of the *Book of Praise* according to their needs. The number of copies to be produced from time to time shall be decided upon in consultation with the Committee.

8. No changes, additions or alterations in or to the text of the *Book of Praise* shall be made by the Publisher without the written consent of the Committee, and the Publisher shall act with the approval of the Committee with respect to all matters of quality and design, and in particular, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the selection of type, paper, cover, colour and method of binding.
9. The Publisher shall publish and produce the *Book of Praise* at its own expense, as soon as, in its opinion conditions permit, so long as it is not prevented from doing so by circumstances beyond its control.

FINANCIAL TERMS

10. The Publisher shall use its best efforts to provide the *Book of Praise* to purchasers at a reasonable price, and shall be entitled to retain the revenues generated by the sale of the *Book of Praise*, provided that
 - a. the retail price of the *Book of Praise* shall be determined from time to time upon the mutual written agreement of the Committee and the Publisher, and
 - b. the Publisher shall make frank and full disclosure of its cost of producing and publishing the *Book of Praise* to the Committee.
11. Excess profits, if any, which may be realized from unanticipated sales, over and above the reasonable cost of production and publication, shall be paid to the Committee to be used by it in whatever manner and for whatever purpose it may see fit.
12. The Publisher shall endeavor to provide the *Book of Praise* to be purchased at a lower price by collective bodies such as churches and schools.
13. The Publisher shall not commence any new printing without first consulting the Committee and without having received from the Committee a statement in writing setting out whether or not, and if so, which, changes are to be made to the contents of the *Book of Praise*.
14. The Publisher shall render annual statements up to the first day of the month preceding such accounting dates, which statements show in detail the number of copies printed, the number sold directly to Canadian Reformed Churches and schools and the number sold elsewhere.

ADVERTISING AND PUBLICITY

15. The Publisher shall advertise the availability of the *Book of Praise* in folders and advertisements distributed throughout the English-speaking world.
16. The Publisher shall provide the Committee with a number of free copies as agreed upon from time to time so as to enable the Committee to distribute these to selected periodicals and to use them for other promotional purposes.

DURATION AND TERMINATION

17. If the Publisher should at any time during the existence of this Agreement fail to comply with or fulfill any of the terms or conditions thereof, this Agreement shall terminate at the option of the Committee and all rights granted herein shall revert to the Committee.
18. This Agreement shall remain in force for five (5) years from the publication date of the first printing of the *Book of Praise* under this Agreement, and thereafter from time to time as agreed upon by the Committee and the Publisher, and this Agreement shall be binding upon the successors in business and assigns of the parties hereto.
19. This Agreement may be terminated by either the Committee or the Publisher by twelve (12) months' notice in writing, and upon termination, the paste-up, art work, and all masked negatives, or such other material as may be required for the print-

ing of the *Book of Praise* shall be surrendered to the Committee, at no cost to the Committee.

20. Upon termination of this Agreement by the Committee, the Publisher shall be entitled to deplete his existing stock, and the Committee shall not interfere with the Publisher's efforts, and shall not publish or advertise a new edition until existing stock is depleted.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the parties have hereto affixed their corporate seals as attested by their respective signing officers, this the day of October, 1982.

SIGNED, SEALED & DELIVERED
in the presence of:

516455 ONTARIO LTD.

Per:

PREMIER PRINTING LTD.

Per:

APPENDIX VIII
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE FOR CONTACT
WITH THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
TO GENERAL SYNOD 1983

- I. MANDATE.** The General Synod 1980 gave the following mandate: To continue the Committee for Contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, with the mandate:
- a. to continue contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, while taking into account the rules for "Ecclesiastical Contact";
 - b. to publish, for the benefit of our Churches, a detailed evaluation of the confessional and church-political divergencies as decided by this Synod (see Acts 1980, Article 97, 11, C, 3);
 - c. to evaluate the reaction of the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church regarding the divergencies, and to come to the next Synod with recommendations (cf. Consideration 5);
 - d. to complete the discussion and evaluation of the relationships which the Orthodox Presbyterian Church has with other parties, especially the Reformed Ecumenical Synod, the Christian Reformed Church, the Reformed Presbyterian Church — Evangelical Synod, and the Presbyterian Church of America;
 - e. to inform the Churches about the progress made by means of press releases;
 - f. to report on its activities and findings to the next General Synod.
- (Acts, 1980, Art. 152, II, D)

- II. Re: "a)** to continue contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, while taking into account the rules for "Ecclesiastical Contact."
This Contact has indeed been continued according to the rules for "Ecclesiastical Contact." These rules are as follows:

- a. to invite delegates to each other's General Assemblies or General Synods 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 continued discussions to use the contact for the purpose of reaching full correspondence.

(Acts, 1977, Art. 91, III)

Besides the meetings of the Committee itself, there has been a combined meeting with the Committee for Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations (CEIR) of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC) on Nov. 6, 1981, in Philadelphia, Pa.

Owing to the preoccupation of the OPC with the invitation of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) to the OPC to apply to join the PCA, the OPC did not have as much time as it would have liked to the pursuit of ecclesiastical contacts with us. However, since the application to join the PCA was not approved by the presbyteries of the PCA, we may expect that the OPC will find more time and motivation for developing stronger ties with the American/Canadian Reformed Churches.

Delegates have been sent to the General Assemblies of the OPC in 1981 (Rev. W. Huizinga) and in 1983 (Rev. J. Mulder). In 1982 a letter was sent to the General Assembly of the OPC, since we were unable to send a delegate.

We have invited the OPC to send a delegate to General Synod 1983 of the American/Canadian Reformed Churches.

Acts of our 1980 General Synod have been sent to the CEIR of the OPC.

They have sent to us a communication on the major issue of applying to join the PCA (entitled "Actions of the 48th General Assembly of the OPC in joining the PCA").

We have used the combined meeting on Nov. 6, 1981, in Philadelphia to discuss

divergencies, relationships of the OPC with other parties and the Formation of the International Conference of Reformed Churches. The goal of these discussions was to work towards the fuller relationship of Church Correspondence.

III. Re "b) to publish, for the benefit of our Churches, a detailed evaluation of the confessional and church political divergencies as decided by this Synod (see *Acts* 1980, Art. 97, II, C, 3)." The Committee has some objections to this part of its mandate, namely:

1. This detailed evaluation should not be issued by a synodical committee but, if necessary, by the General Synod which took the decision to recognize the OPC as a true Church, or by the following General Synod which upheld the decision.
2. The Churches received an evaluation of the so-called divergencies in the Committee report of 1971 (*Acts*, 1971, Supplement V, pp. 64ff.), in the letter of the CEIR of the OPC of April 14, 1976, and in our Committee's letter of October 13, 1978. That these explanations did not satisfy everyone is evident, but we should not endlessly pursue the matter, since it has been decided already in 1977 that these divergencies, having been discussed in the letter of April 14, 1976 (from CEIR), do not form an impediment to recognize the OPC as Churches of our Lord Jesus Christ (*Acts*, 1977, Art. 91, II, Consideration H).

We would therefore like to see this part of our mandate eliminated. Hopefully, the next committee, D.V., can finalize its report to Synod re the divergencies. This report and the decision of General Synod could then, D.V., serve all the Churches, since the reports and decisions, included in the *Acts*, are available for all members of the Churches.

IV. Re "c) to evaluate the reaction of the CEIR of the OPC regarding the divergencies, and to come to the next Synod with recommendations."

The letter of Oct. 13, 1978, in which our Committee presented the confessional and church governmental divergencies, was discussed at a combined meeting of Oct. 25, 1978, in a preliminary way (there was not enough time between these dates for them to deal with our letter properly), and it was discussed further in a combined meeting held on Nov. 6, 1981. Their preoccupation at that time with the invitation to apply to join the PCA prevented them from offering an official reply on paper. What we were able to agree on was a set of minutes of that combined meeting. Since that time they have not been successful in forwarding the promised official reply to us so that our Committee could use it to fulfill its mandate. It seems as though they miss the presence of Prof. N. Shepherd who often drafted letters and replies in their correspondence with us.

Consequently we cannot offer a finalized report for this part of our mandate. We would like to await their promised official reply. Therefore, we are awaiting an official reply from the CEIR of the OPC re the divergencies. We attach a copy of the minutes of our combined meeting to show that we have tried from our side to fulfill our mandate.

Our recommendation is to renew this part of our mandate for the next committee.

V. Re "d) to complete the discussion and evaluation of the relationships which the OPC has with other parties, especially the RES, CRC, RPCES and the PCA."

As far as working towards Church Correspondence is concerned, we remind General Synod that our previous Committee directed to the 1980 General Synod correspondence from CEIR of the OPC and an inquiry from them concerning the rules for Church Correspondence (cf. *Acts* 1980, Appendix V, pp. 191-192). They inquired about giving account to each other concerning correspondence with third parties and asked what our stance was concerning their membership in the RES. General Synod did not give a reply to these inquiries as we had hoped.

Since we have not finalized our discussions about the divergencies, nor have we investigated all the ramifications of Church Correspondence, we have not pressed the discussion about Church Correspondence, also since the last General Synod

1980 declined to answer the inquiries of the OPC about Church Correspondence. As for the relationships of the OPC with others we note the following:

A. The Presbyterian Church in America (PCA)

"The Actions of the 48th General Assembly of the OPC in rejoining the PCA," an official document from the 1981 General Assembly of the OPC, gave the decision of that body in applying to join the PCA. As a Committee we therefore tried to follow these developments closely. We obtained copies of the Book of Church Order, minutes of the General Assemblies, a Yearbook — all of the PCA. Also, we studied a report evaluating and examining the three Churches (OPC, PCA, and RPCES). However, all our study became academic when in the fall of 1981 the required $\frac{3}{4}$ number of PCA presbyteries did not approve the application by the OPC to join the PCA.

There are no proposals from either the OPC or the PCA to come to an eventual union. The dismissal of Prof. N. Shepherd from Westminster Theological Seminary, and his departure from the OPC was seen by some as a removal of an obstacle for the PCA to invite the OPC to join them. However, no invitations to join or requests for union have thus far been entertained by either side.

This should make the OPC more inclined to intensify its contacts and relationship with the American/Canadian Reformed Churches.

B. Reformed Presbyterian Church — Evangelical Synod (RPCES)

This Church has now joined the PCA, and therefore as RPCES does not exist anymore.

C. Christian Reformed Church (CRC)

A report and evaluation were given to Synod 1980. Some further information is given in the minutes of the combined meeting of Nov. 6, 1981. We see the relationship of the OPC to the CRC as "cool and cooling," and as understandable in the light of history.

D. Reformed Ecumenical Synod (RES)

The membership of the OPC in the RES was discussed thoroughly. A report was made to Synod 1980 about this already. In our combined meeting of Nov. 6, 1981 it was brought up again (cf. minutes). The leadership of the OPC within the RES and its desire to await the 1984 RES for its decision on the membership of the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland — Synodaal in the RES has kept it reluctantly in the RES. All present indications are that the upcoming 1984 RES decisions will force the OPC to withdraw.

Members of the CEIR of the OPC were very disappointed both that a constitutive meeting of the International Conference of Reformed Churches was held before the 1984 RES and that the OPC was not invited to this meeting. Their expertise in and knowledge of the international Reformed community could have been utilized well.

We recommend that we await further developments of the 1984 RES and the OPC reactions to it. Also, we recommend that if the Canadian Reformed Churches decide to participate in the 1985 ICRC, they propose that the OPC be invited to the meetings of the ICRC also.

VI. Re "e) to inform the Churches about the progress made by means of press releases" Two press releases were given:

1. Report of the delegate to the 48th General Assembly of the OPC, May 29-June 4, 1981, at Beaver Falls, Pa., by Rev. W. Huizinga, *Clarion*, Vol. 30, 1981, no. 21, p. 411ff.

2. Actions of the 48th General Assembly of the OPC in Re Joining the PCA, by John P. Galbraith, *Clarion*, Vol. 30, (1981), no. 21, p. 410ff.

VII. Re "f) to report on its activities and findings to the next General Synod" We hereby have fulfilled this part of our mandate.

However, we would like to include one "finding" which received much publicity, also in our Church press, namely, the dismissal of Prof. N. Shepherd from the Westminster Theological Seminary and his departure from the OPC. Since the Westminster Theological Seminary is not Church-operated, but independent of the OPC, it is outside the jurisdiction of this Committee to comment on his dismissal. We regret that Prof. N. Shepherd is no longer a member of the OPC and its CEIR, for he was a valuable contact person for us, as well as a real Reformed witness within the OPC.

With this we conclude our report, and wish the Synod much strength and wisdom from the Lord, the Head of the Churches.

Humbly submitted,
Rev. J. Mulder, Convener
Br. J. Boot, Treasurer
Prof. Dr. J. Faber
Rev. W. Huizinga, Secretary

P.S. Rev. J. Mulder was unable to attend the 1983 OPC General Assembly, due to pastoral obligations. A letter was sent instead.

APPENDIX VIII (I)

REPORT OF DELEGATE TO THE FORTY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, HELD MAY 29 — JUNE 4, 1981, AT BEAVER FALLS, PA.

The undersigned attended the 48th General Assembly of the OPC, from June 1 to June 3. He was well received. He offers the following report:

1. Your delegate was introduced to the General Assembly, and on motion duly made and seconded, and approved, was accepted as a corresponding member of the assembly. He addressed the assembly once to bring our brotherly greetings, to assure them of our hearty prayers and to express the hope that the Spirit of the ascended King and Head of the Church would direct all their deliberations and discussions. Your delegate addressed the assembly in the midst of its discussions whether or not to apply to join the Presbyterian Church in America. Consequently, he not only expressed our keen interest in this whole matter, but also briefly sketched from our Reformed Church history the Union of 1892, in order to impress on the assembly our understanding of the difficulties of the decision which it faced.
2.
 - a. In its report to the 48th General Assembly the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations (CEIR) gave a full report on their contact with the Canadian Reformed Churches as well as a report of their delegate to our 1980 General Synod.
 - b. The report of the CEIR also included a section about the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands (Liberated — RCN[lib.]) who have corresponded with the CEIR. The CEIR recommended "to continue correspondence with the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands (Liberated) and to take steps that may lead toward full correspondence." This recommendation was mentioned because our Committee suggested to the Deputies for Correspondence with Churches Abroad of the RCN(lib.) that they open contact with the OPC, but that they do not proceed more quickly than our Churches.
3. The revision of the Book of Discipline came up for discussion. Chapter II, B. 2d was

an interesting new addition. It states that someone who desires to become a communicant member of the OPC must first undergo a thorough examination by the session (local Church), after which he/she would publicly profess the faith before the congregation. Owing to the number of revisions, the whole process will need more time.

4. The overriding matter at this general assembly was the recommendation of the CEIR to accept the invitation of the PCA to apply to join the PCA. This matter received a full and balanced discussion even though about 135 commissioners attended the general assembly. Matters such as the determination of like faith and practice, the call to unity, the boundaries for the various presbyteries, the amalgamation of the various Church-bodies, the theological question of justification by faith in the Philadelphian Presbytery of the OPC, the issue of masonry in the PCA, the presence of charismatic gifts in the PCA, differences between the Form of Government of the OPC and the Book of Church Order of the PCA, and the method of achieving unity, had all been covered in the extensive report of the Committee on Ecumenicity.

The final vote on this recommendation was 93 in favour and 41 against (about 70 per cent). A two-third majority was necessary, so there is now an application by the OPC to join the PCA. Now two-thirds of the presbyteries of the OPC must approve and the next (49th) General Assembly must again approve it by at least a two-third majority vote. It could be mentioned that the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod, also decided by a vote of 73 percent in favour of applying to join the PCA. These rapid developments in favour of unity (Ephesians 4 is often cited) add a whole new dimension to our ecclesiastical contacts with the OPC.

5. Your delegate appreciated the privilege of attending this important General Assembly of the OPC. Not only he himself, but especially the Canadian Reformed Churches are warmly received. Time and again commissioners requested more information about the history of the Reformed heritage of our Churches. This is due probably in part to the increasing attention paid to our Churches at their General Assemblies. Moreover, the Church magazine of the OPC, *New Horizons*, in the May/81 issue, included an excellent introduction to our Churches.
6. Your delegate conveyed the assurance that we do pray and will pray for the OPC Churches while they deliberate further on the application to accept the invitation of the PCA and to be received by the PCA. Since we as Churches have recognized the OPC as a true Church of our Lord Jesus Christ, it would be good that prayer, to the effect that the Spirit of our Lord direct them by His revealed will, be made in all our Churches.

Your appointed delegate,
Rev. W. Huizinga

APPENDIX VIII (II)

MINUTES OF THE COMBINED MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE FOR ECUMENICITY AND INTERCHURCH RELATIONS OF THE OPC (CEIR) AND THE COMMITTEE FOR CONTACT WITH THE OPC (CCOPC) FROM THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES, HELD ON NOVEMBER 6, 1981, AT WESTMINSTER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY IN PHILADELPHIA.

1. Opening

The Rev. John P. Galbraith opened the meeting by reading Col. 1:1-18 and by prayer.

2. Attendance

The following attended the meeting:

From the CEIR: Rev. John P. Galbraith
Rev. Leroy B. Oliver
Prof. N. Shepherd

From the CCOPC: Elder John Boot
Prof. J. Faber
Rev. W. Huizinga
Rev. J. Mulder

3. Agenda

After some discussion it was decided to deal with the following matters (in this order):

- a. The relations of the OPC with other Churches, especially with the PCA and the Christian Reformed Church.
- b. The membership of the OPC in the RES and happenings within the RES.
- c. The membership of the OPC in the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council.
- d. The discussion and evaluation of the apparent divergencies in Confession and Church government between the OPC and the Canadian Reformed Churches.
- e. Church Correspondence.

4. Relations of the OPC with Other Churches

a. Presbyterian Church in America (PCA)

This Church in 1980 invited the OPC to join them on the basis of their standards (Westminster Confession and Catechism) and the Book of Church Order of the PCA. In 1981, the OPC General Assembly accepted this invitation by more than a two-thirds vote.

Three-quarters of the 25 PCA presbyteries (at least 18) had to vote affirmatively to confirm this invitation. So far 15 presbyteries voted in favour and 8 voted against. As it stands, the PCA presbyteries have defeated the invitation to the OPC. Interestingly enough, all PCA presbyteries thus far have voted in favour of extending the invitation to the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod (RPCES). In answer to the question why so many PCA Presbyterians defeated the invitation, the following were offered as possible reasons:

1. Men from the Presbytery of the Dakotas of the OPC said the invitation would bring division within the OPC;
2. The difficulties and differences within the OPC concerning the teachings of Prof. N. Shepherd are influential;
3. Some in the PCA who may have "Arminian" tendencies find that the OPC is too rigid and that the OPC doctrines would inhibit their evangelistic endeavours;
4. To invite both the RPCES and the OPC was too costly;
5. Some objected to the method of joining together; and
6. The PCA is strongly regional (southern) and therefore there may be some prejudice against the OPC.

With regard to this possible reception into the PCA it was remarked by the Canadian Reformed brothers that we defend organic unity of Churches which live in one country and which share the same standards and church polity. However, we know the OPC but not the PCA. Since the PCA is only of recent origin, is there not a problem of blending diverse thoughts and groups into one consistent and positive direction? This was seen to be a problem, and many thought the experience and doctrinal maturity of the OPC would therefore be welcomed!

The question was asked why the PCA did not join the RES. Apparently the PCA distrusted and disliked the membership and dominating influence of the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (GKN-synodaal) in the RES.

b. Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (GKN - liberated)

Since the Canadian Reformed brothers knew that the GKN(lib.) had tried to make contacts with the OPC, it was asked how far this contact had come. Apparently, the letter of the GKN(lib.) had not been dealt with. Meanwhile, the OPC had received brochures introducing the GKN(lib.). The Can. Ref. brothers warned the OPC

against opening contacts with the Reformed Churches outside the federation (buitenverbanders) of the GKN(lib.) since these Churches tend to independentism and are anti-confessional, and also since they have not shown in which direction they will go.

c. **Christian Reformed Church (CRC)**

The OPC has contact with them through NAPARC.

At one time the OPC Committee for contact with the CRC was ready to propose union with the CRC. Then Stonehouse died and the CRC raised new issues and started to change. When the OPC Committee put out a paper on trends within the CRC, the CRC took this ill of the OPC and all union talks came to an end.

The OPC is considered a "Church in Ecclesiastical Fellowship" by the CRC. Some OPC Churches use and identify with the "Back to God" radio program of the CRC. Generally speaking, the OPC, with regret, views the trends in the CRC with concern and alarm. Pulpit exchanges are infrequent.

5. **Reformed Ecumenical Synod (RES)**

The membership of the GKN(syn.) within the RES, while the GKN(syn.) is a member of the World Council of Churches (WCC) and while doctrinal deviations go unchecked and undisciplined, has caused much concern for the OPC which is a member of the RES too.

The recent decision of the GKN(syn.) on homosexuality caused a long debate in the 1980 RES (the word *beleving* was the focus of the debate).

The membership of the GKN(syn.) will be resolved one way or another at the 1984 RES.

Meanwhile the GKN(syn.) has asked the Interim Committee of the RES to change the structure of the RES from a synod which makes decisions and judgments to a conference which only holds discussions and consultations. This change would allow the GKN(syn.) to remain in the RES and also would prevent judgments being passed on the GKN(syn.).

Dr. J. Faber argued that 1984 is too late. The GKN(syn.) has consistently deceived the RES, and is not able to give a Reformed witness to the world. He also mentioned that the GKN(lib.) is planning a Reformed International Synod. (RIS)

Rev. J.P. Galbraith argued that 1984 is not too late. He related his own personal dilemma in the RES Executive Committee. He pleaded for time and asked that the plans for a RIS wait till after 1984.

6. **North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (NAPARC)**

NAPARC has approved reception of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church and the Korean American Presbyterian Church (mostly originating from the Hapdong Churches in Korea) within the council. The various member Churches must confirm this reception. NAPARC has been helpful in bringing the OPC, RPCES and PCA closer together and it has been helpful for mutual consultation.

7. **Divergencies in Confession and Church Polity between OPC and Can. Ref. Churches**

The CEIR asked a general question about the apparent differences. In 1976, in their letter, the CEIR tried to explain the "differences" in such a way that the differences were not unnecessarily maximized but rather that the "gap was narrowed" between us. In 1978 the CCOPC seemed to maximize the differences again. How must the OPC view our intentions? In answer it was pointed out that 1977 General Synod did not deem the so-called divergencies to be an impediment for recognizing the OPC as a true Church. Having said that, the 1977 General Synod still considered

the divergencies of such a serious character that they warrant further mutual discussion.

The following points were discussed:

a. **The Visible and Invisible Church** — the distinction between the two does live in the OPC and it could be fostered by the Westminster Confession (W.C.). However, Prof. J. Murray, for example, criticized it and was not charged for it, though the potential was there. The CEIR would discuss this issue and try to formulate a statement that this distinction does not impede nor undermine the Biblical imperative for organic unity of the (visible) Church.

b. **The Assurance of Faith** — at issue is whether assurance belongs to the essence of faith. W.C. XVIII, 3 ("This infallible assurance doth not so belong to the essence of faith . . .") seems to deny this. Rev. J. Galbraith argued that the accent here fell on *full* or *infallible* assurance which is not always characteristic of faith. At the same time the W.C. confesses:

"such as truly believe . . . may in this life be certainly assured that they are in the state of grace . . ." (XVIII, 1)

Moreover the Canons of Dordt (C.D.), V, Art. 11, also states "that believers in this life . . . do not always feel this full assurance of faith . . ." The answer of the CEIR will be awaited.

c. **The Covenant of Grace** — the two lines of the covenant (with believers and their seed on one hand and with the elect on the other hand) in the Westminster standards seems to correspond to the distinction between the invisible (with the elect) and the visible (with believers) Church. How does this distinction function within the OPC? The impression one receives, it was answered, is that the covenant is seen as made with the elect and their seed. This concept prevails.

However, this concept of the covenant with the elect does not exclude the truth that the covenant is made with believers and their seed. The CCOPC explained how the Reformed Churches in Holland in 1905 made a pacification formula about the covenant along the above-mentioned two lines. Both were tolerated within the Churches. However, in 1942, only the one concept of an inward covenant with the elect was allowed. The CCOPC would not like to see this repeated. Again, the CEIR was left to formulate a response, though it was suggested that the ten points in the booklet *For the Sake of True Ecumenicity*, issued by the GKN(lib.), about the covenant could be affirmed.

d. **The Sabbath** — since the OPC feels strongly about this issue and has made a strong statement about it, to the effect that the Sabbath is a creational ordinance, would this cause problems for us?

It was answered that while the OPC is very specific on paper, practice does not always match the strict stance on paper, and that while the Confessions of the Can. Ref. Churches are not too specific on Sunday worship, yet our practice is very strict.

e. **Church Polity** — the basic difference is that the OPC starts from the Church universal while the Can. Ref. Churches begin with the local Church. In the Can. Ref. Churches the local Church and consistory is basic, while in the OPC it is the presbytery.

Though the differences should not be over-accentuated, since in practice the two systems are closer than might appear on paper, yet they remain and no ready-made solution was available. Both systems honour Christ as the only Head of the Church.

8 Church Correspondence

The members of the CEIR remarked that there was a growing understanding and

appreciation for the rules of Church Correspondence. The CCOPC reiterated that its mandate included the need and desire to work towards full Church Correspondence. This will have the attention of the CEIR.

It was asked whether there is an awareness in the OPC that Church Correspondence with the Can. Ref. Churches would add to the Reformed character of the OPC. In answering it was replied that the awareness of the Can. Ref. Churches has no deep roots in the OPC.

9. Other Business

The CEIR would meet to make an official reply to the letter of 1978 from the CCOPC. No subsequent meeting was arranged, but any eventual combined meeting would be hosted by CCOPC in Canada.

10. Closing

Rev. J. Mulder closed the meeting in prayer. The Rev. J.P. Galbraith thanked the CCOPC for its willingness to come to meet with them. The CEIR was thanked for their hospitality and the delicious meal we enjoyed together.

For the combined meeting,
W. Huizinga, Secretary
of the Committee for Contact
with the OPC

APPENDIX IX

COMMITTEE ON CORRESPONDENCE WITH CHURCHES ABROAD REPORT TO GENERAL SYNOD CLOVERDALE 1983

Esteemed Brethren,

We hereby submit to you a report of the activities of the Committee on Correspondence with Churches Abroad, appointed by General Synod 1980.

I MANDATE

General Synod Smithville 1980 gave our Committee the following mandate:

- a. "to continue the correspondence under the adopted rules with:
The Free Reformed Churches of Australia
De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland
Die Vrije Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika;
- b. to refrain from entering at this time into correspondence with the Korean Presbyterian Church (Koryu-Pa);
- c. to charge the Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad to continue the contacts with the Korean Presbyterian Church with the following mandate:
 - i to evaluate the Form of Government and to pass this evaluation on to the next General Synod;
 - ii to inform the Synod regarding the state of communication with these Churches and also evaluate the communication with the Korean Presbyterian Church (Koryu-Pa) as to the question whether official ecclesiastical correspondence, even if it would be warranted in principle, can be responsibly maintained, due to distance and language;
 - iii to make recommendations to the Synod regarding a future relationship with these Churches;
- d. to charge the Committee to evaluate the criticism of the Deputies of the Netherlands sister Churches on the Historical Review, Korean Presbyterian Church, and to report on this to the next Synod;
- e. to charge the Committee to send an invitation to sister Churches abroad at least one year prior to the date of 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 desirable and feasible;
- f. with regard to the proposed Reformed International Conference:
 - i that the Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad be authorized to send two delegates to this Conference;
 - ii that a report on this Conference analyzing its basis, aim, powers, structure, members and agenda, along with a recommendation on how to proceed further in this matter, be sent to the next Synod of the Canadian Reformed Churches by the Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad;
 - iii that Synod Smithville 1980 refrain from any official endorsement of this Conference due to its preliminary character;
- g. to charge the Committee to inform the Churches from time to time about that which is of interest in the Correspondence with Churches abroad" (Acts 1980, Art. 153).

II RULES FOR CORRESPONDENCE

The rules for correspondence referred to in our mandate are:

- a. To take mutual heed that the corresponding Churches do not deviate from the Reformed Confession in doctrine, liturgy, Church government and discipline.
- b. To forward to each other the agenda and decisions of the broader assemblies and to admit each other's delegates to these assemblies as advisors:
- c. To inform each other concerning changes of, or additions to, the Confession,

Church Order and Liturgical Forms, while the corresponding Churches pledge to express themselves on the question whether such changes or additions are considered acceptable.

- d. To accept each other's attestations and to permit each other's ministers to preach the Word and to administer the Sacraments.
- e. To give account to each other regarding correspondence with third parties (*Acts* 1962, Art. 139).

III GENERAL ACTIVITIES

1. Declarations

- a. The following ministers of the Canadian Reformed Churches, planning to travel abroad, requested and received a declaration that they are ministers in good standing in the Churches: The Revs. B.J. Berends, J. Geertsema, J. Faber, P.K. Meijer, W. Pouwelse, W. Loopstra, L. Selles, Cl. Stam, M. VanBeveren, M. VanderWel.
- b. The following minister of De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland visited Canada: The Rev. C. Stam.

From the Deputies of these Churches, our Committee received a declaration that he is a minister in good standing.

2. Acts — Yearbook

- a. As soon as the *Acts* of General Synod Smithville, 1980, were received a sufficient number of copies were sent to the Deputies of the sister Churches in Australia, The Netherlands and South Africa.
- b. Copies of the *Yearbook* of our Churches, although not an official publication of the Churches, have been sent to these Deputies. In this way they are kept informed about the general activities and statistics of the Churches.

3. Notification and invitations

Letters of notification and invitation were sent to the sister Churches in Australia, The Netherlands and South Africa regarding the convening of Synod Cloverdale 1983. Copies of the Provisional Agenda were sent as soon as they were received.

4. Interim report

Your Committee published a report on the subject of Korea in *Clarion* (Vol. 30, No. 22, Nov. 6, 1981). A copy of this report is to be found in the enclosures.

IV THE FREE REFORMED CHURCHES OF AUSTRALIA

1. Correspondence

- a. After Synod Smithville 1980 met, The Free Reformed Churches were informed about the main decisions of this Synod, as well as the mandate of the new Committee on Correspondence with Churches Abroad.
- b. After the receipt of the Acts of Synod Armadale 1980, a letter was sent to Australia (April 28, 1981) informing the Deputies that a certain letter mentioned in these Acts and addressed to General Synod Smithville 1980 was never received. For more details on this matter, see below.
- c. In April of this year we received notice that the Synod of the Free Reformed Churches would meet the following month in Kelmescott. A Provisional Agenda was included. No report from the Australian Deputies for Correspondence was received.

Our Committee extended greetings on behalf of the Canadian Reformed Churches to this Synod and wished them the blessings and guidance of the Lord in all their deliberations.

- d. A letter was received from the Australian Deputies conveying their best wishes upon the work of General Synod Cloverdale, as well as informing us that the

Free Reformed Churches of Australia have decided to join the International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC).

2. Acts of Synod Armadale, 1980

The 1980 Synod of the Free Reformed Churches in Australia met from September 1-5, 1980, in Armadale. We would like to mention the following decisions:

- a. Synod under the heading *Report Church Book* made the following statement, "General concern is expressed that the lack of close and effective cooperation with the Canadian Committees over the years will eventually lead to a glaring lack of uniformity between the Churches. Consultation would also be required re the text of the Heidelberg Catechism as this is considered to be part of the essence of correspondence with Churches abroad" (Acts, Art. 19). Later the Deputies Church Book received the following mandate, "to continue the contact with the Canadian Committee for Church Book, with particular emphasis on joint consultations concerning the hymns and the revised texts of the Ecumenical and the Reformed Creeds, the Liturgical Forms and the Prayers, so that soundly based uniformity be achieved" (Art. 53, 7b).

In addition, under the heading "Foreign Sister Churches" the following comment is made, "Re Canada a developing divergence is noted in matters of common concern such as new versions of the Creeds, Liturgical Forms and Prayers, due to lack of consultation. Synod decides to send a letter to the Synod of the Canadian Reformed Churches convening at Smithville next November, explaining our concern in the light of the official correspondence as we desire it" (Art. 30).

Finally, in the appendix the following letter can be found addressed to the Synod of the Canadian Reformed Churches, dated Sept. 5, 1980:

Esteemed Brothers in the Lord,

During our Synod discussions of the Report submitted by our Deputies for Correspondence with Churches Abroad it struck us that in various areas which call for close cooperation between your Churches and ours little could be seen of significant steps in the right direction.

Out of concern for the obvious possibility of diverging directions in the future, we decided to voice this concern in the less customary way of a Synod-to-Synod letter.

We think in particular of matters of importance to all our Churches, such as the revision of the Church Order, the revision of Creeds, Liturgical Forms and Prayers, closely linked with the matter of Bible translation. The necessity for close consultation in these work areas must be apparent to you, as it affects the contents of the relationship between corresponding Churches. However, this consultation has been lacking completely.

Brothers, we do fear that this relationship could be damaged by decisions which, however beneficial they could be internally, within your Churches, do less than justice to the standing of your Churches in the world communion of Reformed Churches. Hence this urgent plea to give this matter your earnest attention.

May God bless your deliberation and guide your Churches by His Word and Spirit. (Signed by the Chairman and 2nd Clerk)

For your Committee's reaction see below: "Matter *Church Book*."

- b. Under the heading of *Mission* we find that a full-time mission worker, br. Peter 't Hart, has been appointed. As to the status and particular responsibilities of this brother, no information is supplied.
- c. Regarding the *Church Order*, the Deputies submitted a draft on the first 15 articles of a newly revised Church Order. After presenting Synod with an "excellent sample," they were charged to continue their work.
- d. On the subject of *Mission*, Synod decided "to instruct the Church council of Arma-

- dale to investigate all aspects of the future development of the mission work in WA, with particular emphasis on the Scriptural methods to be followed, work areas to be defined and optimal use of resources" (Art. 34).
- e. Synod decided to appoint new deputies with the mandate to continue the contact with the *Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia* and "to keep in touch with developments between the Dutch deputies and the Free Church of Scotland."
 - f. Various letters of appeal by the *Rev. A.H. Dekker* were considered. In the end the Synod decided to give "its approbation to the decision of the Church of Launceston to dismiss *Rev. Dekker* in accordance with Article 11 of the Church Order. *Rev. Dekker* will be eligible for calls from the sister Churches which will be advised of this. The Church of Launceston is to be reprimanded by letter concerning the fact that help from the bond of Churches was not requested at an earlier stage" (Art. 55).
 - g. The *Rev. P. Lok* attended the Synod as a representative of *De Gereformeerde Kerken in The Netherlands*.
 - h. Synod also decided to adopt a set of regulations to govern its meeting.
 - i. A Yearbook is attached to the Acts and supplies the following statistics (1980):
 - Albany — 441 members
 - Armadale — 1064 members
 - Launceston — 379 members.

3. Matter Church Book

The above mentioned highlights pay quite some attention to the matter of the *Church Book* and the relations between the Canadian Reformed Churches and the Free Reformed Churches of Australia on that matter. We, as Deputies, were rather surprised to read the *Acts* 1980 and find these comments, plus the letter that has or was to be sent to Synod Smithville 1980. The reason for this was due to the fact that Synod Smithville *never received* the Australian letter and neither did your Deputies. As a result, we wrote the Australian Committee for Correspondence in a letter dated April 28, 1981, and told them that Synod Smithville had not received their letter and thus was unaware of their concerns. Furthermore, we advised them to forward their concerns on to the next Synod to be held in 1983. Until now no letter, either of explanation or to be passed on to Synod, has been received. In light of this, we see no way that Synod can fully address itself to this matter.

4. Conclusion

From the correspondence and the *Acts* 1980 we may conclude with gratitude that the Free Reformed Churches of Australia desire to be faithful to God's Word, the Confessions, and the Church Order.

5. Recommendation

On the basis of the above, the Committee recommends to Synod that the correspondence with the Free Reformed Churches in Australia be continued in accordance with the adopted rules.

V DE GEREFORMEERDE KERKEN IN NEDERLAND

1. Correspondence

- a. After Synod Smithville 1980 the Dutch sister Churches were informed about certain matters pertaining to our relations with them. Decisions taken with respect to Korea and the Constituent Assembly of the International Conference of Reformed Churches were also communicated to them.
- b. The Committee received the provisional agenda of the General Synod Arnhem 1981. We informed the Deputies in The Netherlands that we would not be sending a delegate to this Synod, due to the expense factor and the upcoming Constituent Assembly of the ICRC in Groningen. Best wishes for this Synod were sent by telegram.
- c. On April 27, 1981, we wrote to the Dutch Deputies and directed their attention

to Art. 145 of the Acts Smithville 1980, in which permission is asked to use the Form for the Ordination/Installation of Missionaries in translated format. No response has been received.

- d. On Dec. 30, 1981, we wrote again to the Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad, as it is now called and included a copy of the changes to the Korean (Koryu-Pa) Forms of Government which we had translated into the English language. We also informed them that the Theological College had received degree granting status.
- e. The Deputies were told in a letter dated March 19, 1982, that the Canadian Reformed Churches would be represented at the Constituent Assembly of the ICRC by the Rev. M. VanBeveren and J. Visscher. We also asked them to consider the possibility of inviting the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. They replied at a later date that such an invitation was beyond the mandate that they had received from Synod Arnhem 1981.
- f. We have received notification of the upcoming General Synod of our Dutch sister Churches to be held as of April 25, 1984, in Heemse. An invitation to send a delegate from the Canadian Reformed Churches was included.

2. Acts of General Synod Arnhem 1979

This Synod was convened for the purpose of appointing a professor of dogmatics at the Theological College at Kampen due to the forthcoming retirement of Prof. Dr. L. Doekes.

Prof. J. Kamphuis was appointed professor of dogmatics and Drs. D. Deddens was appointed to take Prof. Kamphuis' place, namely, as professor of ecclesiology.

3. Acts of General Synod Arnhem 1980

The purpose of this General Synod *ad hoc* was to appoint a professor of Old Testament at the Theological College at Kampen due to the forthcoming retirement of Prof. Drs. H.J. Schilder.

Appointed was Prof. Drs. H.M. Ohmann, professor at our Theological College at Hamilton.

4. Acts of General Synod Arnhem 1981

- a. This regular Synod dealt extensively with the *revision of the creeds, liturgical forms and prayers*.

1. The following were adopted after revision and declared free for use in the Churches:

The Apostles' Creed, the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, Form for the Baptism of Infants, Form for the Baptism of Adults, Form for the Public Profession of Faith, Form for the Lord's Supper, Abbreviated Form for the Lord's Supper, Form for Discipline over members who have not made profession of faith, Form for the Ordination/Installation of Ministers of the Word, Form for the Ordination of Missionaries, Form for the Ordination of Elders and Deacons, Form for the Solemnization of Marriage, Prayers for the Illumination by the Holy Spirit, Prayer for Thanksgiving, Prayers at the Opening and Closing of the meeting of Consistory, Classis and Synod, Prayers for the Opening and Closing of the meeting of the Deacons.

Regarding Article 9 of the Belgic Confession a committee was appointed to investigate whether or not 1 John 5:7 could be maintained as a proof-text for the Trinity.

2. Provisionally adopted, and not free for use in the Churches, were revisions of the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed and the Canons of Dort as well as some Forms and several Prayers.

- b. Synod decided not to appoint general *deputies ad Art. 19, C.O.* (for indigent students), but to urge the deputies *ad Art. 19 C.O.* of the several Regional Synods to adopt among themselves a suitable form of cooperation.

- c. Theological students were strongly advised not to accept *student loans* from the government. The required repayment of the loans by ministers could mean extra financial burdens for the Churches.
- d. Much attention was paid to the *revision of the Psalm and Hymn Book* of our sister Churches. Synod again adopted several rhymings to be tested by the Churches.
- e. It was decided to introduce a classical examination for missionaries and to establish an *institute for the training of missionaries*. This institute will be independent and yet work in close cooperation with the Theological College.
- f. Synod adopted a letter to be sent to the *Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken* in The Netherlands as an appeal for unity in the faith.
- g. Synod decided to invite the sister Churches abroad and the Churches with which provisional Ecclesiastical Contact is maintained to a Constituent meeting for a *Reformed International Conference*. (The invitation together with the agenda for the conference was received by General Synod Smithville 1980; see Acts Art. 153, B, 4, b).
- h. The Ecclesiastical Fellowship with the *Presbyterian Church in Korea* was continued in accordance with the adopted rules. It was reported that Prof. Dr. J. Douma had given guest-lectures at the Theological Seminary at Busan in 1980, and that during the same year Drs. J.M. Batteau and Drs. N.H. Gootjes had been sent out by the Netherlands Churches to serve at the Seminary as missionary professors.

It was decided to discontinue the financial support to the Seminary; its library, however, would still receive \$3,000 annually.

- i. A missionary lecturer has been sent out to teach at the Theological School of the Churches of East-Sumba-Savu. Ecclesiastical Fellowship with these Churches was continued.
- j. With the *Free Reformed Churches of Australia* and *Die Vrije Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika* the Ecclesiastical Fellowship was continued.
- k. General Synod Groningen-Zuid 1978 had decided to establish Ecclesiastical Fellowship with the *Igreja Presbiteriana Coreana do São Paulo*, but due to several reasons the relationship has not yet been realized.
- l. Synod decided to establish relations with the following Churches:

Ecclesiastical Fellowship with the *Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ireland*; the provisional relation of Ecclesiastical Contact with the *Free Church of Scotland*, the *Dutch Reformed Church of Sri Lanka*, the *Reformed Presbyterian Church in Taiwan*, *Second Presbytery*, the *Reformed Church of Japan* and, if certain conditions are met, with *Die Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika* ("Dopperkerken").

With the following Churches initial contact will be continued: the *Reformed Churches of New Zealand*, the *Orthodox Presbyterian Church of New Zealand*, the *Orthodox Presbyterian Church* in the USA, the *Igreja Presbiteriana Conservadora do Brasil* and the *National Presbyterian Church of Chile*.

The Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad was instructed to seek contact with the *Presbyterian Church in America* (PCA) and with a Church in Nigeria, and to continue certain contacts in Europe.

With a view to the many contacts abroad, the Committee received the mandate to publish a bulletin in the English language every six months. Synod renewed the instruction to seek contact with other Churches whenever they would see a possibility for ecclesiastical fellowship and to prepare the realization of it in accordance with the adopted rules.

- m. Concerning the *Rules for Correspondence* Synod decided to request the sister Churches abroad to change Rule c as follows:

"The Churches shall inform each other as much and as soon as possible concerning proposals (c.q. reports) and decisions which pertain to linguistic or such like changes of the Confession or nonessential changes of the Church Order and the Liturgical Forms; concerning proposals for changes in essen-

tial points of doctrine, however, the sister Churches abroad shall receive ample opportunity (at least three years) to forward their judgment before binding decisions will be made."

Another change as proposed by Synod is that before the Churches abroad admit each other's ministers to preach the Word and to administer the Sacraments, the ministers shall submit a declaration from the Committee on Relations Abroad of their Churches that they are ministers in good standing.

- n. Synod decided to change the name of its Committee on Correspondence with Churches Abroad to "*Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad*." The argumentation for the change was that the old name caused misunderstanding in the English speaking Churches. While the Dutch word *correspondentie* may include the exercise of ecclesiastical fellowship between sister Churches, the English word *correspondence* means only exchange of letters.
- o. Regarding the *Canadian Reformed Churches* it was decided to continue the Ecclesiastical Fellowship with them in accordance with the adopted rules.

The Committee on Relations Abroad was instructed

1. to supply your Committee with information on the manner in which our sister Churches maintain correspondence with the Presbyterian Church in Korea;
2. to attempt to discuss (a) possible contrasting views as to the evaluation of the changes in the Dutch Church Order which the Canadian Committee was instructed to evaluate, and (b) the Dutch criticism;
3. to express the thankfulness of the Netherlands Churches that the instruction at the Theological College in Hamilton could continue without interruption and that the vacancy caused by the departure of Prof. H.M. Ohmann could be filled;
4. to pass on to the Netherlands Committee on the Revision of the *Church Book* the Canadian decisions re the *Book of Praise*.

5. Evaluation

- a. The revisions of the creeds, liturgical forms and prayers that were definitely adopted by General Synod Arnhem 1981, as mentioned above sub 4, a, 1, have been scrutinized by your Committee in accordance with the Rules for Correspondence. Your Committee declares that it considers the revisions to be in accordance with the Holy Scriptures and in harmony with Reformed church polity.
- b. Concerning the proposed change of Rule c (see above sub 4, m), it should be noted that in 1967 (General Synod Amersfoort-West) our Netherlands sister Churches had adopted Rule c of the Rules for Correspondence with Churches Abroad as follows:

"to consult beforehand concerning possible changes of, or additions to, the Confession, Church Order and Liturgical Forms."

Our General Synods since 1954, however, consistently refused to accept the conditions of *prior consultation* as they considered that stipulation impractical and unnecessary. General Synod Hoogeveen (1969/1970) recognized the position of our Synods and judged that Rule c of our Rules for Correspondence guaranteed sufficiently the unity of the faith with our Churches.

It may be observed that the proposal to change Rule c can be considered an admission by our sister Churches that their old Rule c was indeed impractical. It was reported to Synod that when General Synod Groningen-Zuid 1978 adopted the revised Church Order, none of their corresponding sister Churches had sent any prior reaction.

The now proposed Rule c is introduced by the Netherlands Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad as clearer and as making it possible for the Canadian Reformed Churches to abolish their Rule c.

Your Committee, however, is of the opinion that the proposed Rule is more complicated than the old one. The distinction between essential and nonessential

changes as now proposed does not make the rule any clearer and is open to arbitrary application. Moreover, the second part of the proposed rule still implies *prior consultation beforehand*, but now with an undefined time-limit ("at least three years").

In the light of the decision of General Synod Orangeville 1968, Acts Art. 79, 6 (see also Report of Advisory Committee III, re Rules for Correspondence, page 96 and 97 of the Acts), our present Rule c is clear and provides a sufficient safeguard for maintaining the unity of the faith with Churches abroad.

- c. The second proposal to change the Rules for Correspondence pertains to the declaration to be submitted by a guest minister from abroad before he is granted the right to conduct services. The proposal is that the declaration will no longer be issued to the guest minister by the Committee of the Churches that are being visited but by the Committee of the Churches in which he is a minister. The change is in accordance with the decision of our General Synod Toronto 1974, Acts Art. 140. B. 3.
- d. Your Committee is surprised to read the instruction given by Synod to the Netherlands Committee on Relations Abroad (see above sub 4. o. b), namely, to attempt to discuss
 1. possible contrasting views as to the evaluation of the changes in the Dutch Church Order, which the Canadian Committee was instructed to evaluate, and
 2. the Dutch criticism.

While your Committee wondered about the meaning of this instruction, they noticed that the Report of the Netherlands Committee to Synod Arnhem 1981 makes mention of a personal discussion of a member of their Committee with Prof. Dr. J. Faber in *Clarion* regarding the question whether or not the Netherlands Churches had kept their rule of *prior consultation* when they adopted their revised Church Order. The Report then concludes, "Instead of criticizing the Netherlands Churches, Prof. Faber should have directed his criticism to the Canadian Committee."

As far as your Committee can gather from the official documents, a personal discussion inserted in the Report to General Synod was the only motive of Synod to give the above instruction to its Committee. Synod itself, however, does not appear sure about the issue since it speaks of *possible* contrasting views.

While your Committee has no intention of evaluating the above mentioned personal discussion, the fact that Synod Arnhem gave an instruction to its Committee regarding this matter, prompts your Committee to make some remarks.

Firstly, our Rules for Correspondence do not require that your Committee should scan all *proposals* concerning changes of, or additions to the Confession, Church Order and Liturgical Forms in our sister Churches and to judge whether or not the *proposals* to such changes and additions are considered acceptable. Rule c does not speak of *proposed* changes but of *adopted* changes. It would be very impractical and without much benefit if your Committee, not to mention our General Synods, had to react to all proposals submitted to the synods of our sister Churches — proposals which at a synod may be changed, amended, not acted upon and even rejected.

As far as the revised Dutch Church Order is concerned, it should be noted that two consecutive Synods of our sister Churches (1975 and 1978) dealt extensively with proposed revisions. Finally, in 1980, your Committee on Correspondence could report to General Synod Smithville that Synod Groningen-Zuid 1978 had adopted a revised Church Order, and that the Committee had scrutinized it, and declared it to be in accordance with the Holy Scriptures and in harmony with Reformed church polity. Synod Smithville implicitly adopted this judgment as their own.

Secondly, it is to be borne in mind that not the Committee on Correspondence but a General Synod makes the final judgment whether or not a sister Church abides by the Reformed Creeds and Church Order, and whether or not changes

or additions are considered acceptable. The Committee, on the basis of their scrutiny, investigation and evaluation only makes recommendations to the General Synod of their Churches.

From the foregoing, it is clear that the question whether or not the Dutch Church Order as revised in 1978 is acceptable, could be answered only in 1980, and not earlier, by General Synod Smithville. Your Committee does not know of any valid criticism that may be directed at them in this respect.

6. Conclusion

From the correspondence and the Acts of General Synods Arnhem 1979, 1980, and 1981, the Committee may conclude with thankfulness that De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland desire to be faithful to God's Word and to abide by the Reformed Creeds and Church Order.

7. Recommendations

Your Committee recommends to Synod

- a. not to accede to the request of General Synod Arnhem 1981 of our Netherlands sister Churches that their proposed Rule c for ecclesiastical fellowship (correspondence with Churches abroad) be adopted;
- b. to continue the correspondence with De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland in accordance with the adopted rules.

VI DIE VRIJE GEREFORMEERDE KERKE IN SUID-AFRIKA

1. Correspondence

- a. A few months after the close of Synod Smithville 1980 a letter was sent to the South African Deputies informing them of the decision of Synod to continue the correspondence relationship in force with Die Vrije Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika and telling them about some of the other significant decisions of Synod Smithville.
- b. A letter was received from the Deputies in South Africa on Sept. 21, 1981, informing us about the latest developments regarding the former congregation of the late Dr. C. VanderWaal (the so-called 14de laan - gemeenskap). They also requested a copy of the letter that we as Canadian deputies had sent to them about this congregation. They had mislaid this letter. To this we replied that we had sent them no special letter about this congregation, but that in response to letters from this congregation to us, we had referred them to the decision of the Synod of Toronto 1974 (Acts, Art. 57).
- c. Our Committee received a "Brief Report" of the Synod of Die Vrije Gereformeerde Kerke held at Johannesburg from April 16-20, 1982.
- d. On Oct. 8, 1982 we received a letter from the South African Deputies in which they apologized for not informing us about Synod Johannesburg 1982. We were also informed that this Synod had made a decision regarding the settling of brothers and sisters in the dispersion in Southern Africa. If brothers and sisters from abroad intend to settle in South Africa, they are requested to consult the Church of Johannesburg.
- e. In a letter received on July 6, 1983, the Deputies from South Africa notified us that Synod Johannesburg has adopted the rules of fraternal fellowship as drawn up by the Dutch sister Churches at Synod Arnhem 1981 (see under De Geref. Kerken in N.). They also mention that the former congregation of the late Dr. C. VanderWaal (the 14 de laan gemeenskap - Pretoria) has been admitted into the Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika (GKSA).

2. Acts of General Synod Pretoria 1980

At the time of preparation of our report to General Synod Smithville 1980 we had not as yet received the Acts of Gen. Synod Pretoria 1980. However because of the importance of some of the matters we decided to report to Synod Smithville on some

of the highlights, as we gleaned them from the report of the South African Deputies for Correspondence with Foreign Churches to Synod Pretoria 1980 and from the official Brief Report of Synod Pretoria 1980.

At this time we should mention some other matters of interest gleaned from the Acts of Synod Pretoria 1980:

- a. The situation at the time of Synod Pretoria 1980 was that the *Korean Presbyterian Church (Koryu-Pa)* had a "correspondent relationship" with Die Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika, while deputies for Die Vrije Gereformeerde Kerke found it difficult and slow to get answers from Korea. At the same time, the "Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland" has "ties of correspondence" with both Korean Presbyterian Church and Die Vrije Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika. Synod decided to continue the efforts for contact with the Koryu-Pa.
- b. General Synod Pretoria 1980 decided to continue the correspondence with the *Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland*.
- c. General Synod Pretoria discussed in particular the decision of the *Canadian Reformed Churches* at General Synod Coaldale to "recognize the Orthodox Presbyterian Church as true Churches of our Lord Jesus Christ" and to offer the OPC the temporary relationship of "ecclesiastical contact." Synod decided to charge its deputies to give the matter further study.

The Acts mention that the newly appointed deputies for correspondence with foreign Churches were charged to continue the correspondence with the *Canadian Reformed Churches*.

- d. The newly appointed deputies for correspondence with foreign Churches were also charged to continue the correspondence with the *Free Reformed Churches in Australia*.
- e. Synod Pretoria 1980 spent a considerable amount of time discussing the report of "Deputies for Contact with Church Formations in South Africa." This report concerned in particular the relationship with *Die Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika* (GKSA).

One of the obstacles for closer contact has been removed because these Churches have broken their relationship with the Synodical Reformed Churches in The Netherlands. There was considerable reluctance at this Synod to regard Die Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika as "true Churches of our Lord Jesus Christ" because of differences in lifestyle etc.

Synod decided to appoint new deputies for contact with these Churches.

3. Acts of General Synod Johannesburg 1982.

General Synod of Die Vrije Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika met at Johannesburg on April 16, 17, 19 and 20, 1982. All three Churches, Johannesburg, Kaapstad, and Pretoria were legally represented. Of the decisions made by this Synod, we mention the following:

- a. General Synod Pretoria 1971 had judged that ministers in Die Vrije Gereformeerde Kerke should not function as "marriage solemnizers in government service" and decided not to grant the request to authorize ministers in the confederation of Churches to perform civil *marriages*. The Church of Pretoria was of the opinion that this was an improper decision and requested Synod Johannesburg 1982 to take away this decision. Synod decided to grant this request and decided that from now on it would be left to the freedom of the Churches to request a licence to perform marriages for a minister or other office-bearer. A set of rules for the above was adopted.
- b. The differences with *Die Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika* have now been narrowed down to the following:
 1. Die Gereformeerde Kerk should break the ties with the RES.
 2. Die Gereformeerde Kerk should discontinue the practice of the so-called "double correspondence," for instance they have ecclesiastical relations with the

Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland and the Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken in The Netherlands.

3. Die Gereformeerde Kerk should condemn the practice of some of its ministers to conduct services in the "14de Laan Church" (a split from Die Vrije Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika).

The Synod appointed new deputies and they were charged to continue the discussions and report to the next Synod.

- c. General Synod Johannesburg 1982 decided to continue the existing relationship of *correspondence* with the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, the Free Reformed Churches in Australia and the Canadian Reformed Churches.

As far as the matter of "temporary ecclesiastical contact" was concerned, and as it is practised in both Canada and The Netherlands, there appeared to be some disagreement whether this was the proper way to proceed, especially because they did not want "two levels of correspondence."

It was decided not to "take over this model."

In this light, the decision with respect to the request of the Gereformeerde Kerken op Oost Soemba/Savoie for official ecclesiastical correspondence is strange. Synod felt that this might be desirable but would be very difficult, especially because of language differences and the lack of manpower on both sides. Synod then decided to instruct deputies to investigate to what extent the language differences would be an *impediment for the exercise of correspondence in accordance with the adopted rules and to look for a different kind of relationship that is Scripturally responsible* (emphasis-Comm).

Regarding the relationship with the Korean Presbyterian Church (Koryu-Pa), it was also decided to instruct deputies to *prepare a scripturally responsible form of ecclesiastical communion with the Korean Presbyterian Church, taking into consideration the differences in language and report to the next Synod* (emphasis-Comm).

As an example of difficulties in simple correspondence, it was reported that the Korean Presbyterian Church apologized in a letter, dated December 8, 1981, for not answering a letter from South Africa of April 30, 1979, while at the same time, neglecting to answer the questions in that letter.

4. Conclusion

From the correspondence and the *Acts* received we may conclude with gratitude that Die Vrije Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika desire to be faithful to God's Word, the Reformed Creeds and the Church Order.

5. Recommendation

On the basis of the above, the Committee recommends to Synod to continue the relationship with Die Vrije Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika in accordance with the adopted rules.

VII THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN KOREA (Koryu-Pa)

1. Form of Government

Synod Smithville 1980 charged our Committee to evaluate the Form of Government and to pass this evaluation on to you. On the surface this appears to be a rather straightforward request: however, we ran into difficulties because when we finally received the required material from Korea, we discovered that it was written in Korean characters, which none of us could read. Upon the suggestion of the Korean Deputies, the Rev. M. VanBeveren visited a certain Rev. Y. Ch. Kim in Toronto who supplied us with a verbal summary of the contents of the Korean material. While being thankful for this cooperation, the Committee was of the opinion that an actual written translation would be more helpful since it would allow a much more accurate scrutiny of the Form of Government.

To that end we once again approached the Rev. Bruce F. Hunt in Philadelphia, the former OPC missionary in Korea and a great help to us in researching the Historical Review. He obtained for us the services of Mr. Hong-Kwun Chung, a former teacher of Oriental languages in the Koryu-Pa Seminary-College at Busan. He, in turn, was assisted as far as the English language was concerned by Mr. Dwaine Whitley, an elder in the OPC.

After some time these men supplied us with a translation of the Korean material. Upon receipt of this document we decided to share it with the Dutch Deputies. In addition, we discovered that what we had was not a revised edition of the entire Form of Government, but a list of the *changes* that had been made.

As a Committee we have carefully studied these changes. We have found many interesting things in them, but nothing that is of such a nature that would hinder us from stating categorically that these changes are consistent with the principles of Reformed church polity.

In terms of contents, these changes deal with some of the following subjects: the various officers in the Church — lay evangelist, woman exhorter, licensed preachers, candidates for the ministry, the installed pastor, pastor emeritus, meritorious pastor, military chaplain, retired pastor, institutionary chaplain, missionary, subsidiary military pastor, elder, diaconate, financial matters, duties of a Session, congregational meetings, duty of the Presbytery, authority of the General Assembly, training for the ministry, examination of candidates, ceremony of installation, a minister coming from another denomination, and other matters.

This list of subjects immediately indicates that the Korean Form of Government is both more elaborate and deals with topics not mentioned in our Church Order. Of special curiosity might be the position of a "woman exhorter." She is a lady over 50 years of age, elected by two-thirds of the congregation, but not ordained. Her task is to visit the sick, the weak, and those under trial. The designation "meritorious pastor" is another one that rings strange in our ears; however, it describes a pastor who retires at 70 years of age and whose merits are remembered by the Presbytery which in turn conveys upon him this honorary title.

We could continue describing the contents of this document; however, that would serve little purpose beyond satisfying the curious. If Synod or its Advisory Committee would deem it beneficial to have copies made of this material, the Committee will gladly comply.

In short, we find nothing in these changes that constitutes an obstacle with respect to the recognition of The Presbyterian Church in Korea as a Church being governed by the principles of Reformed or Presbyterian Church government.

Having scrutinized these changes, there still remains the matter of the rest of the Form of Government. It is not available, as far as we could ascertain, in the English language; however, from speaking with Dr. K.S. Lee and Dr. S.G. Hur in Groningen, we learned that the remainder contains no surprises and is in line with your classic Presbyterian Form of Government. It differs not at all from the principles of Presbyterian church government as found with the OPC, the Free Church at Scotland, and so on.

Taking this into account, as well as the assurances of the Dutch Deputies, we have as a Committee no reason to suspect the remaining Articles of the Form.

Hence, the Form of Government in the Presbyterian Church in Korea does not form an impediment to recognition of these Churches as true Churches of Our Lord.

2. Communications

Synod Smithville also mandated our Committee to deal with the state of communications with the Korean Churches and to evaluate whether a correspondence relationship could be responsibly maintained. Needless to say, this part of our charge has a difficult side to it seeing that it is impossible for us to predict how things might develop in the future.

At best, we can only point you to the following factors:

- a. For quite a number of years we had difficulties establishing a proper line of communications with the Korean Churches. Then in 1980 the Fraternal Relations Committee informed us that this was the result of internal difficulties and the fact that the material being requested was still in the preparatory stage. Furthermore, they promised to do whatever was possible to improve the line of communications.
- b. Since receiving this assurance in May of 1980 we have had no real reason to put the matter to the test.
Our attention was focused on obtaining a translation of the material sent and of considering their request for correspondence with our Churches.

It may, however, be helpful to inform you that there are indications that communications have improved. In March 1983 we received a brief report *in English* of the 32nd General Assembly held in September of 1982. Its highlights included the following:

- 150 Churches which had previously left The Presbyterian Church in Korea, returned;
 - all seminary graduates shall serve in the Churches for two years before ordination;
 - one more Presbytery (Taegu) was organized and the number of Presbyteries is now 14;
 - current relations with other Churches:
Free Reformed Churches in The Netherlands (Vrij)
Free Reformed Churches in Australia
Reformed Church in South Africa
Orthodox Presbyterian Church
Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod
Overseas Missionary Fellowship
 - newly established relations with
Reformed Church in Japan
Free Reformed Churches in South Africa
 - statistics — 736 Churches (including unorganized)
153,862 total members (reunited Churches not included)
 - missionary work:
Taiwan — 2 missionary families
Brazil, Spain, France, West Germany, Canada, Japan, USA (among Korean immigrants)
South-East Asia — 10 missionaries planned among the native peoples.
- c. In connection with this, it should also be mentioned that the Dutch Deputies who requested the reaction of the Korean Churches to our last Historical Review (see Acts 1980) received a rather quick and extensive reply, again in the English language, from the Fraternal Relations Committee.
 - d. Finally, every year now we receive a notification of the upcoming General Assembly and an invitation, also in English, to be present. Our response has been to extend to them our best wishes, but at the same time to remind them that no official relationship is yet in place between our respective Churches.
 - e. From these remarks, you can see that the Korean Churches appear to be making a more concerted attempt to answer inquiries addressed to them, are informing others of developments within their Churches, and are doing so in the English language. No doubt for our sister Churches in The Netherlands the matter of communication has been helped considerably by the presence of Profs. Batteau and Gootjes in Korea. In the event of difficulties, these men can be relied on to supply the necessary information.

In summary, we may say that while there are indications of improvement in the matter of communications, we can as Committee make no predictions about the future.

3. Language

In addition to the foregoing matter, there is also the whole question of language. In a sense this presents us with an even greater difficulty. For while we are appreciative of the fact that the Korean brothers write to us in English, it is nevertheless so that we as a Committee are called upon "to take mutual heed that the corresponding Churches do not deviate from the Reformed Confession in doctrine, liturgy, church government and discipline." To fulfill such a charge requires that the Committee be familiar with the Korean language, which we are not and probably never will be. The only way that we can "take heed" is to do so indirectly through English summaries of the actions of the General Assembly, through translations of pertinent material, through using the good offices of Profs. Batteau and Gootjes and through discussions at meetings of the International Conference of Reformed Churches. In short, language difficulties mean that we cannot exercise the first rule of correspondence to the same degree and with the same accuracy as we currently do with the other sister Churches.

And now the question: "Should this therefore lead us to reject the request of the Korean Churches to establish sister Church relations with them?" We do not think so! What we have with the Korean Churches, and what we will be confronted with more often in the future, is a request for a relationship with a Church that speaks a different language, has a different social and cultural background, and has a communication system that may not be nearly as advanced as ours. The request from the Korean Churches for correspondence is the first from a Church in the so-called "Third World," and we can be sure that it will be followed by more. What we are saying is that if we reject the Korean Churches on the ground of language difficulties we will be, by that very fact, rejecting many other Churches with whom the same problems will be encountered. In effect, we would be turning our backs to the many small, struggling Churches in the "Third World."

In this connection we would point you to that part of our report dealing with South Africa wherein mention is made of a request from De Gereformeerde Kerk op Oost Soemba/Savoë for correspondence. The Synod of Johannesburg 1982 reacted to this by instructing the deputies to investigate whether language would be an impediment to correspondence and to *look for a different kind of relationship* (emphasis — ours). In the case of the Korean Churches, Synod Johannesburg charged the deputies to prepare a Scripturally responsible form of ecclesiastical communion with the Presbyterian Church in Korea taking into consideration the difference in language.

The South African sister Churches would appear to be convinced that in the face of linguistic difficulties correspondence is not an ideal relationship to apply to either Oost Soemba/Savoë or to Korea. They seem to be looking in the direction of an alternative to correspondence.

We might also inform you that at the meeting in Groningen some time was spent informally discussing the matter of the rules of correspondence and their suitability for Churches that are not of Dutch origin. The reaction of the delegates was that a number of problems were being encountered and that attention should be given to making the rules more flexible.

Perhaps in anticipation of these difficulties the Church at Surrey overtured Synod 1980 to "study the feasibility of having another, less comprehensive relationship (i.e. a relationship different from correspondence) with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and possibly other Churches of our Lord such as the Koryu-Pa." Various grounds were attached to this request (see Acts 1980, Art. 154, 2, d, e, f, g). Synod reacted to this request in negative fashion stating in its conclusions:

1. "There is no reason to establish a different form of permanent ecclesiastical relationship with other Churches in the world than as regulated in the rules for correspondence.

2. These rules can be applied realistically according to the circumstances, like the lesser or greater degree of difference between the Churches" (Acts 1980, Art. 154).

In coming to these Conclusions Synod made a number of Considerations, and a case could be made, for stating that some of them are of doubtful character. To say that "rules for permanent interchurch relations must be dictated by Scripture and not by reality" would appear to be a false dilemma. And then to continue on in that same Consideration to state "these Scriptural rules should be applied realistically" makes it almost contradictory. In short, we have our reservations about the manner of Synod Smithville's response to the Church at Surrey.

In any case, if we read this decision properly then it would appear to give us as a Committee the right to propose to you something which is flexible within the context of the rules for correspondence. The way that South Africa appears to be moving is then ruled out. No alternative relationship, but rather different applications of the one relationship called "correspondence." In line with this Synod Smithville charged your Committee "to make recommendations to the Synod regarding a future relationship with these (Korean) Churches." In light of the Conclusions of Acts 1980 Art. 154 we read this as leaving the door open to other possibilities within the context of correspondence, for it does not say that we are to make recommendations regarding correspondence, but "regarding a future relationship."

4. Correspondence and Korea

But where does this leave us with respect to Korea? As Committee we have spent quite some years occupying ourselves with the Korean question. We have sent you a number of reports, including an extensive Historical Review in two parts. We have evaluated the Confessions, church government, history and character of these Churches. In summary, we must state that there is nothing that forms an impediment to our recognizing the Presbyterian Church in Korea (Koryu-Pa) as a true Church of our Lord Jesus Christ and to entering into an official relationship with this Church. The only question that remains is, "what kind of a relationship — correspondence in its present form or correspondence in a revised form?"

As a Committee we recommend to you that the current rules for correspondence, in a *revised form*, be offered to the Presbyterian Church in Korea. In terms of revision, we propose to add the words "insofar as the circumstances will allow" to rule a., to change "Church Order" in rule c. to "Form of Government." We further realize that rule d. may generate some debate and confusion in the Churches, as if suddenly every visiting minister from Korea has access to the pulpit in the Canadian Reformed Churches; however, the understanding has always been that a visiting minister from a sister Church must have a declaration of good standing from his Church and be invited by a local consistory to lead in the worship services. Hence, this rule offers no particular problems.

In addition, to offering the Presbyterian Church in Korea these slightly revised rules, we would also recommend that you give our Committee the mandate to approach the sister Churches concerning the matter of interchurch relations. As things now stand the South African Churches may be about to enter on a different pathway in searching for an alternative relationship. We are opting, if Synod agrees with our recommendation, for a greater degree of flexibility in the application of correspondence. Meanwhile the Dutch Churches continue to stress the matter of prior consultation in their rules. What this means is that the sister Churches are moving in different directions on the matter of ecclesiastical relations. Surely that is cause for concern and for opening up discussion on this matter. It may be that such a discussion will lead to one set of rules that is mutually acceptable and sufficiently flexible to apply to all Churches.

5. Recommendations

On the basis of the above, your Committee recommends:

- a. that the Presbyterian Church in Korea (Koryu-Pa) be recognized as a true Church of our Lord Jesus Christ;
- b. that we offer to them the status of sister Church governed by the following rules of correspondence:
 - i To take mutual heed insofar as the circumstances will allow that the corresponding Churches do not deviate from the Reformed Confession in doctrine, liturgy, church government and discipline.
 - ii To forward to each other the agenda and decisions of the broader assemblies and to admit each other's delegates to these assemblies as advisors.
 - iii To inform each other concerning changes of, or additions to, the Confession, Form of Government and Liturgical Forms, while the corresponding Churches pledge to express themselves on the question whether such changes or additions are considered acceptable.
 - iv To accept each other's attestations and to permit each other's ministers to preach the Word and to administer the Sacraments.
 - v To give account to each other regarding correspondence with third parties.
- c. that we inform the Presbyterian Church in Korea about the regulations that govern visiting ministers, namely the need for a declaration of good standing to be issued to the minister;
- d. that the Committee for Correspondence be charged to initiate a discussion with the sister Churches regarding the application of the rules of correspondence to various Churches and the creation of alternative relationships. Furthermore, that an attempt be made to come to a uniform set of rules that would be flexible but also faithful to the principles of interchurch relations.

6. Criticism of the Historical Review by the Dutch Deputies

In dealing with the Korean matter there remains still one part to be dealt with, namely "to evaluate the criticism of the Deputies of the Netherlands sister Churches on the Historical Review." As Committee we have evaluated the criticism received and published the results of that evaluation in an article printed in the November 6, 1981 issue of *Clarion* (a copy of this article is appended to this report). The conclusion was that we had found no reason to amend or retract our conclusions/consequences as stated in the Historical Review.

Subsequent to this the Dutch Deputies were so kind as to present us with a copy of a report written for them by Prof. J.M. Batteau entitled, "The Hap Dong Presbyterian Church Group in Korea: An Overview." This report was prepared on site in Korea and gives a great deal of additional material and insight into the Presbyterian Church situation in Korea.

It should also be said that the Dutch Deputies had commissioned this report in large measure because they were desirous to check the validity of our Historical Review. And what does it say now about the Review? To quote Prof. Batteau, "The Canadian report, by the way, is an excellent and accurate one, and deserves careful reading by all those interested in these questions" (p. 9). His findings in the end run parallel to our own, and on the matter of the Hap Dong, constitute an elaboration on what we have found.

In light of the comments of Prof. Batteau, we remain more convinced than ever that our conclusions/consequences are correct.

We would, however, like to clear up a misunderstanding which has crept into Prof. Batteau's report, as well as into the reports of some of our sister Churches. Prof. Batteau wrote, "the Report-Visscher recommends that the Canadian Reformed Churches offer a sister Church relationship to the Hap-Dong Church (which?) if they would indeed offer such a relationship to the Kosin Church (another name for the Presbyterian Church in Korea [Koryu-Pa] — Committee)."

In actual fact we recommended nothing of the sort. Under the heading *Consequences* we stated, "In light of the above, your Committee believes it to be only fair and

honest that, should the General Synod 1980 decide to offer to establish an official relationship with the Koryu-Pa, *because they have requested this*, we should be *willing to consider the establishment of a similar relationship with the Hap Dong, if so requested by these Churches*" (emphasis ours — Committee). It can thus be seen that we were careful in our wording and placed the onus on the Hap Dong. If *they* approach us and if *they* request a relationship with us, then we in turn will have to be fair and evenhanded with them. Hence our Review makes no mention of us "offering" a relationship to the Hap Dong.

With these remarks, we conclude our historical investigation and maintain our conclusions/consequences.

VIII THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF REFORMED CHURCHES (ICRC)

1. Delegates

Upon being notified by the Convening Church, De Gereformeerde Kerken in The Netherlands, that the Constituent Assembly of the International Conference of Reformed Churches would be held from October 26 — November 4, 1982, in Groningen, The Netherlands, the Committee delegated Rev. M. VanBeveren and Rev. J. Visscher to represent the Canadian Reformed Churches. This delegation was made in response to our mandate "that the Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad be authorized to send two delegates to this Conference" (Acts, Art. 153).

2. Appointments

The Assembly appointed the Rev. M. VanBeveren as Clerk and later made him the Provisional Secretary of the ICRC. The Assembly appointed the Rev. J. Visscher as a member of the Committee on the Constitution, together with the Rev. J.N. Macleod of Scotland and the Rev. D.W.H. Thomas of Ireland, and later made him the alternate Provisional Secretary. We relay this information to you to show to what extent your delegates participated in this Assembly.

3. Report

In reporting on this Assembly we would refer you in the first place to the article written by one of your delegates and published in *Clarion* (Year-End Issue 1982), to the official *Proceedings* and to the Constitution and Regulations (see the attached enclosures in the appendix). From these documents a fairly well-rounded picture can be obtained of the actions of the Assembly.

4. Questions, Reservations and Objections

As a further elaboration on this Assembly we would like to draw your attention to some questions that were raised both before and after the Assembly met:

a. *Invitations*

To begin with it should be mentioned that the organization, as well as the invitations extended to this Assembly, was firmly in the hands of the Dutch Deputies. They had received a mandate from Synod Arnhem 1981 as to who to invite and what to discuss. This is not to say that there was no flexibility in the agenda, for there was; however, in the matter of invitations there was no flexibility. We approached the Dutch Deputies with the request to invite the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. They later replied that such a request went beyond the mandate they had received and the list of Churches they had been told to invite. Needless to say, we lamented this development.

b. *Sister Churches Only?*

Another issue that arose regarding invitations to particular Churches centered on the opinion of some who wrote in various Church magazines that they would have preferred an Assembly composed of the original four sister Churches: Australia, Canada, The Netherlands and South Africa.

While we can understand and sympathize with such an opinion, we must point out that such a viewpoint had been rendered untenable by the passage of time and developments. What we mean by that is this: there is no way that the Dutch Churches could have extended invitations to an Assembly restricted to the original four, and in so doing left out the Korean Churches with whom they also have correspondence. By the same token, it would have been impossible for the Australian Churches to have accepted an invitation which would have bypassed their sister Churches in Korea. The only real alternative the Dutch Churches had was to restrict the Assembly to those Churches with whom a correspondence relationship was in force and to refrain from sending invitations to those Churches with which preliminary ecclesiastical contact had been established. No doubt in order to make the Assembly as international as possible, they rejected such an alternative.

c. *Order of Business*

The order of business at the Assembly is another matter that has come under fire. The original agenda was set up in such a way that differences in Confessions, church polity, relations with other Churches, and missions would be discussed first. Thereafter the matter of the constitution and regulations would be dealt with.

We, as Canadian delegates, disagreed with the order of procedure. It was our concern that if the agenda remained structured in this way, that then a lot of time would be spent discussing and debating, but very little would be accomplished in terms of establishing a firm constitutional basis for the ICRC. The Canadian Churches had sent us to The Netherlands at a considerable expense and they would surely expect more for their money than a report of some speeches that were delivered and some debates that were held. They would want to know what concrete steps had been taken towards the establishment of the ICRC, how it would function and should we join. In light of these considerations, we therefore requested that the matter of formulating the constitution and regulations of the ICRC be given primacy of place on the agenda and that the papers to be delivered be scheduled to accommodate this change. The Assembly decided to do so.

Now, this change of emphasis was not met with agreement by all. Some were of the opinion that first all of the differences between the Three Forms of Unity and the Westminster Standards, between the Church Order and the Form of Government, between fraternal relations and correspondence must be ironed out and a common basis established before we could go over to constitutional matters and the establishment of the ICRC.

This view immediately came under attack because, as some delegates stated, we came here precisely because our Churches in their Assemblies/Synods were convinced that we have the Reformed faith in common. If that basic assumption had not been there, we would never have been delegated in the first place. Besides, others remarked, it would be rather optimistic to assume that those differences that do exist between us could be resolved after a few papers and several days of discussion. This is not to say that the differences between Churches originating from the continental Reformed tradition and those arising from the English-Scottish Presbyterian tradition are major, but surely it would take more than just one Assembly to understand each other fully and to smooth out all of the wrinkles that remain in our relationships.

Still, the fact that the Assembly subsequently decided to deal with the constitution first should not be construed as an indication that now all of the remaining differences would be swept under the carpet. Rather, it showed that the Assembly was of the opinion that in spite of our differences we were one in the Lord and that we should proceed to lay the foundation for an organization that would in the future assist in bringing that unity to even greater and clearer expression.

d. *The Three Forms of Unity Only?*

Another decision of the Assembly that has come under critical scrutiny is that in the Basis of the Constitution both the Three Forms of Unity and the Westminster Standards are mentioned. Some appear to be of the opinion that only the Three Forms of Unity should have been used in the Basis. At the bottom of such a view lies the opinion that either the Three Forms of Unity are sufficient for the task and/or they are superior to the Westminster Standards in various ways.

Now we do not want to launch into a discussion of the merits and demerits of respective Confessions; however, we would like to point out that such a viewpoint is either insensitive or unhistorical, or both. For many years the Reformed Churches have recognized that the Westminster Standards belong to that group of Confessions called Reformed. Every minister and student of symbolics is aware of that fact. Hence why the move to exclude the one and in so doing elevate the other? Also, it would be rather contradictory if the Australian, Canadian, and Dutch Churches, who have all recognized the Reformed character of the Westminster Standards, would suddenly support a move to exclude them from the Basis. Surely that would and could only be interpreted as an insult. One does not have to think about how we would react to an attempt to exclude our Confessions from something as important as the Basis of the ICRC.

e. *Membership*

With respect to the matter of membership in the ICRC, it should be noted that the Assembly was of the opinion that it had no alternative but to make those Churches represented at Groningen, charter members. This means that if they decide to join they will be admitted as members and be in a position to evaluate future applications for membership. If, however, it can be proven that any of the charter members are not in harmony with the Basis, their membership can be terminated. After ample discussion with the delegates, plus close examination of the various reports on correspondence, your Committee is of the opinion that no objections can be brought against any of the charter members that would disqualify them from membership in the ICRC.

f. *Authority*

On the point of authority, it should be clearly noted that the decisions of the ICRC shall be "advisory in character." The ICRC is not an attempt to build a super Church or an attempt to create an hierarchical structure that would lord it over the member Churches. Its purpose is to serve, not to rule, to advise, not to legislate.

g. *Benefits?*

Finally, the question has been asked, "what benefits do we derive as Churches from the ICRC?" To some extent that may be answered by pointing to the Purpose of the ICRC. There emphasis is placed on the Conference as a channel to express and promote the unity of faith, to encourage the fullest ecclesiastical fellowship, to promote missionary cooperation between Churches, to study common problems and issues, and to present a Reformed testimony to the world. Needless to say, these aims speak for themselves.

In addition, we as Committee, would draw your attention not just to the question, "what can we as Church get out of the ICRC?" but also "what contribution can we make to the ICRC?" To this more positive and constructive question, we would answer, "quite a few."

The international Reformed community that the ICRC would represent will always be a small one, composed in all probability of quite a number of young Churches from the Third World. As such these Churches are very much in need of various forms of assistance, and then we do not think primarily of financial assistance, but of advice and counsel in the areas of church government, theological education, missions, ethical matters and so forth. For this they look very much in the direction of the more established Reformed Churches. For instance,

at the Assembly questions arose as to whether our Theological College could be of assistance in training ministers for some of the smaller Churches. We were asked about the possibility of the Australian Churches cooperating with the mission work that the Church at Toronto is doing in Irian Jaya. Suggestions were made with regard to the development of a newsletter in the area of missions, as well as missions training, principles, practices and cooperation. In this way the list of areas that lend themselves to cooperative efforts can be expanded.

Yes, and the Canadian Reformed Churches can play a vital role in all of these developments. We are not large in number, but in terms of heritage, we are rich indeed. Surely, it is incumbent upon us to share what the Lord has given us, to be good stewards of His gifts and to be a hand and a foot to each other, not just in our local Churches, but also in the larger Reformed community.

h. *Finances*

At the present time very little is known about the overall costs of the ICRC; however, it is expected that these will not be large or excessive. A formula is being worked on that will take into account both the size of the Church and its financial capabilities.

i. *Other Particulars*

The Convening Church for the first meeting of the International Conference of Reformed Churches will be the Free Church of Scotland. The date has been set at Sept. 3-13, 1985. The place is Edinburgh, Scotland.

The Provisional Committee has been appointed and consists of Rev. J.N. Macleod (Scotland), Rev. D.W.H. Thomas (Northern Ireland) and Mr. D.J. Van Wijnen (The Netherlands).

The Free Reformed Churches of Australia and the Free Church of Scotland have decided to join the ICRC. They are, as far as we know, the first Churches to do so.

j. *In Summary*

From the whole line of reasoning found in this report, it has become obvious that your Committee is very much in favour of the Canadian Reformed Churches joining the ICRC. As far as we can see there is no valid reasons why we should not request membership in this Conference and do what we can to advance the cause of the Reformed faith on an international scale.

Your Committee would once again advise that a delegation be sent to the next meeting composed of two members of the Committee and one theological professor as advisor. We favour a delegation of such a makeup because many issues that arise can only be debated properly and understood fully if the delegates are familiar with the matters of ecclesiastical correspondence and its recent issues and developments.

We would also urge you to recommend the Orthodox Presbyterian Church for membership in the Conference.

Among the issues that we would suggest for future discussion and debate by the ICRC at Edinburgh are the matter of the Church, the covenant, and inter-church relations.

Finally, we would urge you to invite the ICRC to hold its second meeting in Canada as guest of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

5. Recommendations

Your Committee therefore makes the following recommendations:

- a. that the Canadian Reformed Churches agree to join the International Conference of Reformed Churches;
- b. that the Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad be authorized to send, in accordance with the Constitution of the ICRC, two of its members as delegates to the first meeting of the ICRC to be held in Edinburgh in 1985, and that Dr. J. Faber be designated to attend as advisor;

- c. that the Committee for Correspondence be charged to recommend for membership in the ICRC the Orthodox Presbyterian Church;
- d. that the Committee be authorized to inform the Convening Church of the ICRC that the Canadian Reformed Churches would like to see the following subjects placed on the agenda:
 - i the doctrine of the Church in the Reformed Confessions;
 - ii the doctrine of the Covenant in the Reformed Confessions;
 - iii the exercise of interchurch relations;
- e. that the Committee be authorized to invite the ICRC to hold its second meeting to be held in 1989 in Vancouver, BC as guests of the Canadian Reformed Churches;
- f. that the Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad report to the next General Synod on the activities of the ICRC.

Respectfully submitted by your Committee
 August 9, 1983
 E.C. Baartman
 A.C. Lengkeek
 M. VanBeveren
 J. Visscher (Convener)

¹"An Update on the Korean Connection" in *Clarion* (Nov. 6, 1981);*

²A Report on The Constituent Assembly of the International Conference of Reformed Churches* (a slightly amended version appeared in *Clarion* [Year End Issue, 1982])*

³The Constitution and Regulations of the ICRC, along with the Interim Rules.

⁴The Proceedings of the ICRC.*

(*sent to General Synod only)

CONSTITUTION AND REGULATIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF REFORMED CHURCHES

ARTICLE I — NAME

The name shall be The International Conference of Reformed Churches.

ARTICLE II — BASIS

The Basis of the Conference shall be the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament as confessed in the Three Forms of Unity (the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, the Canons of Dort) and the Westminster Standards (the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms).

ARTICLE III — PURPOSE

The purpose of the Conference shall be:

1. to express and promote the unity of faith that the member Churches have in Christ;
2. to encourage the fullest ecclesiastical fellowship among the member Churches;
3. to encourage cooperation among the member Churches in the fulfillment of the missionary and other mandates;
4. to study the common problems and issues that confront the member Churches and to aim for recommendations with respect to these matters;
5. to present a Reformed testimony to the world.

ARTICLE IV — MEMBERSHIP

1. Those Churches shall be admitted as members which:
 - a. adhere and are faithful to the confessional standards stated in the Basis;
 - b. furnish
 - i their confessional standards;
 - ii their form of government;

- iii their form of subscription;
 - iv their declaratory acts (if applicable);
 - c. are accepted by a two-thirds majority vote of the member Churches, every member Church having one vote;
 - d. are not members of the World Council of Churches or any other organization whose aims and practices are deemed to be in conflict with the Basis.
2. Termination of membership shall be by a two-thirds majority whenever the Conference is of the opinion that the member Church in its doctrine and/or practice is no longer in agreement with the Basis.

ARTICLE V — AUTHORITY

The conclusions of the Conference shall be advisory in character. Member Churches are urged to receive the decisions of the Conference and are recommended to work towards their implementation.

ARTICLE VI — AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

The Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the member Churches. The proposed amendment(s) shall be sent to the Corresponding Secretary two years before the meeting of the Conference. He shall send it to the member Churches immediately.

REGULATIONS

ARTICLE I — MEETINGS OF THE CONFERENCE

- 1. The Conference shall convene every four years.
- 2. Each meeting of the Conference shall determine the time, place and convening Church of the next Conference.

ARTICLE II — EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

The Conference shall elect the following officers: a chairman, a vice-chairman, a recording secretary and a corresponding secretary.

- 1. The chairman shall:
 - a. call the meeting to order at the appointed time and see to it that each session is properly opened and closed;
 - b. insure that the matters on the agenda are dealt with as expeditiously as possible;
 - c. put to the meeting every motion that is made and duly seconded, as well as take the vote;
 - d. rule on all points of order, subject always to an appeal from two voting delegates.
- 2. The vice-chairman shall:
 - a. take the chair when the chairman desires to express himself on any question before the meeting;
 - b. assume the duties and privileges of the chairman in his absence;
 - c. render all possible assistance to the chairman.
- 3. The recording secretary shall:
 - a. call the roll every day once the devotions have concluded;
 - b. keep an accurate record of all the proceedings of the meeting;
 - c. insure that all documents are properly cared for;
 - d. forward three copies of the proceedings to the member Churches as soon as possible after compilation.
- 4. The corresponding secretary shall:
 - a. during the meeting of the Conference, assist the recording secretary whenever and wherever possible;
 - b. in between the meeting of the Conference.
 - i attend to all the correspondence;

- ii receive all reports from committees of the Conference and distribute them to the member Churches;
 - iii assist the convening Church;
 - iv publish materials, reports or other publications as authorized by the Conference;
 - v report to the next meeting of the Conference on his activities and in the interim be responsible to the Interim Committee.
5. The Executive shall manage the proceedings of the meetings, arrange and propose the business to be transacted in every session and make recommendations concerning committees.

ARTICLE III — INTERIM COMMITTEE

The Interim Committee shall consist of the chairman, the vice-chairman and the recording secretary.

It shall:

- 1. oversee the work of the corresponding secretary;
- 2. invite one of the alternate committee members to serve when necessary;
- 3. report to the next meeting of the Conference;
- 4. be dismissed subsequent to its report to the next meeting of the Conference.

ARTICLE IV — COMMITTEES

- 1. The Conference may appoint a committee to study any matter that is deemed to be of mutual concern to the member Churches.
- 2. Every attempt shall be made to make the members of these committees as representative as possible.
- 3. Committee reports shall be in the hands of the corresponding secretary at least two years prior to the next meeting of the Conference.

ARTICLE V — PARTICIPANTS

The following are to be seated at the meetings of the Conference:

- 1. Voting delegates from the member Churches.
Each member Church shall be entitled to send two voting delegates to the meeting.
- 2. Advisory delegates from the member Churches.
Each member Church may appoint two advisors, but they shall have no vote.
- 3. Observer delegates from Churches that have made application for membership in the Conference.
They may be invited to take part in all discussions but will not be accorded the right to vote nor be present at closed sessions.
- 4. Visiting delegates from Churches which have not yet applied for membership.
They shall be granted the right to attend the open meetings of the Conference and have extended to them the usual courtesies for such occasions.

ARTICLE VI — CONVOCATION OF THE CONFERENCE

- 1. The convening Church shall organize a prayer service prior to the opening session of the Conference.
- 2. The convening Church shall appoint one of its members to preside at the opening of the Conference.
- 3. The convener shall designate three delegates who will collect, examine and report on the credentials of each delegation.
- 4. The convener shall supervise the election of the executive officers.

ARTICLE VII — AGENDA MATERIAL

- 1. The Conference shall place on its agenda;
 - a. correspondence from member Churches;

- b. applications for membership from other Churches;
 - c. reports from its special committees and corresponding secretary;
 - d. reports from its Interim Committee;
 - e. recommendations from any two member Churches to extend an invitation to another Church to send observers to the Conference.
2. Materials received for the agenda should be received by the corresponding secretary one year in advance. Material received less than one year before the opening of the next meeting of the Conference shall only be considered if the Conference so decides.
 3. The agenda must be finalized three months in advance and a copy sent to all member Churches.

ARTICLE VIII — RULES OF ORDER

1. To obtain the floor each speaker must be recognized by the chair. He shall address himself to the chairman with decorum and respect.
2. If a delegate fails to adhere to the point under discussion or becomes unnecessarily lengthy in his remarks, the chairman shall call him to order.
3. If any delegate has spoken twice on a given issue, others who have not yet spoken shall be given priority by the chairman.
4. When the chairman believes that a motion has been sufficiently discussed, he may propose that debate be drawn to a close. Any delegate convinced of the same may move to close the discussion.
5. Decisions shall be taken on the basis of a simple majority of the votes cast, with the exception of Articles IV, 1. c, IV, 2, VI, of the Constitution and Article X of the Regulations.

ARTICLE IX — FINANCES

(remains to be determined by the Conference)

ARTICLE X — AMENDMENTS TO THE REGULATIONS

These Regulations may be amended by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast.

The proposed amendment(s) shall be sent to the corresponding secretary one year prior to the meeting of the Conference.

INTERIM RULES

ARTICLE I — THE CONVENING CHURCH

The Free Church of Scotland is proposed as the convening Church of the first International Conference of Reformed Churches.

The *date*: September 3-13, 1985. The *place*: Edinburgh, Scotland.

(The alternate convening Church: The Reformed Churches in The Netherlands).

ARTICLE II — THE PROVISIONAL SECRETARY

The Rev. M. VanBeveren (Canada) is designated as the provisional secretary.

(The alternate provisional secretary: Rev. J. Visscher [Canada]).

ARTICLE III — THE PROVISIONAL COMMITTEE

The committees for interchurch relations in Ireland, The Netherlands and Scotland shall each appoint one member to serve on the Provisional Committee.

(The alternate committee: The Free Reformed Churches of Australia.)

ARTICLE IV — THE CURRENT PARTICIPANTS

- a. The Churches represented at the Constituent Assembly who later agree to for-

mally join the International Conference of Reformed Churches shall be recognized as established members of the Conference.

- b. These Churches shall notify the provisional secretary as soon as possible about the decision of their respective Assembly/Synod to join the ICRC.

ARTICLE V — THE PROSPECTIVE PARTICIPANTS

- a. Each currently participating Church will be asked to submit to the provisional secretary a list of Churches whose doctrine and practice is known by them to be in harmony with the Basis of the Conference.
- b. The provisional secretary will send to these recommended Churches a copy of the Constitution-Regulations and the Interim Rules, together with a letter of information stating that they may apply for membership in the Conference.
- c. Applications for membership should be received by the provisional secretary no later than nine months prior to the first Conference.

ARTICLE VI — THE AGENDA

As per the Regulations, with the exception of the time factor mentioned in Art. VII, 2.

ARTICLE VII — THE FINANCES

- a. All costs of publishing and distributing the *Proceedings* of the Constituent Assembly will be borne by The Reformed Churches in The Netherlands.
- b. All additional costs will be reimbursed on the basis of an equitable assessment levied on the member Churches.
- c. The Provisional Committee shall recommend to Churches, as soon as they agree to become members, to designate a sum which they will be prepared to contribute to the expense and benevolent fund of the Conference as a provisional financial agreement.
- d. The Provisional Committee shall serve the first meeting of the Conference with a proposal regarding an equitable assessment formula.

COMMITTEE ON CORRESPONDENCE WITH CHURCHES ABROAD AN ADDITIONAL REPORT TO SYNOD 1983

Esteemed Brethren,

After submitting to you our Report, dated August 9, 1983, we have received some additional correspondence that should be brought to your attention.

THE FREE REFORMED CHURCHES OF AUSTRALIA

Acts of Synod Kelmscott 1983

The 13th Synod of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia held at Kelmscott, Western Australia meet from May 14-24, 1983. From the *Acts* we would like to mention some of the highlights:

1. Under the heading *Church Book* the Synod decided to adopt the new Psalm section and the Forms of the Canadian Reformed Churches. With respect to the latter, several criticisms were voiced and the Canadian Churches will be written and amendments suggested. As to the Hymns, Synod decided to accept only some for use in the Churches. They are Hymn 1, 2, 6, 7, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 21, 24, 26, 27, 29, 32, 34, 36, 39, 40, 41, 44, 47, 49, 50, 53, 58, 59, 63. No criteria are given that explain why some are accepted and others rejected.
2. With respect to the *Church Order* the Synod adopted a revised version. Since the full text is not printed in the *Acts*, we cannot report on this revision at this time. As soon as a copy is received, we will scrutinize it and send you our recommendations.
3. As for the matter of *Bible translation* the Synod made a decision to recommend the

Revised Standard Version (1971 edition) for use in the Churches.

4. On the matter of *Church Relations* Synod decided to continue the correspondence with:

- Canadian Reformed Churches
- De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland
- Die Vrije Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika
- The Presbyterian Church in Korea
- The Churches of Sumba-Savu.

It decided to recognize as faithful Churches:

- The Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ireland
- The Free Church of Scotland
- The Reformed Presbyterian Church of Taiwan.

It decided to investigate whether the Reformed Church of Japan and the Dutch Reformed Church of Sri Lanka can be recognized as true and faithful Churches.

It also decided to investigate the possibilities to seek new contacts with other Churches, in close connection with deputies from the sister Churches, especially The Netherlands.

Synod decided to request the Deputies "to formulate rules for temporary contact with Churches which do not yet belong to the sister Churches."

5. On the subject of the *International Conference of Reformed Churches* the Synod decided to join and to propose two amendments to the Constitution, one dealing with the RES and the other which stresses that members should strive for unity with member Churches of the Conference in their own country.
6. With regard to the *Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia* Synod decided to instruct Deputies to investigate whether that Church could be acknowledged as a true and faithful Church of our Lord Jesus Christ and to report their findings to the next Synod.
7. On the topic of *Mission* Synod decided to take note of the fact that the mission field in Western Australia had to be abandoned. It also took note of the fact that the employment of the full-time Mission worker, br. P 't Hart, was terminated.

Conclusion

From the *Acts* 1983 we may conclude with gratitude that the Free Reformed Churches of Australia desire to be faithful to God's Word, the Confessions and the Church Order.

Recommendation

On the basis of the above, the Committee recommends to Synod that the correspondence with the Free Reformed Churches of Australia be continued in accordance with the adopted rules.

MANDATE TO DISCUSS THE RULES OF CORRESPONDENCE

In our main report (see page 12, 5 d.) we have requested that the Committee be given a mandate to initiate a discussion with the sister Churches of the rules of correspondence in light of the fact that all kinds of additional rules have either been accepted or are being considered.

From reading the *Acts* of Australia 1983 we learn that they too are desirous of having rules for temporary contact and have mandated their committee to formulate a set of rules that can be proposed to their next Synod.

What this means is that in all of our sister Churches the rules for correspondence are being supplemented or soon will be supplemented by additional *permanent* rules for preliminary contact. We find this development lamentable and hence would request you for a mandate, *not to come up with all kinds of alternative relationships, but "to come to a uniform set of rules" for all the sister Churches.* It should be possible to come to a set of rules that are faithful to what we have at present and yet able to meet the needs of the future.

THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF REFORMED CHURCHES

The Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands has decided to make the following proposal to the General Synod of Heemse 1984 regarding the ICRC:

1. to set up a study group with the following tasks:
 - a. to present the member Churches with information about relevant literature on missionary matters;
 - b. to present the member Churches with information about existing colleges and/or courses for missionaries, and about opportunities for coordination;
 - c. to serve the member Churches, if possible, by setting up a missiology on a truly scriptural basis, for instance, by compiling an Introduction;
2. to institute a consultative committee with the following tasks:
 - a. to advise the member Churches on choosing mission fields;
 - b. to investigate and indicate opportunities for the coordination of development work on mission fields;
 - c. to investigate and indicate opportunities for the exchange of missionaries.”

These are the latest matters that have come to our attention and we pass them on to you for your consideration.

May the Lord bless your deliberations.

For the Committee for Correspondence
with Churches Abroad,
J. Visscher, convener/secretary

APPENDIX X A
REPORT OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS
TO GENERAL SYNOD CLOVERDALE 1983

Esteemed Brethren,

The Board of Governors of the Theological College hereby presents to your assembly its report which covers the academic years 1980/1981, 1981/1982 and 1982/1983.

With thankfulness to the Lord, we mention that the work could be continued without interruption. No serious illness hampered the operation of the College and when in some cases a member of the Faculty received a leave of absence, the schedule of lectures could be arranged in such a manner that the progress of the work of the students was not jeopardized.

From the reports of the Governors who visited the lectures during the past three years, it is clear that the instruction is not only on a scholarly level, but also faithful to the Scriptures and confessionally sound.

Three students completed their studies and with the arrival of three new students this year, the total enrollment stands at fifteen.

The matter of granting degrees to those who have successfully completed their studies was extensively discussed with the Senate. In accordance with academic norms and pursuant to Section 10 of the Canadian Reformed Theological College Act, 1981, the Board authorized the Senate to confer degrees as follows: the Master of Divinity degree on students who entered the College with a Bachelor's degree (or equivalent), and the Bachelor of Divinity degree on those who had been admitted on the basis of an admission exam (without an undergraduate degree).

Upon the advice of the Senate and in order to maintain the academic level of instruction, the Board decided that a student needs to attain a weighted average of 65% in the final marks of an academic year in order to be able to continue his studies at the College or to graduate. It is understandable that not all students welcome this decision, but this decision was felt to be necessary in order to maintain minimum standards of academic achievement commensurate with post graduate institutions of higher learning and so that the Churches may be better served as a result.

In January 1982 we were saddened by the death of the Rev. H. Scholten, M.Th. He served as lecturer in the Ecclesiological Department from the date the College was established until he was forced to retire due to illness. The Board remembers his zeal for the cause of our College. His dedication to the instruction of future ministers of the Word still is a reason for great thankfulness.

After ten years as professor of Old Testament, Prof. H.M. Ohmann left us and assumed a professorial position at the Theological College at Kampen, The Netherlands. The Board is thankful for his faithful and fruitful labour among us since 1971.

To fill the vacancy, Synod 1980 appointed Rev. C. VanDam, M.Th. an alumnus of our College. He was installed on September 4, 1981, and could commence his teaching without delay. The following year, and this year again, Prof. VanDam spent the summer months at the Theological College at Kampen studying towards a Th.D. degree. For that purpose, he received permission to remain in Kampen until a few months after the beginning of the academic year. His doctoral studies are expected to be a blessing for the College. Hopefully, Prof. VanDam can have his promotion next year.

A leave of absence was also granted to Prof. Dr. J. Faber for the first semester of the academic year 1981/1982. Dr. Faber had received an invitation from Westminster Theological Seminary to give guest lectures as professor of Systematic Theology. The Board judged the invitation a recognition of Dr. Faber as a Reformed scholar and of the College as a Reformed institution of academic standing. The visit was also considered conducive to make our College better known.

Due to his age, the Rev. G. VanDooren, M.Th., had to retire as lecturer in Diaconology

at the end of the academic year 1981/1982. Since Synod 1980 had charged the Board to make a recommendation to the next Synod regarding a fourth full-time professor, preferably a professor of Diaconiology, it was considered wise not to burden another brother with lecture preparation because his appointment could be only for a limited period of time. Upon the recommendation of the Senate, Rev. G. VanDooren was appointed as a temporary instructor for the course year 1982/1983 in accordance with By-Law Number 1 of the College. His appointment is now extended until the time that a fourth professor can assume his duties. The Board is thankful that, in spite of his age, Rev. G. VanDooren is still able and willing to continue as a lecturer.

The appointment of a professor of Diaconiology has received the Board's full attention. It is hoped that it will be possible to submit a recommendation to your Assembly.

An important event for our College was the enactment of the Canadian Reformed Theological College Act, 1981 in the Ontario Legislature which was proclaimed into force by His Honour the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario on December 11, 1981, whereby the College became an incorporated institution and received the authority to grant the degrees of Bachelor of Theology, Bachelor of Divinity, Master of Divinity and Master of Theology. While Synod 1971 had already authorized the Board of Governors and the Board of Trustees to pursue incorporation, the intention of the Ontario Government to prohibit the conferring of degrees by nonrecognized colleges and universities made the incorporation an urgent matter. The Board wishes to express its appreciation to Mr. C.M. Loopstra, LL.B., who spent much time and effort to prepare the Private Bill and to draft the subsequently adopted By-Laws. The support of the Honourable Mr. George A. Kerr, Member of Parliament, who sponsored the Bill in the Ontario Legislature, was acknowledged by inviting him to the College Evening last year. We are particularly grateful that the Government of Ontario was able to enact provincial legislation specifically for the benefit of the College recognizing the special Reformed status of the College in relation to Synod and the Churches. For example, we refer you to Section 4 of the Act:

"The College shall be carried on as a Christian institute of theology whose basis shall be the infallible Word of God as interpreted by the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons of Dordt as adhered to by the Churches.";

and Section 6(2) of the Act:

"The Board may petition the Churches at any time for a special assembly of Synod to deal with matters pertaining to the College."

The Canadian Reformed Theological College Act, 1981 necessitated some changes in the organization of the College. The Board of Trustees has disappeared and the Trustees have become Governors. The Board of Governors, thus enlarged, has appointed an Academic Committee consisting of the six ministers who used to form the Board of Governors. The former Trustees now form the Finance and Property Committee. In this matter, the workload for everyone involved remains virtually the same as before the incorporation. The reports of the Finance and Property Committee approved and adopted by the Board of Governors will be submitted to your Assembly as an appendix to this report. After Synod 1980, the Academic Committee met four times. The new Board of Governors had three meetings. Part of those meetings were attended by representatives of the Senate when consultation was necessary.

The Board has to report that in spite of the efforts of the Finance and Property Committee, a more suitable building for our College has not yet been found. The present facilities are considered inadequate for the number of students enrolled. A step in the right direction is the decision to increase the building reserve from \$5,000 to \$25,000 annually as per Budget 1982. It is the wish of the Board that the goal of better facilities can be reached in the very near future.

After more than five years as administrative assistant, Miss Anne VanSydenborgh decided to leave us and to move to another part of the country. We wish to express our appreciation for the excellent work she has done since her appointment in 1976. Her place is taken by Miss Teresa G. Bouwman to the satisfaction of all concerned.

The constant and wholehearted support the College receives from the Churches is a reason for great thankfulness. The attendance of the College Evenings/Convocations also shows the interest of the Church members every year again. The continued activities of the Women's Savings Action is highly appreciated. The result of their action is always a pleasant surprise at the annual College Evenings.

We give thanks to the Lord our God for the blessings He has bestowed upon the College and upon all who have been involved in the work. May His grace and favour be upon our institution also in the future.

We draw your attention to the following provisions of the Canadian Reformed Theological College Act, 1981:

1. *Section 5(2)*:
"Within three years from the coming into force of this Act, the Board shall be re-constituted to consist of eleven Governors to be elected or appointed by Synod in such manner as may be prescribed by the by-laws of the College, for a term of three years."
2. *Section 5(5)*:
"The Board may, by by-law,
 - a. reduce the size of the Board to consist of not fewer than seven Governors or increase the size of the Board; and
 - b. provide for the election and retirement of Governors in rotation, but no such by-law shall come into effect until it has been confirmed by Synod."
3. *Section 5(11)*:
"The government, conduct, management and control of the College and of its property, revenues, expenditures, business and affairs are vested in the Board and the Board has all powers necessary or convenient to perform its duties and achieve the object and purpose of the College including, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the power
 - d. to appoint, in accordance with the policies established by Synod, members of the faculty who are in full accord with the basis of the College as set out in section 4;
 - e. to promote, suspend and remove and to grant tenure and leave of absence to members of the faculty in accordance with the policies established by Synod, but any action resulting in suspension or removal of a faculty member shall be in accordance with the by-laws of the College and is subject to an appeal to Synod;"
4. *Section 6(1)*:
"Synod shall assemble not less than every three years to do, in addition to any other business that may be transacted, the following:
 1. Receive the report of the Board as to the operation of the College.
 2. Elect or appoint the Governors in accordance with subsections 5(2) to (6).
 3. Consider the audited financial statements and the report of the auditor for the previous fiscal periods.
 4. Appoint the auditors until the next assembly of Synod.
 5. Confirm or reject any by-laws passed by the Board that under this Act require confirmation by Synod."

We submit to your Assembly the following recommendations for your consideration:

1. To receive and adopt this report and all appendices.
2. To confirm the adoption of:
 - a. *By-Law Number 1* being a by-law relating generally to the affairs of the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches (with Regulation No. 1 being a part thereof);
 - b. *By-Law Number 2* being a by-law respecting the borrowing of money and the issue of securities; and

- c. *By-Law Number 3* being a by-law to amend Section 3.04 of By-Law Number 1 pertaining to the election and term of Governors, including the election or appointment and retirement in rotation of five Governors.
- 3. To accept the resignations of Mr. Hessel Dantuma and Mr. John Medemblik 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 Anton L. VanderHout, Esq. (Hamilton) as Governor for a term from the date of his reappointment until the third General Synod held after the date of his reappointment;
 - b. to appoint Henk Kampen, Esq. (Toronto) and to reappoint C.M. Loopstra, LL.B. (Toronto) as Governors for a term from the date of their appointment until the second General Synod held after the date of their appointment;
 - c. to reappoint Maas van Grootheest, Esq. (Fergus) and Arie Hordyk, Esq. (Burlington) as Governors for a term from the date of their reappointment until the next General Synod held after the date of their reappointment; and
 - d. to appoint, elect, reappoint or reelect six (6) 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 (3) substitutes from each Regional Synod area.
- 4. To direct the Board of Governors to appoint a new professor of Diaconiology (as per a detailed report to be presented to Synod).
- 5. To direct the granting of tenure to Professor C. VanDam, M.Th. and the Rev. W.W.J. VanOene, M.Th. (both appointed by General Synod, 1980).
- 6. To consider the audited financial statements and the report of the auditor for the previous fiscal periods.
- 7. To appoint Robinson, Lott & Brohman, Chartered Accountants, as auditors until the next assembly of Synod.
- 8. To ratify and confirm the acts of the Board of Governors and officers of the College for the years 1980, 1981, 1982 and until the date of this report.
- 9. To authorize the convening Church for the next General Synod to convene a special assembly of Synod at the request of the Board of Governors for urgent reasons.

Submitted at Hamilton, Ontario this 9th day of September, 1983 by the Board of Governors of the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

Rev. D. VanderBoom, chairman
 Rev. J. Mulder, vice-chairman
 Rev. M. VanBeveren, secretary
 Mr. H. Dantuma, treasurer
 Rev. D. DeJong
 Rev. J. Geertsema
 Mr. A.J. Hordyk
 Mr. C.M. Loopstra
 Mr. J.J. Medemblik
 Mr. M. VanGrootheest
 Rev. J. Visscher

APPENDIX X B-1
TWELFTH ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1980
BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Hamilton, Ontario
February 18, 1981

The Forthcoming General Synod, and
The Board of Governors of the
Theological College of the
Canadian Reformed Churches
Esteemed Brothers,

The Board of Trustees are pleased to submit their Annual Report for the year 1980.

1. TRUSTEES ACTIVITIES GENERALLY

We are thankful to report that with the cooperation of the Churches, Board of Governors, Faculty and Students, we have been able once again to perform the task assigned to us in brotherly harmony and in good health.

The Trustees have held three meetings during the past year, and one joint meeting with the Board of Governors. Details of decisions and actions can be found in the Minutes of their meetings, approved copies of which were sent to the Board of Governors. All major decisions and actions, including the implementation thereof, are summarized in this report.

2. PHYSICAL PLANT

2.1 Renovation and Maintenance

Repairs were made to the sunroom roof this year as well as minor repairs to plumbing and to the electrical system. The Board decided to replace the back porch, to install aluminum storm windows, to convert the existing oil furnace to gas, to change the nonfunctional washroom on the second floor into an equipment room, and to replace the hall carpet. These renovations are all to be made in the coming year.

Br. G. Meyer continued to perform the necessary janitorial duties as per contract. The students continued to maintain, as part of their duties, the gardening, lawn mowing, and snow shoveling. They keep their rooms clean and orderly.

2.2 General Insurance Coverage

Upon recommendation of Vanderhout Insurance Agency, the Board renewed the multi-coverage insurance contract with Royal Insurance Company of Canada. The limits of liability were reviewed and coverage broadened. Coverage of building was increased to \$190,000; office contents to \$45,000; library to \$120,000; garage building to \$18,000; and boiler and machinery explosion to \$500,000.

2.3 Student Accommodation

Four students occupied the facilities provided for that purpose on the third floor. The residence fee of \$150 was charged and received for each semester.

3. FACULTY

3.1 Salaries

The professors and lecturers were remunerated in accordance with the salary schedule as approved by Synod 1977 plus an 8.4% C.O.L. allowance for 1980.

3.2 Pension Mrs. Kouwenhoven

The Board provided Mrs. Kouwenhoven with monthly pension payments in accordance with the salary schedule set by Synod 1977 plus an 8.4% C.O.L. allowance for 1980. The pension payments to her were terminated, however, immediately following her marriage to Mr. John Kap.

4. ORGANIZATIONAL

4.1 Administrative Assistant

The Administrative Assistant was remunerated in accordance with the Budget 1980. For the year 1981, her salary was increased by 7.85%.

4.2 Caretaker

The caretaker was remunerated \$152 per month according to contract. Additional services were provided at a rate of \$5 per hour.

5. FINANCIAL

5.1 Contributions

A condensed statement of contributions received during 1980 and of arrears accrued during that period will appear as an appendix to the Financial Statement to be sent to the Board of Governors and others entitled thereto, by the Treasurer.

We take this opportunity to thank those Churches which have cooperated by promptly paying their contributions during 1980 and express our hope that all Churches will do so in 1981.

5.2 Tuition Fees

The tuition fee of \$100 per semester was charged to and received from each of the students.

5.3 Audited Financial Statements

The audited Financial Statements (including a General Fund Balance Sheet; a Pension Fund Balance Sheet; and Statements of Designated Equity, General Equity, Revenue and Expenditure, and Expenditure Detail) as approved by the Board of Trustees, will be sent directly to the convening Church, to the Board of Governors, to the Churches and others entitled thereto, by the Treasurer. These statements, being self-explanatory, need no further comment.

5.4 Investments

Again, no changes of significance were made in the investment policy during the year. All interest earned on the General Fund investments were added thereto, while the yield on the Pension Fund was added to that Fund.

5.5 Budget 1981

The Budget for 1981, prepared by the Treasurer and approved by the Board of Governors and the Board of Trustees, contained a slight increase in expenditures. We are thankful that an increase in contributions per communicant member was not necessary. Copies of the Budget, including a Schedule of Estimated Income for 1981 and a Statement of Contributions and Arrears for 1980, were sent to all the Churches by the Treasurer.

6. CONCLUSION

The foregoing represents a report of the major activities of the Board of Trustees for the year 1980.

Copies of this Report are being sent to all the Churches and to members of the Faculty in accordance with the Constitution, Art. XV, 1.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

With brotherly greetings,

Yours in Christ,

Board of Trustees of the
Theological College of the
Canadian Reformed Churches

Per: M. VanGrootheest, chairman

J. Medemblik, secretary

H. Dantuma, treasurer

A.J. Hordyk

C.M. Loopstra

APPENDIX X B-2
**THIRTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1981
BY THE PROPERTY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE
(Formerly the Board of Trustees)
Hamilton, Ontario
April 8, 1982**

The Forthcoming General Synod. and
The Board of Governors of the
Theological College of the
Canadian Reformed Churches

Esteemed Brothers:

The Board of Trustees are pleased to submit their Annual Report for the year 1981.

1. TRUSTEES ACTIVITIES GENERALLY

We are thankful to report that with the cooperation of the Churches, Board of Governors, Faculty and Students, we have been able once again to perform the task assigned to us in brotherly harmony and in good health.

The trustees held two meetings during the past year. At both meetings all members were present. In addition the Board of Governors, the Board of Trustees and the Faculty held one joint meeting. Details of decisions and actions can be found in the minutes of their meetings, approved copies of which were sent to the Board of Governors. All major decisions and actions, including the implementation thereof, are summarized in this report.

2. PHYSICAL PLANT

2.1 Renovation and Maintenance

During the past year the back porch was replaced, and new carpet was installed in the hallway. Renovations were made to the nonfunctional washroom on the second floor so that it can now be used as an equipment room. The plaster in the existing men's washroom was replaced. Prefinished aluminum storm windows were installed and the window frames were also painted. The existing oil fired furnace was converted to a gas fired one. Several minor repairs were also made due to a break in.

Plans for the coming year include painting Prof. VanDam's room, the kitchen, administration office, the men's washroom and the back hallway.

Br. G. Meyer continued to perform the necessary janitorial duties as per contract. The students continued to perform minor maintenance duties such as the gardening, lawn mowing, and snow shoveling. They keep their rooms clean and orderly.

2.2 General Insurance Coverage

Upon recommendation of Vanderhout Insurance Agency, the Board renewed the multi-coverage insurance contract with Royal Insurance Company of Canada. The limits of liability were reviewed and coverage broadened. Coverage of building was increased to \$190,000; garage building to \$20,000; extra expenses to \$15,000; office contents to \$60,000; library to \$140,000; burglary to \$4,000; general liability to \$1,000,000; and boiler explosion to \$500,000.

The Trustees purchased life insurance for Prof. C. VanDam in the amount of \$75,000.

2.3 Student Accommodation

Four students occupied the facilities provided for that purpose on the third floor during the spring semester and two students during the fall semester. The residence fee of \$150 was charged and received for each semester. One occupant is study-

ing at another institution; however, he is scheduled to enroll in the courses at our College in the next academic year.

3. FACULTY

3.1 Salaries

A reduction in the overall salary expenditure occurred during the year as a result of the departure of Prof. H.M. Ohmann, who was replaced by Prof. C. VanDam. The professors and lecturers were remunerated in accordance with the salary schedule as approved by Synod 1980. The Board decided to increase the salaries for 1982 by a 5.77% C.O.L. allowance.

4. ORGANIZATIONAL

4.1 Administrative Assistant

The Administrative Assistant, Miss Anne VanSydenborgh was remunerated in accordance with the Budget 1981. In August we saw a changeover in staff. Miss Teresa Bouwman was appointed to fill the vacancy which Miss VanSydenborgh left. Her salary was based on \$11,000 per annum for 1981 with an increase to \$12,500 for 1982.

4.2 Caretaker

The caretaker was remunerated \$152 per month according to contract. Additional services were provided at a rate of \$5 per hour.

5. FINANCIAL

5.1 Contributions

A condensed statement of contributions received during 1981 and of arrears accrued during that period will appear as an appendix to the Financial Statement to be sent to the Board of Governors and others entitled thereto, by the Treasurer. We take this opportunity to thank those Churches which have cooperated by promptly paying their contributions during 1981 and express our hope that all Churches will do so in 1982.

5.2 Tuition Fees

The tuition fee of \$100 per semester was charged to and received from each of the students.

5.3 Audited Financial Statements

The audited Financial Statements (including a General Fund Balance Sheet; a Pension Fund Balance Sheet; and Statements of Designated Equity, General Equity, Revenue and Expenditure, and Expenditure Detail) as approved by the Board of Trustees, will be sent directly to the convening Church, to the Board of Governors, to the Churches and others entitled thereto, by the Treasurer. These statements, being self-explanatory, need no further comment.

5.4 Investments

Again, no changes of significance were made in the investment policy during the year. All interest earned on the General Fund investments were added thereto, while the yield on the Pension Fund was added to that Fund.

5.5 Budget 1982

Subject to a salary review at the first joint meeting of the Board scheduled for April, the 1982 Budget has been approved by the Board of Governors and the Board of Trustees. The Budget, prepared by the Treasurer, contained a slight increase in expenditures. Because of this the contributions per communicant member had to rise from \$29 to \$31. Copies of the Budget, including a Schedule of Estimated Income for 1981 and a Statement of Contributions and Arrears for 1981, were sent to all the Churches by the Treasurer.

5.6 Special Provisions

The Board provided Prof. C. VanDam with a low interest loan, thus enabling the professor to purchase a home of his own.

6. CONCLUSION

Effective as of December 11, 1981 the College was incorporated by means of the Canadian Reformed Theological College Act, 1981. This act passed by the Ontario Legislature provides for a board consisting of eleven governors and does away with the concept of a separate Board of Trustees. Until new bylaws are prepared, your existing Board of Trustees will continue to function as a Committee of the Board.

The foregoing represents a report of the major activities of the Board for the year 1981.

Copies of this Report are being sent to all the Churches and to members of the Faculty in accordance with the Constitution, Art. XV, 1.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

With brotherly greetings,
Yours in Christ,

The Property and Finance Committee
(formerly the Board of Trustees)
of the Theological College of the
Canadian Reformed Churches

Per: M. VanGrootheest, chairman
J. Medemblik, secretary
H. Dantuma, treasurer
A.J. Hordyk
C.M. Loopstra

APPENDIX X B-3

FIRST ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1982 TO MAY 1983 BY THE FINANCE AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE Hamilton, Ontario August 22, 1983

The Forthcoming General Synod,
and 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 Annual Report for the year 1982/83.

1. ACTIVITIES GENERALLY

We are thankful to report that with the cooperation of the Churches, Board of Governors, Faculty and Students, we have been able once again to perform the task assigned to us in brotherly harmony and in good health.

The Committee held four meetings during the past year. All members were present for these meetings. In addition the Board of Governors, and the Faculty held one joint meeting. Details of decisions and actions can be found in the minutes of their meetings, approved copies of which were sent to the Board of Governors. All major decisions and actions, including the implementation thereof, are summarized in this report.

2. PHYSICAL PLANT

2.1 Renovation and Maintenance

During this past year Prof. VanDam's room, the kitchen, administration office, the men's washroom and the back hallway were painted. Also the kitchen door and several locks were replaced due to a break in. A door from the chapel room to the photocopy room has been installed as well as a set of French doors from the chapel room to the hallway. Most of the basement ceiling and walls were painted. The old archive room in the basement has now been converted into a library room. A floor has been put in, carpet laid, and lighting installed. The final touch to the room is the new library shelves.

Br. G. Meyer continued to perform the necessary janitorial duties as per contract. The students continued to perform minor maintenance duties such as the gardening, lawn mowing, and snow shoveling. They keep their rooms clean and orderly.

2.2 General Insurance Coverage

Upon recommendation of Vanderhout Insurance Agency, the Board renewed the multi-coverage insurance contract with Royal Insurance Company of Canada. The limits of liability were reviewed and coverage broadened. Coverage of building was increased to \$221,000; garage building to \$21,000; extra expenses to \$15,000; office contents to \$65,000; valuable papers and records (library) to \$150,000; burglary to \$4,000; general liability to \$1,000,000; and boiler explosion to \$500,000.

2.3 Student Accommodation

Two students occupied the facilities provided for that purpose on the third floor during the spring semester of 1982. Also during the summer one student made use of the residence facilities. The residence fee of \$150 was charged and received from each student. During the past school year three students occupied the facilities. For this period \$50 per month was charged and received from each student.

3. FACULTY

3.1 Salaries

The professors and lecturers were remunerated in accordance with the salary schedule as approved by Synod 1980. The Board decided to increase the salaries for 1982/83 by a 9.6% C.O.L. allowance, and for 1983/84 by a 5.26% C.O.L. allowance.

4. ORGANIZATIONAL

4.1 Administrative Assistant

The administrative assistant was remunerated in accordance with the Budget 1982. For the year 1982/83 her salary was increased by 4% and for 1983/84 by 5.26%.

4.2 Caretaker

The caretaker was remunerated \$152 per month according to contract. Additional services were provided at a rate of \$5 per hour.

5. FINANCIAL

5.1 Contributions

A condensed statement of contributions received till May 1983 and of arrears accrued during that period will appear as an appendix to the Financial Statements to be sent to the Board of Governors and to others entitled thereto, by the Treasurer.

We take this opportunity to thank those Churches which have cooperated by promptly paying their contributions during 1982/83 and express our hope that all Churches will do so in 1983/84.

5.2 Tuition Fees

The tuition fee of \$100 per semester was charged to and received from each of the students. For students who are not members of one of the Churches or a sister Church, a fee of \$400 per semester was charged and received. For the upcoming year these fees will increase to \$200 and \$600 respectively.

5.3 Audited Financial Statements

The audited Financial Statements (including a Balance Sheet, and statements of Designated Equity, General Equity, Revenue and Expenditure and Expenditure Detail) as approved by the Finance and Property Committee for the five months ended May 31, 1982 have been sent directly to the convening Church, to the Board of Governors, to the Churches and others entitled thereto, by the Treasurer. These statements, being self-explanatory, need no further comment. The Financial Statements for 1982/83 have not been completed as yet.

5.4 Investments

Again, no changes of significance were made in the investment policy during the year. All interest earned on the General Fund investments was added thereto, while the yield on the Pension Fund was added to that Fund.

5.5 Budget 1983/84

The Budget, prepared by the Treasurer, contained a slight increase in expenditures. Because of this the contributions per communicant member will increase in January 1984 from \$31 to \$33. Copies of the Budget, including a Schedule of Estimated Income for 1983/84 were sent to all the Churches by the Treasurer.

5.6 Special Provisions

The Board provided Prof. C. VanDam with a forgivable loan to cover the extra cost of his studies in The Netherlands.

6. CONCLUSION

The foregoing represents a report of the major activities of the Committee for the year 1982/83.

Copies of this Report are being sent to all the Churches and to members of the Faculty in accordance with the Act, Section 7, 2.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

With brotherly greetings,
Yours in Christ,

The Finance and Property Committee
of the Theological College of the
Canadian Reformed Churches

Per: M. VanGrootheest, chairman
J. Medemblik, secretary
H. Dantuma, treasurer
A.J. Hordyk
C.M. Loopstra

APPENDIX X B-4

**THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1980**

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STATEMENT 5 — Expenditure Detail

AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Board of Governors
Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches
Hamilton, Ontario

We have examined the general fund and pension fund balance sheets of Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches as at December 31, 1980 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 other procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.

In our opinion, these financial statements present fairly the financial position of the College as at December 31, 1980 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.

ROBINSON, LOTT & BROHMAN
Chartered Accountants
Guelph, Ontario
July 2, 1981

STATEMENT 1

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
GENERAL FUND BALANCE SHEET
AS AT DECEMBER 31, 1980

ASSETS

Current		1980	1979
Petty Cash		\$ 100	\$ 100
Cash in bank — current accounts		22,177	8,000
Cash in bank — savings accounts		13,249	5,513
Cash in bank — N.V. Slavensburg Bank — Rotterdam		313	569
Allotments receivable		<u>2,045</u>	<u>5,735</u>
		<u>37,884</u>	<u>19,917</u>
Investments			
Term deposits		72,300	55,000
Accrued interest		<u>245</u>	<u>880</u>
		<u>72,545</u>	<u>55,880</u>
Fixed	Cost	Accumulated Depreciation	
Equipment, furniture and fixtures	\$ 14,916	\$ 12,669	2,247
Real estate and driveway	71,182	—	71,182
Library books	<u>59,004</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>59,004</u>
	<u>\$145,102</u>	<u>\$ 12,669</u>	<u>125,464</u>
Trust Fund			
Pension fund — statement 2		<u>24,328</u>	<u>21,310</u>
		<u>\$267,190</u>	<u>\$222,571</u>

LIABILITIES

Current			
Employees' payroll deductions payable		\$ 1,670	\$ 1,711
Allotments received in advance		23	7
Due to pension fund		<u>23,285</u>	<u>2,794</u>
		<u>24,978</u>	<u>4,512</u>
Trust Fund — Pension Fund — statement 2		<u>24,328</u>	<u>21,310</u>
		<u>49,306</u>	<u>25,822</u>

EQUITY

Designated — statement 3			
Library		\$ 5,693	\$ 10,163
Future building		48,823	43,823
Salary fund		<u>8,800</u>	<u>—</u>
		<u>63,316</u>	<u>53,986</u>
General — statement 3		<u>154,568</u>	<u>142,763</u>
		<u>217,884</u>	<u>196,749</u>
		<u>\$267,190</u>	<u>\$222,571</u>

STATEMENT 2

**THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
PENSION FUND BALANCE SHEET
AS AT DECEMBER 31, 1980**

ASSETS

	1980	1979
Current		
Cash in bank	\$ 1,043	\$ 935
Due from general fund	<u>23,285</u>	<u>2,794</u>
	<u>24,328</u>	<u>3,729</u>
Investments		
Term deposits	—	17,300
Accrued interest	—	<u>281</u>
	<u>—</u>	<u>17,581</u>
	<u>\$ 24,328</u>	<u>\$ 21,310</u>

EQUITY

Equity		
Balance at beginning of year	\$ 21,310	\$ 19,004
Add — Appropriation from budget	500	500
— Interest earned	2,518	1,806
Balance at end of year	<u>\$ 24,328</u>	<u>\$ 21,310</u>

STATEMENT 3

**THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
STATEMENT OF EQUITY
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1980**

DESIGNATED EQUITY

Library	1980	1979
Balance at beginning of year	\$ 10,163	\$ 13,620
Add — Appropriation from budget	<u>2,500</u>	<u>2,500</u>
	12,663	16,120
Deduct — Transfer to general equity to cover cost of books purchased	<u>6,970</u>	<u>5,957</u>
Balance at end of year	<u>\$ 5,693</u>	<u>\$ 10,163</u>
Future Building		
Balance at beginning of year	\$ 43,823	\$ 38,823
Add — Appropriation from budget	<u>5,000</u>	<u>5,000</u>
Balance at end of year	<u>\$ 48,823</u>	<u>\$ 43,823</u>
Salary Fund		
Balance at beginning of year	\$ —	\$ —
Add — Appropriation from budget	<u>8,800</u>	<u>—</u>
Balance at end of year	<u>\$ 8,800</u>	<u>\$ —</u>

GENERAL EQUITY

Balance at beginning of year	\$142,763	\$135,322
Add — Transfer from library fund to cover cost of books purchased out of general funds	6,970	5,957
Excess of revenue over expenditure	<u>4,835</u>	<u>1,484</u>
Balance at end of year	<u>\$154,568</u>	<u>\$142,763</u>

STATEMENT 4

**THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1980**

	1980 Budget	1980 Actual	1979 Actual
Revenue			
Allotments from Churches	\$127,600	\$128,209	\$114,561
Gifts and collections	5,000	6,982	4,613
Student fees	900	1,400	1,100
Student accommodation	1,200	1,305	1,050
Investment income	6,000	7,034	5,716
Superannuation benefits	5,435	4,950	5,435
	<u>146,135</u>	<u>149,880</u>	<u>132,475</u>
Expenditure — statement 5			
Faculty	100,606	98,855	94,846
Property	7,072	7,615	8,185
Administration	19,973	20,636	19,749
Library	1,000	42	211
Appropriations	16,800	16,800	8,000
Unforeseen	684	1,097	—
	<u>146,135</u>	<u>145,045</u>	<u>130,991</u>
Excess of Revenue over expenditure	<u>—</u>	<u>\$ 4,835</u>	<u>\$ 1,484</u>

STATEMENT 5

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
EXPENDITURE DETAIL
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1980

	1980 Budget	1980 Actual	1979 Actual
Faculty			
Salaries — professors	\$ 74,170	\$74,170	\$ 68,500
Salaries — lecturers	6,000	6,000	6,000
Pension — Mrs. Kouwenhoven	13,314	11,095	12,180
Superannuation	4,892	5,346	4,892
Social insurances	1,050	1,112	1,938
Other personnel insurances	1,180	1,132	1,336
	<u>100,606</u>	<u>98,855</u>	<u>94,846</u>
Property			
Property improvements and maintenance	1,060	2,374	855
Caretaking	2,000	1,829	2,180
Hydro and water	750	668	650
Fuel	2,000	1,390	1,746
Insurance	1,262	1,354	1,262
Depreciation of equipment	—	—	1,492
	<u>7,072</u>	<u>7,615</u>	<u>8,185</u>
Administration			
Travelling and meetings — board of governors	1,500	1,013	575
Travelling — lecturers	1,000	1,157	891
Travelling and meetings — trustees	250	98	60
Administration and office supplies	1,350	1,750	1,105
Salary — administrator	13,500	13,500	12,500
Social insurances — administrator	446	468	—
Other personnel insurances — administrator	377	357	211
Legal and audit	350	400	310
Telephone	700	840	841
General	500	1,053	—
Convocation in Western Canada	—	—	3,256
	<u>19,973</u>	<u>20,636</u>	<u>19,749</u>
Library			
Supplies	1,000	42	211
Appropriations			
Pension fund	500	500	500
Building fund	5,000	5,000	5,000
Library fund	2,500	2,500	2,500
Salary fund	8,800	8,800	—
	<u>16,800</u>	<u>16,800</u>	<u>8,000</u>
Unforeseen			
Expenses re new professor	684	1,097	—
	<u>\$146,135</u>	<u>\$145,045</u>	<u>\$130,991</u>

APPENDIX X B-5

**THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1981**

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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 December 31, 1981 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 work in respect of this revenue was limited to accounting for the amounts recorded in the books. The College does not depreciate the buildings, driveway or library books as disclosed in note 1.

In our opinion, except for the limitations in the scope of our examination referred to in the preceding paragraph, these financial statements present fairly the financial position of the College as at December 31, 1981 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.

ROBINSON, LOTT & BROHMAN
Chartered Accountants
Guelph, Ontario
March 30, 1982

STATEMENT 1

**THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
BALANCE SHEET
AS AT DECEMBER 31, 1981**

ASSETS

Current	1981	1980
Petty cash	\$ 100	\$ 100
Cash in bank — current accounts	8,900	22,177
Cash in bank — savings accounts	15,918	14,292
Cash in bank — N.V. Slavensburg Bank — Rotterdam	769	313
Allotments receivable	<u>883</u>	<u>2,045</u>
	<u>26,570</u>	<u>38,927</u>
Investments (at cost)		
Term deposit	7,300	72,300
Loan receivable	65,000	—
Loan receivable	3,080	—
Accrued interest	<u>526</u>	<u>245</u>
	<u>75,906</u>	<u>72,545</u>

Fixed	Cost	Accumulated Depreciation	
Equipment, furniture and fixtures	\$ 18,893	\$ 13,259	5,634
Real estate and driveway	77,157	—	77,157
Library books	<u>68,441</u>	—	<u>68,441</u>
	<u>\$164,491</u>	<u>\$ 13,259</u>	<u>151,232</u>
		<u>\$253,708</u>	<u>\$243,905</u>

LIABILITIES

Current		
Employees' payroll deductions payable	\$ 1,807	\$ 1,670
Allotments received in advance	—	23
	<u>1,807</u>	<u>1,693</u>

EQUITY

Designated — statement 2		
Library	—	5,693
Future building	53,823	48,823
Pension fund	27,141	24,328
Salary fund	<u>17,600</u>	<u>8,800</u>
	98,564	87,644
General — statement 2	<u>153,337</u>	<u>154,568</u>
	<u>251,901</u>	<u>242,212</u>
	<u>\$253,708</u>	<u>\$243,905</u>

STATEMENT 2

**THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
STATEMENT OF EQUITY
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1981**

DESIGNATED EQUITY

	1981	1980
Library		
Balance at beginning of year	\$ 5,693	\$ 10,163
Add — Appropriation from budget	<u>2,500</u>	<u>2,500</u>
	8,193	12,663
Deduct — Transfer to general equity to cover cost of books purchased	<u>8,193</u>	<u>6,970</u>
Balance at end of year	<u>—</u>	<u>\$ 5,693</u>
Future Building		
Balance at beginning of year	\$ 48,823	\$ 43,823
Add — Appropriation from budget	<u>5,000</u>	<u>5,000</u>
Balance at end of year	<u>\$ 53,823</u>	<u>\$ 48,823</u>
Pension Fund		
Balance at beginning of year	\$ 24,328	\$ 21,310
Add — Appropriation from budget	500	500
— Interest allocation	<u>2,313</u>	<u>2,518</u>
Balance at end of year	<u>\$ 27,141</u>	<u>\$ 24,328</u>
Salary Fund		
Balance at beginning of year	8,800	—
Add — Appropriation from budget	<u>8,800</u>	<u>8,800</u>
Balance at end of year	<u>\$ 17,600</u>	<u>\$ 8,800</u>

GENERAL EQUITY

Balance, at beginning of year	\$154,568	\$142,763
Add — Transfer from library fund to cover cost of books purchased out of general funds	8,193	6,970
Excess of revenue over expenditure — statement 3	<u>—</u>	<u>9,424</u>
	162,761	154,568
Deduct — Excess of expenditure over revenues — statement 3	<u>9,424</u>	<u>—</u>
Balance at end of year	<u>\$153,337</u>	<u>\$154,568</u>

STATEMENT 3

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1981

	1981	1981	1980
Revenue	Budget	Actual	Actual
Allotments from Churches	\$132,675	\$133,538	\$128,209
Gifts and collections	5,000	7,998	6,982
Student fees	1,700	1,900	1,400
Student accommodation	1,200	900	1,305
Investment income	6,500	7,046	7,034
Superannuation benefits	—	—	4,950
	<u>147,075</u>	<u>151,382</u>	<u>149,880</u>
Expenditure			
Faculty	94,980	99,130	98,855
Property	11,164	11,847	7,615
Administration	21,457	22,053	20,636
Library	1,000	460	42
Appropriations	16,800	16,800	16,800
Unforeseen	1,674	10,516	1,097
	<u>147,075</u>	<u>160,806</u>	<u>145,045</u>
Excess of Revenue over expenditure	<u>\$ —</u>	<u>(\$ 9,424)</u>	<u>\$ 4,835</u>

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
EXPENDITURE DETAIL
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1981

	1981 Budget	1981 Actual	1980 Actual
Faculty			
Salaries — professors	\$ 79,500	\$79,933	\$ 74,170
Salaries — lecturers	8,000	8,000	6,000
Pension — Mrs. Kouwenhoven	—	—	11,095
Superannuation	5,346	7,756	5,346
Social insurances	995	1,583	1,112
Other personnel insurances	1,139	1,858	1,132
	<u>94,980</u>	<u>99,130</u>	<u>98,855</u>
Property			
Property improvements and maintenance	5,000	4,355	2,374
Caretaking	2,000	1,824	1,829
Hydro and water	750	600	668
Fuel	2,000	2,553	1,390
Insurance	1,354	1,925	1,354
Depreciation of equipment	60	590	—
	<u>11,164</u>	<u>11,847</u>	<u>7,615</u>
Administration			
Travelling and meetings — board of governors	1,500	1,585	1,013
Travelling — lecturers	1,200	1,775	1,157
Travelling and meetings — trustees	250	30	98
Administration and office supplies	1,500	1,938	1,750
Salary — administrator	14,560	13,757	13,500
Social insurances — administrator	409	545	468
Other personnel insurances — administrator	388	355	357
Legal and audit	350	375	400
Telephone	800	930	840
General	500	763	1,053
	<u>21,457</u>	<u>22,053</u>	<u>20,636</u>
Library			
Supplies	1,000	460	42
Appropriations			
Pension fund	500	500	500
Building fund	5,000	5,000	5,000
Library fund	2,500	2,500	2,500
Salary fund	8,800	8,800	8,800
	<u>16,800</u>	<u>16,800</u>	<u>16,800</u>
Unforeseen			
Expenses re new professor	1,674	8,878	1,097
Special receptions	—	834	—
Incorporation expense	—	804	—
	<u>1,674</u>	<u>10,516</u>	<u>1,097</u>
	<u>\$147,075</u>	<u>\$160,806</u>	<u>\$145,045</u>

**THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1981**

1. Significant Accounting Policies

a. Fixed Assets

The College does not record depreciation on the building, driveway and library books.

Depreciation is recorded on the equipment, furniture and fixtures on the straight line basis over a ten year period.

b. Accounting Change

During the year the pension fund commenced to be accounted for as a part of designated equity.

2. Incorporation

The College was incorporated by Private Bill in the Ontario Legislature on December 11, 1981. The College has operated for many years as an unincorporated body.

APPENDIX X B-6

**THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FIVE MONTHS ENDED MAY 31, 1982**

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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, 1982 and the statements of equity and revenue and expenditure for the five months 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 work in respect of this revenue was limited to accounting for the amounts recorded in the books. The College does not depreciate the buildings, driveway or library books as disclosed in note 1.

In our opinion, except for the limitations in the scope of our examination referred to in the preceding paragraph, these financial statements present fairly the financial position of the College as at May 31, 1982 and the results of its operations for the five months then ended in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding period.

ROBINSON, LOTT & BROHMAN
Chartered Accountants
Guelph, Ontario
August 2, 1982

STATEMENT 1

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
(Incorporated under the laws of Ontario)
BALANCE SHEET
AS AT MAY 31, 1982

ASSETS

Current

Petty cash	\$ 100	
Cash in bank — current accounts	12,084	
Cash in bank — savings accounts	19,872	
Cash in bank — N.V. Slavenburgs Bank — Rotterdam	774	
Allotments receivable	7,716	
Prepaid expense	<u>684</u>	\$ 41,230

Investments (at cost)

Term deposits	7,300	
Loan receivable	65,000	
Loan receivable	2,720	
Loan receivable	4,000	
Accrued interest	<u>71</u>	79,091

Fixed	Cost	Accumulated Depreciation	
Equipment, furniture and fixtures	\$ 19,749	\$ 13,657	6,092
Real estate and driveway	77,157	—	77,157
Library books	<u>72,242</u>	—	<u>72,242</u>
	<u>\$169,148</u>	<u>\$ 13,657</u>	155,491
			<u>\$275,812</u>

LIABILITIES

Current

Employees' payroll deductions payable	\$ 2,055	
Accommodations paid in advance	113	
Allotments received in advance	<u>10,838</u>	\$ 13,006

EQUITY

Designated — statement 2

Future building	\$ 64,240	
Pension fund	28,638	
Salary fund	<u>17,600</u>	\$110,478

General — statement 2

<u>152,328</u>	<u>262,806</u>
	<u>\$275,812</u>

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
STATEMENT OF EQUITY
FOR THE FIVE MONTHS ENDED MAY 31, 1982

DESIGNATED EQUITY

Library

Balance at beginning of period	—
Add — Appropriation from budget	<u>1,042</u>
	1,042
Deduct — Transfer to general equity to cover cost of books purchased	<u>1,042</u>
Balance at end of period	<u>\$ —</u>

Future Building

Balance at beginning of period	\$ 53,823
Add — Appropriation from budget	<u>10,417</u>
Balance at end of period	<u>\$ 64,240</u>

Pension Fund

Balance at beginning of period	\$ 27,141
Add — Appropriation from budget	208
— Interest allocation	<u>1,289</u>
Balance at end of period	<u>\$ 28,638</u>

Salary Fund

Balance at beginning and end of period	<u>\$ 17,600</u>
--	------------------

GENERAL EQUITY

Balance at beginning of period	\$153,337
Add — Transfer from library fund to cover cost of books purchased out of general funds	<u>1,042</u>
	154,379
Deduct — Excess of expenditure over revenue — statement 3	<u>2,051</u>
Balance, at end of period	<u>\$152,328</u>

STATEMENT 3**THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE
FOR THE FIVE MONTHS ENDED MAY 31, 1982**

	BUDGET (5/12)	ACTUAL
Revenue		
Allotments from Churches	\$ 61,419	\$ 62,387
Gifts and collections	2,083	1,515
Student fees	792	1,000
Student accommodation	187	337
Investment income	2,500	2,312
	<u>66,981</u>	<u>67,551</u>
Expenditure		
Faculty	40,975	40,722
Property	4,806	5,175
Administration	8,591	9,991
Library	104	474
Appropriations	11,667	11,667
Unforeseen	838	1,573
	<u>66,981</u>	<u>69,602</u>
Excess of Revenue over expenditure	<u>\$ —</u>	<u>(\$ 2,051)</u>

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
EXPENDITURE DETAIL
FOR THE FIVE MONTHS ENDED MAY 31, 1982

	BUDGET	ACTUAL
	(5/12)	
Faculty		
Salaries — professors	\$ 33,854	\$ 35,062
Salaries — lecturers	3,333	3,333
Superannuation	2,468	1,113
Social insurances	544	759
Other personnel insurances	776	455
	<u>40,975</u>	<u>40,722</u>
Property		
Property improvements and maintenance	2,108	2,105
Caretaking	833	760
Hydro and water	312	235
Fuel	750	1,677
Insurance	803	—
Depreciation of equipment	—	398
	<u>4,806</u>	<u>5,175</u>
Administration		
Travelling and meetings — board of governors	625	2,473
Travelling — lecturers	833	191
Travelling and meetings — trustees	62	260
Administration and office supplies	729	450
Salary — administrator	5,208	5,208
Social insurances — administrator	182	202
Other personnel insurances — administrator	138	156
Legal and audit	188	500
Telephone	417	329
General	209	222
	<u>8,591</u>	<u>9,991</u>
Library		
Supplies	<u>104</u>	<u>474</u>
Appropriations		
Pension fund	208	208
Building fund	10,417	10,417
Library fund	1,042	1,042
	<u>11,667</u>	<u>11,667</u>
Unforeseen		
Incorporation expense	<u>838</u>	<u>1,573</u>
	<u>\$ 66,981</u>	<u>\$ 69,602</u>

**THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE FIVE MONTHS ENDED MAY 31, 1982**

1. Significant Accounting Policies

a. Fixed Assets

The College does not record depreciation on the building, driveway and library books as these assets are considered not to physically depreciate.

Depreciation is recorded on the equipment, furniture and fixtures on the straight line basis over their estimated life expectancy which is ten years.

b. Fiscal Year End Change

The College changed its fiscal year from December 31 to May 31 to coincide with the academic year. As a result comparative figures for the corresponding period in the prior year have not been shown as they would not have any significance. The original 1982 budget estimates have been pro-rated for the five month period under review.

2. Subsequent Events

Section 11(2) of the Act incorporating the College requires that any funds held for the benefit of the College shall be vested in the College. Women's Savings Action is an organization which has for a number of years been raising funds to assist the College particularly in the provision of library facilities. Negotiations were underway at May 31, 1982 to transfer the assets held by Women's Savings Action to the College but the final transfer of these assets has not yet been completed. These assets in the form of cash and guaranteed investment certificates amounted to \$91,483. at May 31, 1982.

3. Incorporation

The College is incorporated by a special Act of the Ontario legislature.

APPENDIX XC
THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
ACT, BY-LAWS AND REGULATIONS

BILL Pr42

1981

**An Act respecting the Theological College of
the Canadian Reformed Churches**

Preamble	<p>Whereas the Canadian Reformed Churches, an unincorporated federation of Reformed Churches in Canada, hereby represent that they maintain an institution of higher learning in theology for the training for the ministry, known as the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches; that it is desirable that the said College be incorporated and that the College be given the authority to grant degrees in theology; and whereas the Canadian Reformed Churches hereby apply for special legislation for such purposes; and whereas it is expedient to grant the application;</p> <p>Therefore, Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Ontario, enacts as follows:</p>
Interpretation	<p>1.—(1) In this Act,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. "Board" means the Board of Governors of the College;b. "Churches" means all the Churches that from time to time comprise the federation of Canadian Reformed Churches;c. "College" means the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches;d. "faculty" means all persons employed by the College as professor, associate professor, assistant professor, lecturer or instructor;e. "Principal" means the Principal of the College;f. "property" includes all property, both real and personal;g. "Senate" means the Senate of the College;h. "student" means a person who is registered or enrolled in a course of study or program at the College;i. "Synod" means an assembly convened by the Churches as the Synod of the Canadian Reformed Churches in Canada;j. "unincorporated college" means the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches as it existed immediately prior to the coming into force of this Act.
Conflict with R.S.O. 1980, c. 95	<p>(2) In the event of conflict between any provision of this Act and any provision of the <i>Corporations Act</i>, the provision of this Act prevails.</p>
Incorporation	<p>2.—(1) The persons named in the Schedule hereto are hereby created a body corporate with perpetual succession and a common seal under the name of "Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches."</p>
Continuation of rights, etc.	<p>(2) Subject to any rights acquired by any person prior to the day this Act comes into force, the property, rights, privileges and powers of the unincorporated college are hereby continued and vested in the College and the liabilities of the unincorporated college together with the benefits and burdens of all contracts and covenants of the unincorporated college are hereby continued in and assumed by the College.</p>
Idem	<p>(3) Subject to this Act, all by-laws, resolutions and appointments of the unincorporated college shall continue as by-laws, resolutions and</p>

	appointments of the College until amended, repealed or revoked.
Dissolution	(4) The unincorporated college is dissolved on the day this Act comes into force.
Objects	3. The object and purpose of the College is the advancement of learning in theology for the training for the ministry of the Gospel.
Basis	4. The College shall be carried on as a Christian institute of theology whose basis shall be the infallible Word of God as interpreted by the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons of Dordt as adhered to by the Churches.
First Board of Governors	5.—(1) The persons named in the Schedule shall constitute the Board of Governors which shall act until the Board is reconstituted in accordance with subsection (2).
Reconstitution of Board	(2) Within three years from the coming into force of this Act, the Board shall be reconstituted to consist of eleven Governors to be elected or appointed by Synod in such manner as may be prescribed by the by-laws of the College, for a term of three years.
Term	(3) No Governor shall serve for more than nine years consecutively, but on the expiration of one year after having served on the Board for nine consecutive years, such person shall again be eligible for membership on the Board.
Idem	(4) Subsection (3) does not apply to service on the Board of Governors of the unincorporated college.
Increase or decrease in Board	(5) The Board may, by by-law, a. reduce the size of the Board to consist of not fewer than seven Governors or increase the size of the Board; and b. provide for the election and retirement of Governors in rotation, but no such by-law shall come into effect until it has been confirmed by Synod.
Qualifications	(6) No person may be a Governor unless, a. he is a Canadian citizen; and b. he is a member in good standing of one of the Churches.
Quorum	(7) A majority of the Board constitutes a quorum for the transaction of business.
Chairman and vice-chairman	(8) The Board shall elect a chairman and a vice-chairman from among its members and, in the case of the absence or illness of the chairman or there being a vacancy in that office, the vice-chairman shall act as and have all the powers of the chairman.
Majority vote	(9) Questions arising at any meeting of the Board shall be decided by a majority of votes and, in the case of an equality of votes, the question shall be deemed to be defeated.
Minutes	(10) The Board shall keep proper records and minutes of its proceedings and proper books of account of the financial affairs of the College.
Powers	(11) The government, conduct, management and control of the College and of its property, revenues, expenditures, business and affairs are vested in the Board and the Board has all powers necessary or convenient to perform its duties and achieve the object and purpose of the College including, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the power, a. to enact by-laws for the conduct of its affairs; b. to establish and terminate programs and courses of study after

- consideration of the recommendations, if any, of the Senate;
- c. to appoint, promote, suspend and remove the administrative officers of the College and the members of the administrative staff;
 - d. to appoint, in accordance with the policies established by Synod, members of the faculty who are in full accord with the basis of the College as set out in section 4;
 - e. to promote, suspend and remove and to grant tenure and leave of absence to members of the faculty in accordance with the policies established by Synod, but any action resulting in suspension or removal of a faculty member shall be in accordance with the by-laws of the College and is subject to an appeal to Synod;
 - f. subject to the direction and approval of Synod, to establish, maintain, change and terminate faculties, schools, institutes, departments and chairs within the College;
 - g. to appoint or remove the Principal;
 - h. to establish and collect fees and charges for tuition and for services of any kind offered by the College and collect fees and charges on behalf of any entity, organization or element of the College;
 - i. to borrow money for the purposes of the College and give security therefor on such terms and in such amounts as it may deem advisable;
 - j. to invest all money that comes into the College that is not required to be expended for any purpose to which it lawfully may be applied, subject always to any express limitations or restrictions on investment powers imposed by the terms of same, in such manner as it considers proper and, except where a trust instrument otherwise directs, to combine trust moneys belonging to various trusts in its care into a common trust fund;
 - k. to hold, manage, sell or convert any of the real or personal property from time to time owned by the College and to invest and reinvest any principal in such manner as may from time to time be determined;
 - l. to enact by-laws to regulate the admission of students who are in full accord with the basis of the College as set out in section 4 and to set admission standards based on academic qualifications; and
 - m. to appoint one or more Governors, or any other person or persons, to execute on behalf of the Board documents and other instruments in writing generally, or specific documents and other instruments in writing, and to affix the corporate seal of the College thereto.

Meetings open to public

(12) Subject to subsections (13) and (14), a meeting of the Board shall be open to the public and prior notice of the meeting shall be given to the members of the Board and to the public in such manner as the Board, by by-law, may determine, and no person shall be excluded from a meeting except for improper conduct as determined by the Board.

Confidential matters

(13) Where matters confidential to the College are to be considered, the part of the meeting concerning such matters may be held *in camera*.

Idem

(14) Where a matter of a personal nature concerning an individual may be considered at a meeting, the part of the meeting concerning such individual shall be held *in camera* unless there is a mutual agreement to the contrary by the Board and the individual.

Delegation of powers	(15) The Board may appoint an executive committee and such other committees as the Board considers advisable and delegate to any such committee any of its powers in accordance with the by-laws of the College, but where power and authority to act for the Board are delegated to a committee, a majority of the members of the committee shall be Governors.
Synod	<p>6.—(1) Synod shall assemble not less than every three years to do, in addition to any other business that may be transacted, the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Receive the report of the Board as to the operation of the College. 2. Elect or appoint the Governors in accordance with subsections 5 (2) to (6). 3. Consider the audited financial statements and the report of the auditor for the previous fiscal periods. 4. Appoint the auditors until the next assembly of Synod. 5. Confirm or reject any by-laws passed by the Board that under this Act require confirmation by Synod.
Special assembly	(2) The Board may petition the Churches at any time for a special assembly of Synod to deal with matters pertaining to the College.
Audit R.S.O. 1980, c. 405	7.—(1) The accounts and transactions of the College shall be audited at least annually by one or more public accountants licensed under the <i>Public Accountancy Act</i> .
Distribution of annual report	<p>(2) The Board shall distribute annually to all of the Churches an annual report including, in addition to any other information, the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. an audited annual financial report; and b. an annual budget for the ensuing year.
Principal	8. There shall be a Principal who shall supervise the affairs of the College, including its administration, faculty and students, and who shall report to the Board.
Chancellor	9.—(1) The Principal shall act as Chancellor of the College and, as Chancellor, he shall confer all degrees.
Degrees	(2) Degrees shall only be conferred upon the recommendation of the Senate.
Senate	<p>10.—(1) There shall be a Senate composed of,</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. the Principal; b. the faculty; and c. such retired members of the faculty as may be appointed by the Board.
Chairman	(2) The Principal shall act as chairman of the Senate.
Powers	<p>(3) The Senate has power,</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. to make recommendations to the Board to establish and terminate programs and courses of study; b. to determine the curricula of all programs and courses of study, enforce standards of admission to the College and continued registration therein, and determine the qualifications for graduation; c. to conduct examinations, appoint examiners and decide all matters related to examinations and the appointment of examiners; d. to grant the degrees of Bachelor of Theology, Bachelor of Divinity, Master of Divinity and Master of Theology; e. to award fellowships, scholarships, bursaries, medals, prizes and

- other marks of academic achievement;
- f. to enact by-laws for the conduct of its affairs provided such by-laws are approved by the Board;
- g. to take disciplinary action against students and to dismiss students, but disciplinary action or dismissal shall be in accordance with the by-laws of the Senate and is subject to an appeal to the Board;
- h. to appoint committees and delegate thereto power and authority to act for them with respect to any matter or class of matters set out in clauses a. to g., but where such power and authority to act are delegated to a committee, a majority of the members of the committee shall be members of the Senate;
- i. to do all things necessary for carrying out the powers and duties as set out in clauses a. to h.

Property

11.—(1) The College has power to purchase or otherwise acquire, take or receive, by deed, gift, bequest or devise, and to hold, possess and enjoy, without licence in mortmain and without limitation as to the period of holding, any estate or property whatsoever, whether real or personal, and to sell, grant, convey, mortgage, lease or otherwise dispose of the same or any part thereof, or any interest therein from time to time as occasion may require, and to acquire other estate or property in addition thereto or in place thereof and to enter into and carry out agreements, contracts and undertakings incidental thereto.

Idem

(2) All property previously or hereafter granted, conveyed, devised or bequeathed to the College or to the unincorporated college or to any person in trust for or for the benefit of the College or to the unincorporated college or of any faculty, school or department thereof, or otherwise in connection therewith, subject to any trust or trusts affecting the same, shall be vested in the College.

Dissolution

(3) Upon the dissolution of the College and after the payment of all debts and liabilities, the remaining property of the College shall be distributed or disposed of to those Churches that are deemed to be charitable organizations in Canada in such manner as Synod may direct.

Non-profit corporation

12. The College shall be carried on without the purpose of gain for the Governors or the Churches and any profits or other accretions to the College shall be used in promoting its object and purpose.

Application of R.S.O. 1980, cc. 65, 63

13. The *Charities Accounting Act* and the *Charitable Gifts Act* apply to the College.

Commencement

14. This Act comes into force on the day it receives Royal Assent.

Short title

15. The short title of this Act is the *Canadian Reformed Theological College Act, 1981*.

SCHEDULE

First Board of Governors of the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches:

Mr. Hessel Dantuma, Executive
Rev. Jacob Geertsema, B.A., B.D., Clergyman
Mr. Arie Hordyk, Real Estate Broker & Appraiser
Mr. Clarence Loopstra, LL.B., Barrister
Mr. John Medemblik, Executive
Rev. Johannes Mulder, B.A., B.D., Clergyman
Rev. Clarence Stam, B.A., B.D., Clergyman
Rev. Dirk VanderBoom, M.Th., Clergyman
Rev. Martin VanderWel, B.A., B.D., Clergyman
Mr. Maas VanGrootheest, Executive
Rev. James Visscher, B.A., B.D., Clergyman

BY-LAW NUMBER 1

**A by-law relating generally to
the affairs of the Theological College
of the Canadian Reformed Churches.**

BE IT ENACTED as a by-law of the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches as follows:

SECTION ONE

INTERPRETATION

1.01 **Definitions** — The definitions in the Canadian Reformed Theological College Act, 1981 are hereby adopted. In addition, in this by-law and all other by-laws of the College, unless the context otherwise requires:

“Act” means the Canadian Reformed Theological College Act, 1981;

“active minister” means a minister ordained as such in one of the Churches who has not retired from active service;

“business day” means any day which is not a non-business day;

“by-laws” means this by-law and all other by-laws of the College from time to time in force and effect;

“convening Church” means the Church appointed by Synod to convene the next Synod;

“Corporations Act” means the Corporations Act for the Province of Ontario, and any Act that may be substituted therefor as from time to time amended;

“faculty” means, in addition to the meaning attributed thereto by the Act and for greater certainty, the faculty including the Principal, temporary instructors and lecturers;

“non-business day” means Saturday, Sunday and any other day that is a holiday as defined in the Interpretation Act (Ontario);

“recorded address” means in the case of any Church the last known address for the Clerk of such Church as recorded in the records of the College, and in the case of a Governor, officer, auditor or member of a committee of the Board, his address as recorded in the records of the College;

“signing officer” means in relation to any instrument, any person authorized to sign the same on behalf of the College pursuant to the by-laws, or by a resolution passed for that purpose;

save as aforesaid, words and expressions defined in the Act and the Corporations Act

have the same meanings when used herein; and words importing the singular number include the plural and vice versa; words importing the masculine gender include the feminine and neuter genders; words importing persons include individuals, bodies corporate, partnerships, trusts and unincorporated organizations.

SECTION TWO GENERAL PROVISIONS

2.01 **Head Office** — Until changed in accordance with the Corporations Act, the head office of the College shall be at 374 Queen Street South, Hamilton, Ontario L8P 3T8.

2.02 **Corporate Seals** — Until changed by resolution of the Board, the corporate seals of the College shall be in the form impressed hereon:

- a. For academic use:
- b. For legal use:

SECTION THREE GOVERNORS

3.01 **Number of Governors** — Until changed in accordance with the Act, the Board shall consist of eleven (11) Governors.

3.02 **Qualifications** — In addition to the qualifications set out in the Act, no person shall be qualified for election or appointment as a Governor if he is an undischarged bankrupt, if he is mentally incompetent or incapable of managing his affairs, if he has not attained 21 years of age, or is over 70 years of age. At least six (6) Governors shall be active ministers of the Word. No person shall be a Governor unless he is a confessing member of one of the Churches in good standing.

3.03 **Consent** — No election or appointment of a person as a Governor shall be effective unless:

- a. he consents in writing to act as a Governor before his election or appointment or within ten (10) days thereafter, or he was present at the meeting when he was elected or appointed and did not refuse at that meeting to act as a Governor; and
- b. he has subscribed in writing to the following declaration:

Declaration of Governors of the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches

I, the undersigned Governor of the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches, do hereby:

- i acknowledge that I am an officer of and responsible to the Canadian Reformed Churches in General Synod assembled;
- ii further acknowledge the right of each Synod to terminate my appointment;
- iii promise faithfully to carry out the duties imposed upon me by the Act and the by-laws passed pursuant to it; and
- iv declare that any action taken by me shall be done in accordance with the directions and policies established by Synod.

3.04 **Election and Term**

(See By-Law No. 3, being a by-law to amend Section 3.04 of By-Law No. 1.)

3.05 **Removal of Governors** — The Board of Governors may, by resolution passed by at least the majority of the votes cast thereon at a meeting of Governors called for that purpose, remove any Governor before the expiration of his term of office if that Governor no longer qualifies to be a Governor as required by the Act and the by-laws. Synod may, for any reason, remove a Governor from office.

3.06 Vacancies — If a vacancy shall occur in the Board of Governors, the remaining Governors shall appoint a qualified person from the substitutes provided by Synod, if any, to fill the vacancy until the next Synod. If there are no substitutes available, and the Board consists of not fewer than seven (7) Governors, the Board shall continue until the next Synod. If there are less than seven (7) Governors remaining, and there are no qualified substitutes available to fill the vacancies to constitute a Board of at least seven (7) Governors, the remaining Governors shall request the convening Church to schedule a special Synod as soon as possible.

3.07 Place of Meetings — Meetings of the Board shall be held at the head office of the College, or if the Board so determines, at any place elsewhere in Canada.

3.08 Calling of Meeting — Meetings of the Board shall be held from time to time at such time and on such day as the Board, the chairman, any officer with the concurrence of the Executive committee, or any four (4) Governors may determine. Notice of the time and place of every meeting so called shall be given in the manner provided in Section 11 to each Governor, not less than seven (7) days before the time when the meeting is to be held. No notice of a meeting shall be necessary if all of the Governors in office are present or if those absent waive notice of or otherwise consent to such meeting being held. In addition, notice to the public of each meeting shall be given by posting a notice of such meeting, together with an agenda in a conspicuous place in the head office of the College at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meeting being held.

3.09 Regular Meetings — The Board of Governors shall meet at least once annually, at which time they shall elect from among themselves a chairman, vice-chairman and secretary to hold office for the ensuing year. In addition, the Board may also from time to time elect or appoint such other officers as may be desirable who need not be Governors.

3.10 Order of Procedure of Meeting — At the annual meeting, the Board of Governors shall deal with the following:

- a. the election of officers;
- b. the report of the Executive Committee;
- c. the report of the Academic Committee;
- d. the report of the Finance and Property Committee;
- e. the report of the Convocation Committee;
- f. the report of the Visitors;
- g. the report of the Senate;
- h. the report of the Principal;
- i. the report of the Librarian;
- j. the report of the Registrar;
- k. the Visitors' Schedule for the following year;
- l. consideration of unfinished business;
- m. consideration of new business;
- n. such other matters as may be properly before the Board.

3.11 Chairman -- The chairman, or in his absence, the vice-chairman, shall be chairman of any meeting of the Board. If no such officer is present, the Governors present shall choose one of their number to be chairman.

3.12 Votes to Govern — In addition to the provisions in the Act, all votes at all meetings of the Board shall be taken by ballot if so demanded by any Governor present, but if no demand be made, the votes shall be taken in the usual way by show of hands. A declaration by the chairman that a resolution has been carried and an entry to that effect in the minutes shall be admissible in evidence as prima facie proof of the fact without proof of the number or proportion of the votes recorded in favour or against such resolution.

3.13 Conflict of Interest — A Governor shall not be disqualified by reason of his office from contracting with the College. Subject to the provisions of the Corporations Act, a Governor shall not, by reason only of his office, be accountable to the College for any

profit or gain realized from such a contract or transaction in which he has an interest, and such contract or transaction shall not be voidable by reason only of such interest, provided that if a declaration and disclosure of such interest is required by the Corporations Act, such declaration and disclosure shall have been made and the Governor shall have refrained from voting as a Governor on the contract or transaction.

3.14 Remuneration and Expenses — The Governors shall receive no remuneration for acting as such, but shall be entitled to be reimbursed for travelling and actual expenditures incurred for duties authorized by the Board and for attending at meetings of the Board. Nothing herein contained shall preclude any Governor from serving the College in any other capacity and receiving remuneration therefor.

3.15 Powers of the Board — In addition to the powers contained in the Act, the Board shall further have power:

- a. to appoint a registrar and a librarian and such other officers as may be necessary or desirable, and to fix their duties and responsibilities;
- b. after consultation with the Senate, and upon the recommendation or in consultation with the Academic Committee, to appoint temporary instructors in cases of either prolonged illness of faculty members or to fill vacancies in the faculty between Synods, to fix the duties and responsibilities of such temporary instructors and to discharge them;
- c. for good and sufficient reasons to grant a professor or lecturer honourable discharge before his normal retirement;
- d. for good and sufficient reasons to grant a professor or lecturer a leave of absence for such period or periods and upon such terms and conditions as may seem proper.

3.16 Duties of the Board — The Board of Governors shall have *inter alia* the following duties:

- a. to serve Synod with advice in all matters pertaining to the College and to carry out the decisions and instructions of Synod on such matters;
- b. upon the advice of the Academic Committee, to exercise supervision over the confession, doctrine and life of the faculty, including temporary instructors and over the instruction they give at the College in order that everything may be barred from their teaching which is not in accordance with the Holy Scripture and the Confession and Church Order of the Churches;
- c. to bar forthwith from the execution of his office, a faculty member whom the Board of Governors has found to be delinquent either in doctrine or in conduct, and as soon as possible thereafter, to request the convening Church to schedule a special Synod for the purpose of ratifying the decision of the Board, and if necessary, to consider an appeal from the faculty member;
- d. to determine upon the advice of the Academic Committee the programs and courses of study and the subjects in which each faculty member is to give instruction;
- e. to convene a college evening at the beginning of each academic year;
- f. to keep proper records of their meetings and to retain all other records pertaining to their duties;
- g. to approve a budget for each fiscal year and fix the annual contributions to be made by the Churches;
- h. to approve the appointment of such employees, servants or agents as may be necessary or desirable;
- i. to acquire additional real property or replace existing real property in accordance with the needs of the College in consultation with or upon the recommendation of the Finance and Property Committee;
- j. to fix tuition and resident's fees and fees to be paid for all auxiliary activities at the College in consultation with or upon recommendation of the Finance and Property Committee and the Academic Committee;

- k. to pass regulations respecting pensions and salaries of faculty, provided that such regulations shall not be effective until ratified by Synod.

3.17 Reports of the Board — In addition to the annual report required to be distributed by the Board to all of the Churches, including, in addition to any other information, the following:

- a. an audited financial report; and
- b. an annual budget for the ensuing year;

The Board shall also prepare a written report for each Synod, which shall contain the annual reports not considered by previous Synod, together with a summary of the affairs of the College. The report shall also contain a specific request from the Board of Governors pertaining to any matters which require a statement of policies from Synod pursuant to the provisions of the Act or the by-laws. A copy of such report shall be forwarded to each of the following:

- a. the convening Church;
- b. each of the Churches;
- c. each of the members of the faculty, including all temporary instructors and lecturers;

The Board of Governors may, in their sole discretion, append to the annual report confidential schedules which shall not be circulated until Synod has dealt with the same. In addition, the Board shall from time to time prepare and make available for public viewing, a summary of the matters dealt with at their meetings.

3.18 Resolutions by Mail — Any Governor may initiate a resolution by forwarding the proposed resolution in a concise statement to the secretary of the Board of Governors and all other Governors in accordance with the provisions of Section Twelve. The proposed resolution may, in a separate statement, be accompanied with an explanation or argument in support of the proposal. All Governors shall have 10 business days after the notice is deemed to have been received (being a total of 15 business days from the mailing of the notice) to forward to the secretary of the Board a vote in favour or not in favour of the proposed resolution. Failure by the secretary to receive any response from any Governor within 5 business days thereafter, (being a total of 20 business days from the mailing of the original notice containing the proposed resolution), shall be deemed to be a favourable vote on the resolution, provided that at least a quorum of Governors have actually responded to the proposed resolution. Failure to obtain a written response from a quorum of Governors, either in favour or not in favour of the resolution, within 20 business days from the mailing of the proposed resolution, shall cause the resolution to be null and void. The resolution shall only be deemed effective if:

- a. the secretary has received written verification from the Governor who originated the resolution that the provisions of Section Twelve with respect to notice have been adhered to and notice of the resolution was given to all Governors as required;
- b. the secretary has tabulated the written votes in accordance with the provisions hereof and has determined that the resolution has passed; and
- c. the secretary has given notice in writing to all Governors of the new resolution being in effect.

SECTION FOUR

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

4.01 Composition and Powers — The Executive Committee shall consist of the following officers of the Board, who shall be Governors:

- a. chairman;
- b. treasurer;
- c. secretary.

In the absence of the chairman, the vice-chairman shall take the chairman's position on the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee may exercise all of the powers of the Board specifically delegated to them by the Board from time to time. In addition, the Executive Committee shall be empowered to do the following:

- a. to execute any of the powers of the Board of Governors in cases of emergency. Any such decision may be subsequently rescinded by a regular meeting of the Board;
- b. to supervise the duties of the officers;
- c. to prepare the notices and agenda for all regular meetings of the Board of Governors, and to convene meetings of the Board of Governors as often as is necessary;
- d. to approve correspondence sent on behalf of the Board of Governors;
- e. to obtain reports from all Committees at least once annually, and submit the same to the Board of Governors with such recommendations as the Executive Committee considers advisable;
- f. to maintain communications with the Principal, the Faculty, and the Senate, and if necessary, to convene joint meetings. If it would appear as a result of such meetings that any matter arising therefrom should be considered by the Board of Governors, the Executive Committee shall convene a regular meeting of the Board of Governors;
- g. execute all matters delegated to it specifically by the Board of Governors;

4.02 **Quorum and Vote** — Two members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, and questions arising at any meeting of the Executive Committee shall be decided by a majority of votes and, in the case of an equality of votes, the question shall be deemed to be defeated.

SECTION FIVE

ACADEMIC COMMITTEE

5.01 **Composition and Powers** — The Academic Committee shall be appointed by the Board, and shall consist of six (6) members who must be Governors and active ministers. The Academic Committee shall:

- a. make recommendations concerning all matters pertaining to the Principal, faculty, Registrar, library and librarian;
- b. exercise supervision over the confession, doctrine and life of the Principal and faculty, including temporary instructors and over the instruction they give at the College;
- c. make recommendations to the Board of Governors concerning any findings of delinquency, either in doctrine or in conduct, with respect to the Principal and any member of the faculty;
- d. make recommendations to the Board of Governors, after consultation with the Senate, to determine the programs and courses of study, and to determine the programs and courses of study in which each faculty member is to give instruction, and to approve the curricula of all programs and courses of study as recommended by the Senate;
- e. appoint Visitors from among the academic committee from time to time, for the purpose of being in attendance during the teaching of all programs and courses of study, on a periodic basis and to monitor examinations with respect to such programs and courses of study, pursuant to an annual schedule drawn up by the Academic Committee;
- f. submit a report to the Board of Governors as often as is requested by the Board or by the Executive Committee, and at least once annually.

5.02 **Quorum and Vote** — Four members of the Academic Committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, and questions arising at any meeting of the

Academic Committee shall be decided by a majority of votes and, in the case of an equality of votes, the question shall be deemed to be defeated.

5.03 Consultation — There shall be consultation between the Academic Committee and the Principal as much as reasonably possible, and a copy of all reports and minutes of the Academic Committee to the Board of Governors should be given to the Principal prior to submission to the Board of Governors, unless such report contains matters of a confidential nature affecting the Principal.

5.04 Records — The Academic Committee shall keep proper records of their meetings and maintain all other records pertaining to their duties.

SECTION SIX

FINANCE AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE

6.01 Composition and Powers — The Finance and Property Committee shall be appointed by the Board, and shall consist of five (5) members who must be Governors. The Finance and Property Committee shall:

- a. make recommendations concerning all matters pertaining to the maintenance and operation, acquisition and replacement of College property;
- b. receive all monies for and on behalf of the College and to make all proper disbursements;
- c. properly administer the funds, monies and other property of the College;
- d. after consultation with the faculty pertaining to salaries, prepare a budget for each fiscal year for consideration by the Board of Governors;
- e. maintain all necessary books of account and employ the auditor to prepare financial statements;
- f. make recommendations concerning the appointment of such employees, servants or agents as may be necessary or desirable, and if necessary, make interim appointments or engagements for that purpose, and subject to the direction of the Board of Governors, to fix their duties, responsibilities, salaries, pensions and other emoluments and terms of employment;
- g. take out insurance and to take such other actions and precautions as may be necessary or desirable for the proper maintenance and upkeep of the property of the College;
- h. make recommendations concerning tuition and fees;
- i. incur expenses and enter into contracts in accordance with the approved budget, provided however, that expenses may be incurred and contracts may be entered into in amounts in excess of the amounts provided therefor by the approved budget, but the aggregate total of the actual expenditures incurred for the fiscal period shall not exceed 110% of the approved budget, and no expenditure or liability shall be incurred if the same is contrary to a decision of the Board of Governors. Notwithstanding the aforesaid, the Committee may approve expenditures for emergencies if the welfare or property of the College is threatened, and it is not feasible to obtain the prior approval of the Board of Governors;

6.02 Quorum and Vote — Three members of the Finance and Property Committee constitutes a quorum for the transaction of business, and questions arising at any meeting of the Committee shall be decided by a majority of votes and, in the case of an equality of votes, the question shall be deemed to be defeated.

6.03 Records — The Finance and Property Committee shall keep proper records of their meetings and maintain all other records pertaining to their duties.

6.04 Consultation — There shall be consultation between the Finance and Property Committee and the Principal as much as is reasonably possible, and a copy of all reports and minutes of the Finance and Property Committee to the Board of Governors should

be given to the Principal prior to submission to the Board of Governors, unless such report contains matters of a confidential nature affecting the Principal.

SECTION SEVEN

CONVOCAATION COMMITTEE

- 7.01 **Composition** — The Convocation Committee shall consist of the following:
- two Governors appointed by the Board of Governors;
 - one member of the faculty, nominated by the Senate and appointed by the Board of Governors.
- 7.02 **College Evening**
The Convocation Committee shall organize a college evening annually on a date to be determined by the Board of Governors, and to be held in conjunction with any convocation requested by the Senate. The program for any college evening shall include, together with such other items as may be arranged by the Committee, the following:
- opening by the chairman of Board of Governors or in his absence, the vice-chairman, or such other person delegated by the Board of Governors;
 - the report of the Principal;
 - Convocation exercises, if any; and
 - not less than one featured speaker.
- 7.03 **Quorum and Vote** — Two members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, and questions arising at any meeting of the Committee shall be decided by a majority of votes and, in the case of an equality of votes, the question shall be deemed to be defeated.
- 7.04 **Notices and Reports** — The Convocation Committee shall adequately publicize the holding of the annual college evening so that the Churches and the members thereof are made aware of the date, time, and place of the event, and after the holding thereof, it shall publish such reports of the event in publications commonly read by members of the Churches, as it considers advisable.

SECTION EIGHT

FACULTY

- 8.01 **Composition and Powers** — All appointments to the faculty shall be subject to the approval of Synod. The Board of Governors shall seek the advice of Synod with respect to the following matters:
- the number, rank and tenure of professors and lecturers, and their powers, functions and duties;
 - the appointment of the Principal, and his power, function and duty;
 - the salaries and pensions of the Principal and faculty, including the pensions of their widows and orphans;
 - the termination of an appointment of a member of the faculty or the Principal.
- 8.02 **Subscription Form** — The members of the faculty must be members in good standing of one of the Churches. Before their appointment is effective, they shall sign the following subscription:
- Form of Subscription for the Faculty of the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches
- The undersigned, a member of the faculty at the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches, does hereby, sincerely, and in good conscience before the Lord, declare by this subscription, that he heartily believes and is persuaded that all the articles and points of doctrine, contained in the doctrinal standards

of the Canadian Reformed Churches: The Belgic Confession, The Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dordt, do fully agree with the Word of God.

I promise therefore diligently to teach and faithfully to defend the aforesaid doctrine, without either directly or indirectly, contradicting the same, by my public teaching or writing. I declare, moreover, that I not only reject all errors that militate against this doctrine, but that I am disposed to refute and contradict these and to exert myself in keeping the Church free from such errors. If hereafter any difficulties or different sentiments should arise in my mind respecting the aforesaid doctrine, I promise that I will neither publicly nor privately propose, teach, or defend the same, either by teaching or by writing, until I have first revealed such sentiments to the Governors, or the Academic Committee appointed by them, and have had such sentiments examined by them. I declare myself ready always to submit to their judgment under the penalty, that in case of refusal, I am by that very fact suspended from office.

Furthermore, if at any time the Governors, upon sufficient grounds for suspicion and to preserve the uniformity and purity of doctrine, may deem it proper to require of me a further explanation of my sentiments respecting any particular article of the above mentioned doctrinal standards, I do hereby promise to be always willing and ready to comply with such requisition, under the penalty above mentioned. I reserve for myself however, the right of appeal to Synod in case I should believe myself aggrieved by the sentence of the Governors, and until a decision is made upon such an appeal to Synod, I will acquiesce in the determination and judgment already passed.

8.03 Notice of Meetings — The Principal shall receive notice of all meetings of the Board of Governors and all committees of the Board, and the Principal or some other member of the Faculty designated by him for that purpose, may attend and address such meetings upon his request to do so. The Principal or such other member of the Faculty may be excluded from any part of any meeting if in the opinion of the members present matters of a confidential nature are to be considered.

SECTION NINE

SENATE

9.01 Duties — The Senate shall:

- a. make recommendations to the Board of Governors to establish and terminate programs and courses of study and concerning all matters of an academic nature, particularly in regard to the filling of vacancies in the faculty between Synods, and concerning any appointment by Synod to the faculty;
- b. determine the curricula of all programs and courses of study, and enforce standards of admission to the College and continued registration therein, and determine the qualifications for graduation; all of the aforesaid to be in consultation with the Academic Committee and in accordance with the approval of the Board of Governors;
- c. conduct examinations, appoint examiners and decide all matters related to examinations and the appointment of examiners;
- d. grant degrees for certain programs and courses of study approved by the Board of Governors; and
- e. enact by-laws for the conduct of its affairs, provided such by-laws are approved by the Board of Governors, and in particular, to enact by-laws with respect to disciplinary action against or dismissal of students at the College.

SECTION TEN

STANDARDS OF ADMISSION, PROGRAMS AND COURSES OF STUDY, AND ACADEMIC YEAR

10.01 **Admission** — A person who is a member of one of the Churches, or who is a member of a Church acknowledged as a sister Church by the Churches, and who presents a proper attestation of confession and conduct, and who has graduated from a Canadian university with a Bachelor of Arts or equivalent degree or a degree from another institution of higher learning, whether in Canada or elsewhere, that in the opinion of the Senate is at least equivalent to such Bachelor of Arts or equivalent degree, shall qualify for admission as a student to the College, but no person shall be admitted to the College unless such person has satisfactorily completed such prerequisite disciplines and subjects as are prescribed by the Board of Governors from time to time, or has satisfactorily passed an entrance examination prescribed by the Senate covering such disciplines and subjects. A person who is not a member of one of the Churches or a sister Church may be admitted as a student to the College at the discretion of the Senate subject to the policies established by the Board of Governors if such person has declared that he agrees with the basis of the College as set out in section 4 of the Act.

10.02 **Preparation for Admission** — Students wishing to be admitted to the College shall, if possible to do so, contact the Senate before commencing their studies leading to an undergraduate degree required for admission to the College, in order that they may be counselled with respect to the disciplines and subjects required as part of the preparatory training for admission.

10.03 **Counselling** — The Academic Committee shall appoint not less than one person from among its members and not less than one member of the faculty, to form a committee to counsel an applicant for admission to the College concerning the significance of his studies as preparatory to the office to which he aspires and shall examine him on his knowledge of the Word of God and the Confession and government of the Churches and Church history. The Committee shall, from time to time, report in writing to the Senate and the Academic Committee on each applicant counselled and examined.

10.04 **Programs, Courses of Study** — All programs and courses of study at the College shall require full-time attendance for a period fixed by the Senate. The Senate may waive in whole or in part any program or course of study for any student who has satisfactorily completed an equivalent program or course of study at another institution of higher learning, and in every such case the Senate shall advise the Academic Committee with respect to the waiving of any programs or courses of study for any student.

10.05 **Academic Year** — An academic year shall consist of thirty (30) teaching weeks which shall be divided into terms, and with such vacations as determined by the Board of Governors upon the recommendation of the Senate. Unless otherwise prescribed by the Board of Governors, the academic year shall commence in September and terminate in May of the following calendar year.

SECTION ELEVEN

FINANCIAL AND BUSINESS MATTERS OF THE COLLEGE

11.01 **Finances** — The funds necessary for the operation of the College shall be obtained primarily from assessments against the Churches based on the number of confessing members associated with each of the Churches. In addition, funds may be obtained through donations, bequests, Church offerings, fund drives, and gifts from persons and organizations and by other means consistent with the purpose and character of the College.

11.02 **Financial Year** — Until changed by resolution of the Board of Governors, the finan-

cial year of the College shall end on the 31st day of May in each year.

11.03 Execution of Instruments — By-laws, deeds, transfers, assignments, contracts, obligations, certificates and other instruments may be signed on behalf of the College by two persons provided each of them holds the office of chairman, vice-chairman, secretary or Governor. In addition, the Board may from time to time direct by resolution the manner in which, and the person and persons by whom, any particular instrument or class of instruments may or shall be signed. Any signing officer may affix the corporate seal of the College thereto.

11.04 Banking Arrangements — The banking business of the College shall be transacted with such banks, trust companies or financial institutions as may from time to time be designated by or under the authority of the Board of Governors or the Finance and Property Committee. Such banking business or part thereof shall be transacted under such agreements, instructions and delegation of powers as the Board may from time to time prescribe or authorize.

11.05 Cheques and Bills of Exchange — All cheques, bills of exchange or other orders for the payment of money, notes or other evidences of indebtedness issued in the name of the College shall be signed by such officer or officers, agent or agents of the College, and in such manner as shall from time to time be determined by resolution of the Board or the Finance and Property Committee, and any one of such officers or agents may alone endorse notes and cheques for deposit with the College's bankers for the credit of the College, or the same may be endorsed "for collection" or "for deposit" with the bankers of the College by using the College's rubber stamp for that purpose. Any one of such officers or agents so appointed may arrange, settle, balance and certify all books and accounts between the College and the College's bankers and may receive all paid cheques and vouchers and sign all the bank's form of settlement of balances and release or verification slips.

11.06 Deposit of Securities for Safekeeping — The securities of the College shall be deposited for safekeeping with one or more bankers, trust companies, or other financial institutions to be selected by the Board of Governors or the Finance and Property Committee. Any and all securities so deposited may be withdrawn from time to time, only upon the written order of the College signed by such officer or officers, agent or agents, of the College and in such manner, as shall from time to time be determined by resolution of the Board, and such authority may be general or confined to specific instances. The institutions which may be so selected as custodians by the Board shall be fully protected in acting in accordance with the directions of the Board and shall in no event be liable for the due application of the security so withdrawn from deposit or the proceeds thereof.

11.07 Voting Rights and Other Bodies Corporate — The signing officers of the College may execute and deliver instruments of proxy and arrange for the issuance of voting certificates or other evidence of the right to exercise the voting rights attaching to any securities held by the College. Such instruments, certificates or other evidence shall be in favour of such person or persons as may be determined by the officers signing or arranging for them. In addition, the Board may from time to time direct the manner in which and the person or persons by whom any particular voting rights or class of voting rights may or shall be exercised.

11.08 Borrowing — The College may borrow money for the purpose of the College and give security therefor on such terms and in such amounts as it may deem advisable, and for this purpose the Finance and Property Committee may by resolution:

- a. issue, sell or pledge debt obligations (including bonds, debentures, notes or other similar obligations secured or unsecured) of the College;
- b. charge, mortgage, hypothecate, or pledge all or any of the currently owned or subsequently acquired real or personal, movable or immovable property of the College, including book debts, to secure any debt obligations or any

- money borrowed or other debt or liability of the College;
- c. designate any two members of the Finance and Property Committee to execute such documents and give such further assurances as may be required to give full force and effect to this provision, and the execution of such documents by any two members of the Committee under the corporate seal of the College, shall be deemed to be execution by the College of such instruments for that purpose.

SECTION TWELVE

NOTICES

12.01 Any notice (which term includes any communication or document) to be given, sent, delivered or served pursuant to the Act, the Corporations Act, the by-laws or otherwise, to a Governor, officer, auditor, member of a Committee of the Board, or member of the faculty, shall be sufficiently given if delivered personally to the person to whom it is intended to be given, or if delivered to his recorded address or if mailed to him at his recorded address by prepaid ordinary mail, or if sent to him at his recorded address by any means of prepaid transmitted or recorded communication. A notice so delivered shall be deemed to have been given when it is delivered personally, or left at the recorded address as aforesaid. A notice so mailed shall be deemed to have been given five days (not including non-business days) after deposit in a post office or public letter box; a notice sent by any means of transmitted or recorded communication shall be deemed to have been given the next business day after the same is dispatched or delivered to the appropriate communication company or agent or its representative for dispatch. The secretary of the College may change or cause to be changed the recorded address of any Governor, officer, auditor, member of a Committee of the Board, or member of the faculty, in accordance with any information believed by him to be reliable. Notice to Synod shall be given in the same manner as aforesaid, except the same shall be sufficiently given if delivered or sent to the recorded address of the clerk of the convening Church. Notice to any of the Churches shall be sufficiently given if delivered or sent to the recorded address of the clerk of such Church in the same manner as aforesaid.

12.02 **Computation of Time** — In computing the date when notice must be given under any provision requiring a specified number of days, notice of any meeting or other event, the date of giving the notice shall be excluded and the date of the meeting or other event shall be included. In the event of a postal disruption, notice by mail shall not be deemed effective during the period of such disruption and such period shall be excluded from the computation of time.

12.03 **Omissions and Errors** — The accidental omission to give any notice to any Governor, officer, auditor, member of a Committee of the Board, member of the faculty, Church or convening Church, or the non-receipt of any notice by any such person or body or any error in any notice not affecting the substance thereof, shall not invalidate any action taken at any meeting held pursuant to such notice or otherwise founded thereon.

12.04 **Waiver of Notice** — Any Governor, officer, auditor or member of a Committee of the Board, may waive any notice required to be given to him under any provisions of the Act, the Corporations Act, the by-laws or otherwise, and such waiver, whether given before or after the meeting or other event of which notice is required to be given, shall cure any default in giving such notice.

SECTION THIRTEEN

OFFICERS

13.01 **Election or Appointment** — There shall be a chairman, a vice-chairman, a treasurer, a secretary and such other officers as the Board may determine by by-law

from time to time. The chairman, vice-chairman, secretary and treasurer shall be elected by the Board from among their number at the first meeting of the Board after the appointment of Governors by Synod. The other officers of the College need not be members of the Board, and in the absence of written agreement to the contrary, the appointment of all officers shall be settled from time to time by the Board.

13.02 **Chairman** — The chairman shall be the chief executive officer of the College, and subject to the authority of the Board, shall have general supervision over the affairs of the Board. The chairman, if present, shall chair all meetings of the Board.

13.03 **Vice-chairman** — During the absence or disability of the chairman, his duties shall be performed and his powers exercised by the vice-chairman. The vice-chairman shall have such other powers and duties as the Board may prescribe.

13.04 **Secretary** — The secretary shall attend and be the secretary of all meetings of the Board, and of the Executive Committee, and shall enter or cause to be entered in records kept for that purpose, minutes of all proceedings thereat. He shall give or cause to be given, as and when instructed, all notices to Governors, members of Committees of the Board, Senate, any member of the faculty, the Principal, the Churches, and the convening Church. He shall have such other duties as the Board may from time to time prescribe.

13.05 **Treasurer** — The treasurer shall keep proper accounting records in compliance with the Act, and the Corporations Act, and under the direction of the Property and Finance Committee, shall control the deposit of money, the safekeeping of securities and the disbursement of the funds of the College; he shall render to the Property and Finance Committee, or to the Board, whenever required, an account of all his transactions as treasurer and of the financial position of the College, and he shall have such other duties as the Board or the Property and Finance Committee may from time to time prescribe.

13.06 **Agents and Attorneys** — The Board shall have power from time to time to appoint agents or attorneys for the College in or out of Canada with such power of management or otherwise (including the power to sub-delegate) as may be thought fit.

13.07 **Fidelity Bonds** — The Board may require such officers, employees and agents of the College, as the Board deems advisable, to furnish bonds for the faithful discharge of their duties, in such form and with such surety as the Board may from time to time prescribe.

SECTION FOURTEEN

PROTECTION OF GOVERNORS, OFFICERS AND OTHERS

14.01 **Limitation of Liability** — No Governor or officer of the College shall be liable for the acts, receipts, neglects or defaults of any other Governor or officer or employee, or for joining in any receipt or other act for conformity, or for any loss, damage or expense happening to the College through the insufficiency or deficiency of title to any property acquired by order of the Board for or on behalf of the College or for the insufficiency or deficiency of any security in or upon which any of the monies of the College shall be invested, or for any loss or damage arising from the bankruptcy, insolvency or tortious acts of any person with whom any of the monies, securities or effects of the College shall be deposited, or for any loss occasioned by any error of judgment or oversight on his part, or for any other loss, damage or misfortune, whatever which shall happen in the execution of the duties of his office or in relation thereto, unless the same are occasioned by his own willful neglect or default, provided that nothing herein shall relieve any Governor or officer of any liability imposed upon him by the Act or the Corporations Act.

14.02 **Indemnity** — Every Governor and every officer of the College and every other person who has undertaken or is about to undertake any liability on behalf of the Col-

lege and his heirs, executors, administrators, and other legal personal representatives shall, from time to time, be indemnified and saved harmless by the College from and against:

- a. any liability and all costs, charges and expenses that he sustains or incurs in respect of any action, suit or proceeding that is proposed or commenced against him for or in respect of anything done or permitted by him in respect of the execution of the duties of his office; and
- b. all other costs, charges and expenses that he sustains or incurs in respect of the affairs of the College.

SECTION FIFTEEN

PREVIOUS BY-LAWS AND REGULATIONS

15.01 **Repeal** — Upon approval of these by-laws by Synod, the previous constitution and by-laws of the unincorporated college and the previous by-laws of the College are hereby repealed.

15.02 **Regulations** — "Regulation No. 1," being a regulation regarding salary, retirement, salary continuation and pensions of the faculty and attached hereto is hereby adopted.

Passed at Hamilton, Ontario by the Board of Governors at a meeting held for that purpose on the 21st day of April, 1982.

D. VanderBoom, chairman
M. VanBeveren, secretary

REGULATION NO. 1

A Regulation regarding
SALARY, RETIREMENT, SALARY CONTINUATION AND PENSIONS
of the Faculty of the
THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES

BE IT ENACTED as a Regulation of the Theological College of The Canadian Reformed Churches as follows:

Definitions

1. In this Regulation:
 - a. "Adjusted salary" of a professor since his retirement for any year means the "salary" earned in such year by all professors in active service of the same rank as the retired professor;
 - b. "dependent" means a professor's child who is under the age of 18 years, unmarried, not employed full-time, and who normally resides with the professor or is in full-time attendance at a school or university, or a professor's child over the age of 18 years who through illness or infirmity is unable to earn a livelihood, or any other person (other than a professor's wife) who is wholly dependent for support upon a professor, provided that a child shall be deemed to be under the age of 18 years for the balance of the calendar year in which he attains that age;
 - c. "deferred retirement" means retirement of a professor or lecturer at the end of any academic year after he reaches age 66 and before he reaches age 71;
 - d. "dependent's allowance" means an allowance in the nature of a pension calculated and payable in accordance with this Regulation to or for the benefit of a dependent of a professor;
 - e. "early retirement" means honourable discharge of a professor or lecturer due to his disability or illness before his normal retirement;

- f. "salary" means the total salary earned by a professor in any one year without any deductions, but the term does not include
 - i. additional remuneration paid to the professor in respect of a special office or for additional services,
 - ii. moneys paid to him in cases of need or to provide for unforeseen events, or
 - iii. "other benefits" not actually payable to a professor;
- g. "lecturer" means a part-time lecturer appointed by Synod;
- h. "normal retirement" means retirement of a professor or lecturer at the end of the academic year in which he reaches age 65;
- i. "other benefits" means benefits of a financial nature other than salary, which may from time to time be paid by the College for the benefit of a professor;
- j. "professor" includes a professor, an associate professor, an assistant professor, and a full-time lecturer;
- k. "professor's pension" means a pension calculated and payable in accordance with this Regulation to professor;
- l. "stipend" means the honorarium payable to a lecturer;
- m. "widow's pension" means a pension calculated and payable in accordance with this Regulation to a professor's widow.

Retirement

- 2. 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.

Salaries fixed by the Board

- 3. Subject to the direction of Synod, the Board of Governors fixes the salaries payable to all professors and the stipends payable to all lecturers annually. Unless otherwise provided by this Regulation, a professor's salary and a lecturer's stipend cease to be payable upon the death and upon the early, normal or deferred retirement, as the case may be, of the professor or lecturer.

Professors' Salaries, Additional Remuneration and other Benefits

- 4.
 - a. A professor shall be paid a salary in the amount fixed by the Board of Governors.
 - b. The Board of Governors may direct the payment of additional remuneration to a professor in respect of any special office held by him.
 - c. In addition there may be paid for the benefit of a professor such other benefits as the Board of Governors may determine.

Lecturer's Stipends

- 5. A lecturer shall receive an annual stipend.

Continuation of Salary

- 6. Provided that a professor, his widow or any of his dependents are living, the professor's salary and his other benefits will continue:
 - a. in the case of his early retirement, for the lesser of six months or until he would have reached normal retirement,
 - b. in the case of his death during the period stipulated in clause a. hereof, for the balance of such period, and
 - c. in the case of his death before his normal retirement, except as provided in clause b. hereof, for the lesser of six months or until he would have reached normal retirement.

Such salary shall be paid to the professor or, if he is deceased, to his widow or, if she is deceased, to or for the benefit of his dependents, if any, and to none other.

Professor's Pension

7. a. A professor's pension shall be paid to a professor,
 - i in the case of his early retirement, commencing six months from the date thereof or when he would have reached normal retirement, whichever is the shorter period,
 - ii in the case of his normal retirement, commencing upon the date thereof, or
 - iii in the case of his deferred retirement, commencing upon the date thereof.
- b. A professor's pension shall end when the professor dies.

Widow's Pension

8. A Widow's Pension shall be paid to a professor's widow commencing when the professor dies and ending when she ceases to be his widow.

Dependent's Allowance

9. A Dependent's Allowance shall be paid to or for the benefit of a professor's dependent, commencing when the survivor of the professor and his wife dies and ending when the recipient ceases to be a dependent.

Amounts of Professor's and Widow's Pensions

10. The amounts of the annual Professor's Pension, Widow's Pension and Dependent's Allowance shall be calculated as follows:
 - a. A Professor's Pension shall be:
 - i 70 per cent of his adjusted salary, plus
 - ii a further 5 per cent of such adjusted salary in respect of each dependent to a maximum of two, less
 - iii the amount of any pension or other allowance paid to the professor and to his wife and to or in respect of any dependents by the Government of Canada or by any province or municipality or any agency thereof.
 - b. A Widow's Pension shall be:
 - i 60 per cent of the husband's adjusted salary, plus
 - ii a further 5 per cent of such adjusted salary in respect of each dependent at a maximum of four, or less
 - iii the amount of any pension or other allowance paid to the widow and to or for the benefit of any dependents by the Government of Canada or by any province or municipality or any agency thereof.
 - c. A Dependent's Allowance shall be:
 - i 5 per cent of his father's adjusted salary, less
 - ii the amount of any pension or other allowance paid to or for the benefit of the dependent by the Government of Canada or by any province or municipality or any agency thereof.

Discretionary Payments

11. The Board of Governors may, in cases of need or to provide for unforeseen events (including serious inflation):
 - a. pay to a professor (whether before or after his retirement), to his widow, or to or in respect of or for the benefit of any of his dependents, such further moneys from time to time as the Board may in its sole discretion deem necessary or appropriate.
 - b. pay to or in respect of or for the benefit of any person who is partially dependent upon a professor for support such moneys from time to time as the Board may in its sole discretion deem necessary or appropriate.

Periodic Payments, Deductions

12. All salaries, stipends, pensions and allowances payable under this Regulation shall

be paid monthly in advance or by other convenient instalments, or, where in the opinion of the Finance and Property Committee, it is more desirable to do so, in a lump sum, to or for the benefit of the person or persons entitled thereto, less any deductions required to be made by law, by this or other Regulation, or for any other reason.

Suspension of Lecturer's Stipend

13. If a lecturer has been unable, due to his disability or illness, to fulfill his duties as a lecturer for a continuous period of six months, and the lecturer does not request early retirement, the Board of Governors may suspend his salary at the end of such six months if it is the opinion that the disability or illness is likely to continue for some time or be of indefinite duration, but it shall not take such a decision without first hearing the lecturer concerned or his representative.

Repeal and Continuation

14. All previous Regulations regarding Salaries, Retirement, Salary Continuation, Pensions and Allowances are hereby repealed, provided however, that any person who is at present receiving any pension or allowance under any such previous Regulation shall continue to receive a pension or allowance calculated in accordance with this Regulation.

BY-LAW NUMBER 2

A by-law respecting the borrowing of money and the issue of securities by the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

BE IT ENACTED by the Governors of the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches as a Special by-law of the said Corporation as follows:

The Finance and Property Committee of the Corporation may from time to time:

- a. borrow money upon the credit of the Corporation;
- b. issue, sell or pledge debt obligations of the Corporation, including without limitation, bonds, debentures, notes or other similar obligations of the Corporation whether secured or unsecured;
- c. charge, mortgage, hypothecate or pledge all or any currently owned or subsequently acquired real or personal, movable or immovable property of the Corporation, including book debts, rights, powers, franchises and undertaking, to secure any such debt obligations or any money borrowed, or other debt or liability of the Corporation;
- d. delegate to such one or more of the officers and Directors of the Corporation as may be designated by the Directors all or any of the powers conferred by the foregoing clauses of this by-law to such extent and in such manner as the Directors shall determine at the time of each such delegation.

Passed by the Board of Governors and sealed with the Corporation's seal this 10th day of September, 1982.

(w.s.)

Chairman

(w.s.)

Secretary

The undersigned officers of the within named Corporation hereby certify that the by-law on the reverse side hereof is a true and complete copy of a Special by-law of the said Corporation which was

passed by the Governors of the said Corporation at a meeting duly called and regularly held on the 10th day of September, 1982,

all as set forth and recorded in the minute book of the proceedings of the Board of Governors of the said Corporation; and further that the said Special by-law is now in full force and effect.

WITNESS our hands and the corporate seal of the said Corporation this 10th day of September, 1982.

(w.s.) _____
Chairman

(w.s.) _____
Secretary

BY-LAW NUMBER 3

BEING A BY-LAW TO AMEND SECTION 3.04 OF BY-LAW NUMBER 1.

BE IT ENACTED as a by-law of the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches as follows:

3.04 Election and Term

Synod shall, at General Synod, which shall occur not less than once every three years, appoint or elect, reappoint or reelect, or remove and replace, as the case may be, the Governors in the following manner:

- a. six (6) Governors, who shall be active ministers, shall be elected or appointed to hold office until the next General Synod, three (3) of which may be nominated by each Regional Synod prior to General Synod considering such election or appointment, but General Synod may, upon motion duly made, add such additional nominations as it considers advisable and appoint at least three (3) substitutes from each Regional Synod area for the purpose of filling vacancies between General Synods; and
- b. five (5) Governors, who shall not be ministers shall be elected or appointed and shall retire in rotation in the following manner, that is to say, at the first General Synod held to elect or appoint the five (5) Governors, one (1) Governor shall be elected or appointed to hold office for a term from the date of his election or appointment until the third General Synod held after such date, two (2) Governors shall be elected or appointed to hold office for a term from the date of his election or appointment until the second General Synod held after such date, and two (2) Governors shall be elected or appointed to hold office for a term from the date of his election or appointment until the next General Synod, and thereafter at each General Synod, Governors shall be elected or appointed to fill the vacancy of those Governors whose term of office has expired and each Governor so elected or appointed shall hold office

for a term from the date of his election or appointment until the third General Synod thereafter.

Passed at Hamilton, Ontario by the Board of Governors at a meeting held for that purpose on the 9th day of September, 1983.

Chairman

Secretary

Confirmed by Synod (pursuant to Section 5 (5) of the Canadian Reformed Theological College Act, 1981) on the _____ day of _____, 1983.

APPENDIX XI

REPORT ON WOMEN'S VOTING RIGHTS

By the committee appointed by General Synod Smithville
of the Canadian Reformed Churches 1980

WOMEN'S VOTING RIGHTS

to the General Synod of the
Canadian Reformed Churches
meeting in Cloverdale, BC, November 1983.

Esteemed Brethren,

We hereby submit to you our Report pertaining to Women's Voting Rights, in accordance with the received MANDATE:

- a. to reexamine the matter, including the Study-Report presented to Synod in the light of the criticism voiced in letters to Synod and in the report of the Advisory Committee;
- b. to give more consideration to material available in other study reports re the place and task of women in the Church;
- c. to submit a report with recommendations to the next General Synod, with a sufficient number of copies to the Churches.

For personal reasons, Rev. S. DeBruin informed the Committee that he could not take part in the work of the Committee.

Wishing you the guidance of the Holy Spirit by His Word in all your work, we respectfully submit our report and recommendation to you for your consideration.

The Committee:
D. DeJong
C. Hoogerdijk
J.D. Wielenga

May 1983

CONTENTS

I SCRIPTURAL DATA

A. Remarks on the Previous Report's Chapters on Women in Scripture

We did not see a need to completely rewrite the part on women in Scripture. It will suffice to make some necessary corrections, and to correct and re-write some of the conclusions.

In chapter V, Women after the Fall, the statement, "The female is now placed in SUBJECTION to the male (Genesis 3:16)," does not mention by whom this is done, although in a note (7) an exegesis is referred to which gives the impression that this is an ordinance of God. We are convinced that man's rule over the women as meant in Genesis 3:16 is not an ordinance of God, but part of the curse of sin. The Hebrew word for "desire," "teshuqah" is also used in Genesis 4:7, and Song of Songs 7:10. In Genesis 4:7 the Lord says to Cain: "its (i.e. sin's) desire is for you, but you must master it." The apparent meaning is, that sin's desire is to master Cain, and that Cain may not accept this, but on the contrary must master sin. In Song of Songs 7:10 the bride says: "I am my beloved's, and his desire is for me." Here again, as in Genesis 4:7, the object of the desire is what is mentioned in the other part of the sentence: his desire is to belong to his beloved. Accordingly we must in Genesis 3:16 find the object of woman's desire in the second part of the sentence, namely "to rule," and read the verse as follows: "yet your desire shall be to rule over your husband, and he shall rule over you." This is of course not an ordinance of God which must be obeyed, but a statement of the cursed state of affairs caused by the fall into sin. Eve, instead of following Adam, actually tried

to rule over him when she listened to Satan and caused Adam to sin as well; this will from now on remain woman's desire, but in vain; the sad consequence of her refusal of following man but her instead desiring to rule over him will bring the opposite, namely that man is going to rule over her, instead of leading her as it was in the beginning. (1)

For this reason the first sentence in chapter VI, Women in the Old Testament, should not read, "The matter of the rulership of the male over the female in Marriage is further developed in the Old Testament after the Fall," but, "With respect to the matter of the rulership of the male over the female in MARRIAGE, the consequences of the curse of sin can be noticed in the history of the Old Testament after the Fall (e.g. Deut. 24:1-4), together with ordinances intended to curb these consequences." (Later we will return to this when we deal with Peter's words in 1 Peter 3:1-8). We also doubt the evidence of a "development" of the rulership of the male over the female in marriage in the other mentioned Scripture passages Numbers 5 and 30, where according to us we read of limits put to man's ruling over woman. The law of jealousy e.g. does not show the ordinance of God, but God's reckoning with the curse in protecting the woman against man's dominance. The law took correcting measures in a society which was much affected by the curse. (2) Therefore there is no reason to insert the word "even" when it is said about women: "They were even granted theophanies," and "Some even occupied a leading and prophetic role."

When it is said that Miriam "was certainly not of the same rank and standing as Moses," but had a prophetic "position subordinate to that of Moses," we must remark that the same applies to all other prophets, whether male or female (cf. Deuteronomy 34:10).

Further we would like to emphasize and ask attention for the last paragraph in this chapter concerning the character of prophecy.

In chapter VII, Women in the New Testament, we disagree with what is said under A. The gospels, as if the Lord Jesus disapproved of Moses and the Law. The Lord Jesus did disapprove of the convenient way that man divorced their wives in His own time, abusing the law of Moses.

When under B. The Acts of the Apostles, (IV) Acts 15:22, the previous Committee expresses as its "feeling," "however, it feels that the 'excluding position' is much more likely," the remark must be made that this feeling has no grounds in the text and contradicts the earlier made statement (at the end of [III] Acts 6:1-5), "In the final analysis it is doubtful whether one will be able to speak a conclusive word about the matter of female involvement in this passage."

As to C. The Epistles, (I) Galatians 3:28, we would like to add that Paul's emphasis is on the equality of men and women etc. as HEIRS in Christ.

Since we intend to replace the part about 1 Corinthians 11 in our addition to this part of the Report, we will limit ourselves to one remark only on (II) 1 Corinthians 11:2-16. In note (21) it is mentioned that The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology goes in the same direction as the Theological Dictionary of the New Testament when it asserts, "Here head is probably to be understood not as 'chief' or 'ruler' but as 'source' or 'origin.'" Without argumentation this interpretation is rejected and the statement made, "Man is the head of the woman and rules over her (cf. 1 Timothy 2) and man is the origin, the source of woman." However, 1 Timothy 2 does not at all say that man rules over her, but that woman may not rule over man. Genesis 3:16 (see above) states as a fact of the curse that man rules over woman, but from the beginning this was not so; then it was leadership and not rulership, as was made clear in chapter IV.

It is said under (VI) 1 Timothy 2:11-15, "Some would say that man has dominion and the woman lived in subjection, or that man ruled and the woman obeyed. Your Committee considers that to be too harsh an evaluation of the ideal conditions in

Paradise." We are convinced that this evaluation is not just too harsh, but simply wrong, and that therefore the next words, "It is more correct" should read, "It is only correct." (From this it follows that the last word of chapter IV, "obedience" had better be read as "recognition of his leadership.")

VIII SUMMING UP THUS FAR

- a. This conclusion can be maintained.
- b. Same
- c. The words "and the Lord proclaims" must be replaced by "in the curse"; the words "and the wife shall obey" must be left out.
- d. To this sentence must be added: " but from the beginning this was not so."
- e. This conclusion can be maintained.
- f. Same
- g. Same
- h. and i. These conclusions will be replaced by other conclusions on the basis of the following addition.

B. Addition to the Previous Report's Chapters on Women in Scripture

(1) *Ephesians 5:21-33*

The verb "be subject" in verse 22, "Wives, be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord" is inserted in our translation from verse 21, "Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ." The Greek word, "hypotassomai," "does not so much mean to obey — though such a relationship could result from placing oneself under — or to do someone's will, but TO LOSE or TO GIVE UP YOUR OWN RIGHT or YOUR OWN WILL." (3) Thus to be subject to one another means here the same as e.g. in Philippians 2:3, where Paul says, "Do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility count others better than yourselves."

This must be done out of reverence for Christ who is, chapter 6:10ff. the Commander of God's army. As soldiers in God's army we must, 6:10, "be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might" in the struggle against the enemy. But in our relationship toward our fellow-soldiers we must be quite different. There we must not be strong, but humble and meek. This does not mean that the one soldier is subordinated to the other in the sense that he must obey his commands, like e.g. he must towards his officers. No, he must respect his fellow-soldier in the position which has been assigned to him by the Commander, out of reverence for the Commander, Christ.

Paul applies this to the several positions which have been assigned to differently positioned people, to children in 6:1, fathers in verse 4, slaves in verse 5, masters in verse 9, and husbands and wives in 5:22-33 (see specifically his summary in verse 33).

"As to the Lord" in verse 22 does not mean that they must obey their husbands as their lords and masters like they must obey the Lord Jesus as their Lord and Master, but that they must know their position in connection with their husbands because in that way they obey Him who as the Commander has assigned to them their different positions.

Why does the Lord Jesus assign to them a different position with respect to their husbands? Verse 23 says, in a more accurate translation than the RSV, "because man is head of the woman." Often this is read as expressing the thought that like the head rules the body, so the man rules the woman, and therefore head is taken to mean something like final authority, superior rank, or something similar to it. However, the Greek word for head, "kephale," has as the common meaning for Greek-speaking people "source," or "beginning," or "what comes first," or "what goes ahead," or "completion" or "crown." While the Hebrew word for head, "roosch," also has the meaning of authority, superior or commander, the Greek translation of the O.T. uses in such cases preferably not the word "kephale," because this would convey the wrong idea. (4)

In an army, soldiers in the rear are not subordinated to those who go ahead, although they do well to listen to them and to follow them. Well, says Paul in verse 23, that's the position of the man, he is head of the women, he goes ahead, in relation to the woman, who follows. Just as Christ, continues Paul in verse 23, is the head of the Church. Here Christ is not called the Lord, but the head of the Church, who as its Saviour is the first one, who goes ahead of her, as her Protector. That wives must be subject to their husbands means in this connection, that they must follow where he leads, where he goes ahead. And both must love and respect each other on the place assigned to them (verse 33).

(II)1 Peter 3:1-8

It seems to be that Peter's teaching is different from that of Paul as explained above, because he refers to Sarah as an example who "obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord."

Peter uses the same word as Paul for being submissive or subject, namely "hypotas-somai." However, Peter writes about this in a different context, the context being that of the sufferings which Christians must endure in the human relationships and institutions as these have grown wrong in the course of the time because of sin and the curse of sin. In this context he writes about the relation of husbands and wives in the specific situation of wives whose husbands are unbelievers who do not obey the Word of God and therefore do not treat their wives like the Lord wants them to do this. (5)

These wives are like Sarah (Sarah's children, verse 6), if they like Sarah do right, and, like Sarah, let nothing terrify them. Apparently both they and Sarah were up against terrifying things in their marriages, with abuses comparable to those that slaves were often subjected to.

In Genesis we read that Abraham was called by God out of the city of Ur of Chaldees to go to the land of Canaan. And Abraham "took Sarai his wife," and all that belonged to him, and went. He simply took Sarah with him as if she was part of his property. Sarah did not rebel, but went with him, gladly as we may suppose, because she too believed God's promises. Together with Abraham she "hoped in God," looking forward to the city with foundations, the everlasting inheritance. Then, in the same chapter Genesis 12, we read that Abraham went to Egypt, not because God called him to, but because of a famine. He commanded Sarah to tell the people that she was his sister, "that it may go well with me because of you, and that my life may be spared on your account." For his selfish reasons Sarah must not only lie, but also give up her honour as a woman by letting herself be taken into the harem of Pharaoh, as no more than a slave in Abraham's eyes with whom he can do what he wants to.

This was normal for Abraham, for we read in Genesis 20 that Abraham did the same thing in Gerar, where he admitted, "When God caused me to wander from my father's house, I said to her, 'This is the kindness you must do to me: at every place to which we come, say of me, he is my brother.' " And Sarah obeyed Abraham like a slave, acting like a slave, and in doing so calling him her lord or master. What a terrifying suffering must this have caused her. This command of Abraham was on her all her life, and characterized their marriage to a great extent. Sarah has patiently suffered this injustice which was a consequence of the curse which lay especially heavy on women in societies where the Word of God was not known and obeyed at all, or, as in Abraham's case, only in an initial stage.

Sarah did not rebel, but obeyed, although Abraham did not have the right to ask her obedience in these things, but only that she would follow him where God had called him to go. She called him lord, although he was not entitled to this title as her head. It is this Sarah who is pictured before the eyes of Christian women whose husbands treated them like slaves as an example to be followed. Although they have no right to demand obedience and to be called lord, yet, do it, like Sarah did it, so that, although they do not obey the Word, anyway some of them may be won without a word by the reverent and chaste behaviour of their wives.

Now of course this example is not to be placed before Christian brides and bridegrooms on the day of their wedding (and therefore this has rightly been omitted in our new Marriage-form, although the word "obey" still has been left in and as yet should be replaced by "follow"). This example is to be used when counseling is needed in a marriage where the one abuses the other. For Christian husbands this means, continues Peter, that they must live with their wives "according to knowledge," namely the knowledge that they are not their slaves but joint heirs with them of the grace of life, acknowledging them as (literally translated) "the weaker vessel, namely female."

The word vessel is in Greek a word for body, but sometimes also rendered as woman. Since the word female is added it should here be taken as body. (6) Then Peter says the same as Paul in Ephesians 5:28, "Husbands should love their wives as their own bodies," because the husband's wife is his own body, according to the words in Genesis 2, "and the two shall become one." This points to their equality. Yet, they are also different in position. This is expressed by the words "weaker, namely female." Often the word weaker is explained as meaning weaker in either physical, mental or psychological respect. However, this is just an assumption which even in several respects is in conflict with the facts of life. It is better, since Peter in several ways uses the same argumentation as Paul, also here to expect a reasoning like that of Paul. The woman is called the weaker one because she, as female, was created after man had been created, and therefore according to God's creation-order is the follower in God's service, and man the leader. (The same can be said about the relation between parents and children, namely that children, as coming from and after their parents, are the weaker ones. This would hold true, also when e.g. a 17-year-old boy has grown mentally and physically stronger than his mother and father. Also, the fact that "weaker," refers to a different status among basically equal positions is borne out by the use of this word in 1 Corinthians 12:22-25. The word "inferior" in verse 24 is not a literal translation and should be read in the context as "so-called inferior.")

(III) 1 Corinthians 11:3-16

A main difficulty is in verse 10, where Paul says that a woman ought to have "exousia" on her head because of the angels. A look in a Greek concordance shows that Paul uses the word "exousia," together with the related words "exousiasthai" and "exestin," repeatedly in the previous chapters.

The Corinthians have approached Paul with questions concerning our Christian freedom, and in answering these questions Paul makes use of the word "exousia," of which the original and most common meaning is, to have the freedom or the authority to do something, or to be licensed to do something. (7) In chapter 7:4 the word appears in connection with the relation between husbands and wives, and is translated by the RSV as meaning, to rule. This would mean that the woman may rule her husband's body. This cannot be correct, for it would bring Paul in our verse in conflict with what he writes in 1 Timothy 2:12, where Paul does not permit women to rule over men. It does mean that none of the two has the freedom or authority to do with his or her own body what he or she wants, because their bodies belong to each other.

In chapters 8-10 the question is dealt with whether Christians have the exousia to eat food which has been offered to idols. In chapter 10 Paul denies that freedom if it would mean taking part in heathen worship-services in their temples; but further he stresses in chapter 8 that our Christian exousia or freedom is to do it, unless it would appear to be a stumblingblock to others. He illustrates this in chapter 9 with his own exousia or freedom as an apostle to accept remuneration and to be married, and adds that he does not make use of his exousia but rather makes himself a slave if otherwise offense would be given to the preaching of the gospel. At the end of chapter 10 he sums this up in a conclusion (verses 31-33), "So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Give no offense

to Jews or to Greeks or to the Church of God, just as I try to please all men in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved.”

It is ON THE BASIS OF THIS CONCLUSION that Paul continues in chapter 11 with the way in which this exousia, this freedom or authority to do certain things, is used in Corinth when both men and women prophesy (11:3-16), and when the members come together for the Lord's Supper celebrations (11:17-33). The second part deals with social discrimination which must be abolished, the first part deals with sexual differences which must be recognized in order that no contentions may arise in this respect.

Now coming to verse 10, there is no reason why the word exousia should not be understood in the same way as it has been used by Paul in the previous chapters. A woman ought to have a license or authority or freedom (to do something) on her head, because of the angels. Her exousia is apparently different from that of the men, for Paul stresses in this chapter that a man may only pray or prophesy with his head uncovered, while a woman may only do it with her head covered. The having of different exousia's or, e.g., licenses for doing the same thing is not so strange. We know of the same in connection with driver's licenses. An adult driver must show a valid driver's license to the police officers, while a 15 year old must show a learners permit. If they show the wrong license, they are sent off the road, a shameful situation.

“That is why a woman ought to have an exousia on her head, because of the angels,” says Paul. Why because of the angels? The Bible tells us in Hebrews 1:14 that the angels are “ministering spirits sent forth to serve” the believers. They are God's messengers who take God's messages to men (Hebr. 2:2, Gal. 3:19, and several Old — and New Testament — stories about angels appearing to people). This means that when someone prophesies a revelation coming directly from God, this message is brought by the service of angels. The Bible also says that our prayers are taken to God by the service of angels (Revelation 8:4). Just like police officers must see the correct license in order to accept a driver on the road, so the angels must see the correct license of those who pray or prophesy. (8)

How must a woman show that she has the exousia, the freedom or authority, the correct license, to pray and prophesy? By showing the proof of being licensed, just like a driver must show the proof by means of a document which identifies him or her, with picture and all. A woman must show to the angels that she is a woman who knows her place as a woman. How? In the way her head is covered; not like the head of a man, in the unisex way, but (of course in accordance with local customs which may differ) like the head of a woman. That's HER license, HER proof of freedom or authority to prophesy and to pray. That's HER privilege and pride.

Some commentaries admit that going by the rules of Greek grammar it is strange to call the exousia on the woman's head a sign of man's authority over her, instead of a sign of her authority. (9) Yet almost all commentaries explain it that way, because of their wrong preconceived idea of what it means that man is the head of woman (see above, (1) Ephesians 5:21-33).

The conclusion must be, from simply reading this verse in the context of Paul's writing about our Christian freedom, that verse 10 speaks about Christian freedom of the woman to pray and to prophesy, provided that she does it AS a woman, not abusing her Christian freedom by now also acting and showing herself as if she would be a man. This would be unnatural, that someone born as a woman (natural refers to birth) would act as if she is not a woman but a man. Anyone can judge that for him- or herself, especially a Christian who believes that God created man male and female, and that Christ has come to restore us again into the original position for which we had been created in the beginning.

Of course, the same applies to the men. They must show that they pray and prophesy AS men. The difference between the sexes is a creation-ordinance which God wants to be recognized for all times (see Deut. 22:5). Now the question arises why

this is shown in the custom of man uncovering his head (resp. having short hair), and women covering her head (resp. having long hair). This teaching of nature goes back to the ordinances of the Creator of nature. Man, says Paul in verse 7, is the glory (manifestation, weight, cf. Hebrew "kabood") of God. God gave His commands directly to Adam, and thus brought His weight directly to bear on the man, without anything in between. In the New Testament Christ is called the head of the man, because He has become the Mediator between God and man and thus, as the second Adam, has become the head of every man, while the head of Christ is God. But the woman, Paul continues in verse 7, is the glory of man. God spoke His commands via Adam also to Eve, and God's fellowship is reflected and brought to bear on Eve via Adam. In other words, the man has received his place between God and the woman. Now the fact that there was nothing between God and Adam when God communicated His will to him is made visible in the custom that when a man responds to God in prayer his head is uncovered; there is nothing between God and his head, and in this way he shows that he is a man, and not a woman. On the other hand, the fact that God when giving His commands communicated with Eve via Adam is made visible in the way her head is covered by something in between, a way in which she shows that she is a woman, and not a man.

Both the man and the woman have been created in the image of God, but there is a difference which must be recognized, namely that man is the glory of God, and woman the glory of man. In the beginning both shared equally in the work of praying and prophesying and having dominion over God's creation works, as priests and prophets and kings; but man as being the first going ahead, and the woman as woman following him, and not each of them independently of each other (cf. verse 11). Thus it should remain, for as woman was made from man (therefore second), so man is now born of woman (therefore yet equal) (cf. verse 12).

(IV) *1 Corinthians 14*

On the basis of his conclusion in chapter 10:31-33 Paul has instructed the congregation in chapter 11 that everyone in the Church, in spite of sexual and social differences, must know his or her own place in the Church, which must be discerned as being a body (11:29).

In chapter 12 Paul works this picture of the Church as a body out by showing that, although there are many and diverse gifts among the members, so that indeed there are differences among the members, yet all these different gifts are "inspired by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as He wills" (12:11).

Thus Paul again stresses that all members are equal, and yet that there are differences as well. But then, in chapter 13, he shows the most excellent way of love, on which way all are bound together, and in which way of love each member must take the place assigned to him or her, and use the gifts assigned to him or her. Not only this, but Paul also shows in chapter 14, that the gift of prophecy is the one most to be desired, because verse 3. "he who prophecies speaks to men for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation," and edifies the Church (vs. 4) also by giving certain revelations to the Church (vs. 6, 26, 30).

When we want to find out the character of God's speaking through prophecies we must go back to how it was in the beginning. Adam and Eve had been created in the image of God, and as such were priests and prophets and kings. As kings they had dominion over all of creation, and as priests they dedicated themselves completely to the LORD. Whenever Adam and Eve spoke, their words reflected the revealed will of God. When e.g. God had told Adam how He had made Eve from his body, Adam prophetically interpreted this in the first wedding-song. And when the serpent asked Eve what God had said about the trees in the garden, Eve passed on the Word of God, that we may eat of the fruit of the trees, except from the one in the midst of the garden.

After the fall however the situation changed, and so we find that prophecy has more

and more become the work of certain privileged persons, to whom God reveals His will, and who pass on the Word of God which has been entrusted to them to others. Basically two kinds of prophets can be distinguished in the Old Testament. On the one hand there are those who prophesy in ecstasy; they are as it were completely overpowered by the Spirit of God, and speak with ecstatic utterances which they have not under control of their own mind. An example of this we find in the story of Saul who met such a band of ecstatic prophets and by the power of the Spirit was forced to join them. This kind of prophecy was also found among the heathen, whose prophets were possessed by evil spirits.

More common however was the prophet to whom the Lord revealed His will in ways by which the own personality and mind of the prophet remained intact so that he passed on the Word of God in his own language and style of speaking. Moses was the greatest prophet of the Old Testament because God spoke to him face to face: others received the Word of God from angels, in dreams, or in visions, while also a means of knowing the will of God was by casting the lot.

Sometimes such prophecy was of a predicting nature, other times it consisted of interpreting the deeds or words of the Lord in the past or in the present. Part of the prophet's work was also the application of the Word and will of God to the special situation in which either the Church as a whole, or certain members of the Church, found themselves; then this prophecy was of a judging or an encouraging or an admonishing nature.

On the Pentecostal day Christ poured out His Holy Spirit over the whole Church, both men and women.

Yet, although since then the office of prophet has become the office of all the believers, the time of the early Christian Church was still a time of transition. The New Testament like we have it today was not written yet, and God wanted the Church to grow very fast, also in many countries outside of Palestine. For that reason there were, besides the Apostles who had a very special function in this respect, also prophets who prophesied with a special gift or charisma. They could be compared with those prophets in the time of the Old Testament, who received special revelations of God concerning certain things or situations, and among whom there were who were so gripped by the Spirit that they with ecstatic minds played musical instruments and uttered strange sounds.

Thus it was also in Corinth. Although all the believers were prophets by virtue of sharing Christ's anointment with the Spirit, by which they had been restored in the original prophetic office of Adam and Eve in Paradise, they could also strive to receive the special gifts of speaking in tongues, which could be converted into prophecy by means of the gift of interpretation of tongues, or, what Paul even recommended as most desirable, the special gift of prophecy itself. Those who had this special gift received revelations of God which, when they passed them on to the others in the congregation, served "for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation." This way they edified the Church and, if there would be unbelievers present, could convict them, call them to account for their unbelief, disclose the secrets of their hearts, and, by the grace of God, bring them so far that they would join in worshipping God. (vs. 3, 4, 24, 25).

Not only in Corinth were there such special prophets. We read in Acts 21 that the four daughters of the deacon and evangelist Philip practised this gift, and that there was a certain Agabus who prophesied that Paul would be arrested if he would go to Jerusalem.

We also read how this kind of prophecy, which as we have seen was just a particular form of the prophetic office of all the believers, and therefore could and should be desired by all the members of the Church, men and women alike, functioned in the election of special office-bearers. In Acts 9 and 22 we read that in Damascus a certain Ananias in a vision was charged by the Lord to go to Saul, and that on the basis of this prophetic vision he informed Saul of his appointment by God to

become His apostle among the gentiles. In Acts 13 we are told that there were some prophets in the Church at Antioch to whom the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." "Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off."

In Acts 16:1-3 we read about Timothy in Lystra, who "was well spoken of by the brethren at Lystra and Iconium," so that as a result Paul wanted Timothy to accompany him in his mission-work. Although this recommendation of Timothy for the mission-work is not called prophecy here, Paul himself reminds Timothy in 1 Timothy 1:18 that he must perform his office "in accordance with the prophetic utterances which pointed to you." (10)

In all these examples it appears that the election of special office-bearers consisted of an appointment to their respective offices, preceded by a prophetic pointing out of the persons to be appointed for these offices! This prophetic pointing out of the persons to be appointed was as well done by prophecies based on special revelations given by God, as by a form of prophecy which consisted of applying the Word of God in the way of recommending a person for office, in accordance with the revealed Word of God concerning the requirements for a special office in God's Church.

To sum it up, we can say on the basis of what the Scriptures say about the character of prophecy, that prophecy is the privilege of all the believers, both men and women, and that therefore all the members of the Church, again both men and women, also ought to desire that special gift of prophecy which consisted of receiving special revelations from God to be passed on to the congregation. Further, that this special gift of prophecy had to serve the building up and edification of the Church, and therefore was not restricted to a practice at home and in private only, but rather should receive its legitimate place in the midst of the congregation, in its official meetings.

Now, as far as we today are concerned, we have received the complete revelation of God in the books of the Old and New Testament. For this reason we are not called anymore to strive for the special gift of prophecy as this was found in Corinth and other Churches in these early days of the Christian Church. We are called to desire, and to strive after, such a knowledge of the BIBLE that we can all prophesy for the edification of the Church, and the conviction and conversion of those who are outside.

All of us, without any form of discrimination. For our God is not a God of confusion, a God who at one place in the Bible says that all may prophesy and at another place takes this back again, but our God is a God of harmony, of the peace of the Church which Christ has brought about by his sacrifice for our sins on the cross.

The fact that someone prophesies does not take away the responsibility of the hearers; on the contrary, it is their responsibility, as Paul says it somewhere else, in 1 Thess 5:21, to test everything which is prophesied and then to hold fast what is good. That's why Paul says in verse 29 that the others who are listening must "weigh what is said": they must carefully judge it.

This judging is in the first place necessary because there could also be false prophets in the Church. We refer to the warnings in 2 Corinthians 11:4. Galatians 1:6. Colossians 2:18, 2 Thessalonians 2:2. 1 Timothy 4:1, 2 Timothy 3:13, Titus 1:10, 2 Peter 2:1, and 1 John 4:1. In the light of all these warnings it is no wonder that Paul instructs the Corinthians "to weigh what is said" by those who prophesy in the Church.

But there is also a second reason for this. Even when, after testing the prophecies by the revealed Word of God, the teaching of salvation which they had received already, they may conclude that the prophecy indeed comes from God Himself, the question arises how they must act on this prophecy. We have a good example of this in Acts 11:27-30. The prophet Agabus "foretold by the Spirit that there would be a great famine over all the world." This prophecy was apparently discussed in the Church at Antioch where this prophecy was given, and then we read that "the

disciples determined . . . to send relief to the brethren who lived in Judea." So they judged this prophecy on the question what to do with it, how to act on it.

A similar example we find in Acts 21:10-14. The same prophet Agabus prophesied that the Jews at Jerusalem would arrest Paul and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles. A serious discussion took place among those who heard this to the extent that they begged Paul not to go to Jerusalem, till they agreed with Paul's decision that he would go to Jerusalem anyway. So again, this prophecy was discussed and judged on the question, how to act on it.

The purpose of the prophecies which God gave the prophets in order that they would pass them on to the Church is, says Paul in verse 31, "that all may learn and all be encouraged." But of course this means and implies that they must practise what they have learned and act on the encouragement which they have received. Decisions must be made, a course of action established, and the decisions executed. We should e.g. think of the prophecies which pointed to certain men who should be appointed as special office-bearers in the Church: Paul, Barnabas, Timothy. These prophecies required that decisions would be made; decisions of accepting them as coming from God, and then also decisions concerning how to go about it, and how to implement and execute.

This brings us to the question what kind of character this judging of prophecies has, or, to put it differently, with what kind of authority this judging of prophecies takes place.

In verse 32 Paul writes that "the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets." In chapter 12 Paul has made it clear that also the prophecies are inspired by the Holy Spirit of God. However, it is impossible that now in our text Paul would mean to say that the Holy Spirit of God would be subject to prophets; it is just the other way around, the prophets are subject to the Holy Spirit of God. Thus the spirits of prophets must mean something else than the Holy Spirit of God.

In chapter 11 we have seen that both men and women who pray and prophesy must show their authority or license to pray and prophesy to the angels. The angels, says Hebrew 1:14, are "all ministering spirits sent forth to serve" the believers. They take their prayers to God, and bring God's messages to them. Apparently the spirits of prophets who are subject to prophets are the angels, who as ministering spirits serve the believers and thus are placed below them. Although, as Hebrews 2 further explains on the basis of Psalm 8, God made man, because of sin, for a little while lower than the angels, yet in Christ everything is subjected under His feet, the angels included. Paul had already expressed the same thought earlier in his epistle, in chapter 6:3, where he asked the Corinthians the question: "Do you not know that we are to judge angels?"

The prophets must judge whether the angels, the spirits from whom they receive their revelations, indeed are angels of God, and not angels of Satan. Once the prophets have made their prophecies known to the Church, the others must carefully weigh and judge what is said, again as to the question whether the spirits behind these prophecies are angels of God or angels of Satan, and then also as to the question how further to act on them.

Now, it is in this context that Paul sees the need to underline what is the rule in all the Churches of the saints, namely that "the women should keep silence in the Churches." This is a rule, says Paul, which has been given by God Himself, in His law. From other places in Paul's epistles it is quite clear to what the apostle refers here. It is the law of God from the beginning, that man was made first, as the head, and therefore the glory of God, to whom God directly spoke His Word; while woman, being made after and from the man, is the glory of man, to whom God spoke His Word via, and in connection with the man. That's why Paul here says to those women in Corinth who apparently wanted to act as if they were men: "What! Did the Word of God originate with you, or has it reached you just by yourselves." this means, apart from the men, in isolation from them? (11)

The answer to this question is of course, no. God first spoke His Word to Adam, and Adam taught Eve the will of God, as her head. Eve did not teach Adam, but Adam taught Eve. And when after the fall God also spoke to Eve. He did not do so by addressing her apart from Adam, but in connection with him. It was exactly Eve's sin that she judged the words of the fallen angel Satan instead of giving first Adam the opportunity to give his judgment, and thus let herself be deceived, and then even taught Adam to follow her wrong judgment.

It is on the basis of these things, of what the law says in Genesis 2 and 3, that Paul in 1 Timothy 2:12 says about the position of women in the Church: "I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over men; she is to keep silent. For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor." It is for these reasons that Paul also says in our text that the woman should keep silence in the Churches.

Of course Paul is not taking back here what he has said in 1 Cor 11, that also woman may prophesy in Church provided that they do it AS women, properly licensed as such. What Paul forbids here is not prophesying, but teaching; and then specifically teaching in such a way that it has a decisive character, so that by this teaching men would be ruled by women, because they would have to subject themselves to her teaching as authoritative.

Now why does Paul bring up this matter of women not being allowed to teach in the Church and thus ruling over men, while he first has allowed them to pray and prophesy in the Church? The reason for this is, that now he began to speak about JUDGING of prophecy. And as we have seen, this judging has the same character as teaching with authority; decisions are to be made; angels must be judged, whether they are spirits sent by God or angels of Satan; some prophets, among whom men, must be silenced as false prophets on the basis of the sound doctrine or teaching of the gospel; decisions must be made concerning what some people, men among them, ought to do; in matters of prophecy concerning men who are pointed out as possible office-bearers, decisions concerning these men must be taken, they must be ordained and sent out with a specific charge.

It is clear, that if also the women in the Church would take part in this decision-making, they would also judge over angels; and that while Eve had sinned when she not only made the wrong judgment, but did not leave the judgment up to Adam as the head; and it is also clear that if women in the Church would take part in this decision-making, they in that way would be judging and teaching and ruling men in the congregation. Well, says Paul, that kind of speaking in the Church would be shameful for a woman. For in that way she would abandon her place as a woman, as the glory of man, and try to act like a man, teaching him the will of God and ruling over him by means of that teaching. For then she would teach men the Word of God with the same authority, as Adam was called to do to Eve; as if the woman was the first created and addressed by God, and not the man. But Eve was to learn from Adam what is the will of God concerning decisions to be made, and therefore the married women in the church should ask their own husbands what they want to know about decisions to be made concerning angels and men.

Yes, also concerning men who had been pointed out as possible office-bearers by prophecies uttered by women. Women may prophesy. Paul has made this very clear in 1 Cor. 11. This means in this respect that they also may point out as prophets, that is on the basis of the revealed Word of God, which men should become office-bearers in the Church. It does not really make any difference whether they do this by word of recommendation only or also by vote, but taking part in the discussion about the judging of these prophecies which leads to the definite decision about it, that's forbidden. Forbidden, not just by Paul, or by the Church-Order, but by God Himself. Forbidden in the Church today, because it was not meant to happen in the beginning either.

In the beginning there was no confusion, but harmony. And the glad message of

the gospel is, that God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever would believe in Him would not perish, but have everlasting life. The Son of God has come, to gather all those who believe in Him together in His Church. There, in the Church, He leads all things back again to how it was in the beginning. (12) There the curse of sin is taken away by the grace of God, the forgiving blood of Jesus Christ. Also the curse, that women's desire has become to rule over men, with the consequence that men began to rule it over women. In the Church men and women have received their own place again. Co-heirs of everlasting life, yet each having their own place and calling in the Will or Covenant of God. That's the message of the gospel which sets men and women free. Here in the Church, and for all eternity.

Notes

- (1) For this exegesis of Genesis 3:16, cf. W.H. Gispen, *Genesis* (in *Commentaar op het Oude Testament*), and the *Westminster Theological Journal*, Vol. 37, No. 3, of Spring 1975, Article on "What is the Women's desire?" by Susan T. Foh, p. 376.
- (2) cf. W.H. Gispen, *Numeri*, Vol. 1, p. 90: "Ook moeten wij bedenken, dat de onschuldige vrouw door deze wet van de jaloersheid beveiligd werd tegen haar al te jaloerse man."
- (3) Gerhard Kittel, *Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, s.v. "hypotassoo" (translated by us from the German language).
- (4) *Christianity Today* of February 20, 1981, article "The 'Head' of the Epistles," by Berkeley and Alvera Mickelsen. Cf. Gerhard Kittel, o.c., s.v. "kephale."
- (5) Especially for the exegesis of 1 Peter 3:1-8 (but also for other parts of our report) we are indebted to Rev. A. Hordijk's book, *Een hulp die bij hem past*, Oosterbaan & Le Cointre, Goes, 1968.
- (6) See also W. Hendriksen, *New Testament Commentary*, on 1 Thessalonians 4:4.
- (7) Gerhard Kittel, o.c., s.v. "exousia."
- (8) Cf. DeBoor, *Wuppertaler Studienbibel*, 1 Corinthians 11:10, page 182.
- (9) E.g. *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*; Dr. Jos Keulers, *De Brieven van Paulus*. See especially Dr. F.W. Grosheide's commentary on this verse, who tries to mix the two meanings of freedom and subjection.
- (10) Cf. W. Hendriksen, 1. 2 Timothy and Titus (in *N.T. Commentary*) p. 85.
- (11) Most commentaries apply these words to the Church at Corinth, however, without showing grounds for this in the text. Our exegesis of these words fits in the context as again a reference by Paul to the place of woman after man.
- (12) For this reason, and because the teaching with authority concerning God's Word is meant, the question whether men may be governed by a Queen or taught at schools or universities by woman-teachers or professors is irrelevant.

C. Conclusions

On the basis of part B of our report we now add the conclusions h-j to those mentioned at the end of part A. These conclusions read as follows:

- a. In the Genesis 1 and 2 account, although both are involved, man stands out as the leading figure in fulfilling the creation mandate and the woman is presented as the one who helps, supports and makes it possible for him to meet his objectives. She must look to him for leadership; he must look to her for support.
- b. Although there is a functional and chronological difference between man and woman, they are of equal worth since both male and female are made in the image of God.
- c. As the result of the Fall, the harmonious relationship between man and woman is destroyed in the curse that the husband shall rule.
- d. In the Old Testament this rulership of husband (man) over wife (woman) is evident in marriage and in the Church, but from the beginning this was not so.
- e. Our Lord Jesus upholds the worth and the dignity of the woman during His entire ministry on earth, as opposed to the established demeaning tradition upheld by the scribes and Pharisees.
- f. As a result of our Lord's redemptive work all racial, social and sexual distinctions,

as they bear on a believer's standing with God, are eliminated. All believers are equal before the Lord.

- g. In the New Testament there is, however, a clear prohibition on woman being involved in a ruling or official teaching capacity in the Church. This prohibition does not rest on Pauline prejudices but on the creation account of Genesis 1-3.
- h. It is clear from the Scriptures that both men and women are exhorted to prophesy since both share equally in the anointment of Christ with the Holy Spirit; however, in doing so the differences between them as men and women by virtue of God's creation ordinance must be acknowledged. (cf. conclusion f).
- i. Although the Scriptures do not provide a detailed account of voting as we know it today, it is clear from the Scriptures that the part of the election of special office-bearers which consists of pointing to men who according to Scriptures are deemed fit for special office in the Church, belongs to the prophetic task to which both men and women in the Church are called. (cf. Acts 9:15, 16 and Acts 22: 14, 15; Acts 13:1-3, Acts 16:1-3 and 1 Timothy 1:18).
- j. It is also clear from the Scriptures that the part of the election of special office-bearers which consists of discussing the received recommendations and taking the relevant decisions concerning the ordination of those who have been elected, belongs to the official task of governing the Church which exclusively has been entrusted to men, chosen and ordained for this task. (cf. conclusion g).

II CHURCH HISTORY

A. General Remarks.

The Church History part of the Committee Report is in our opinion somewhat one-sided. More positive things could have been said about the position of women in the early Church. H. Bavinck in *De Vrouw in de hedendaagsche maatschappij*, Kok, Kampen, 1918, twice refers to Mausbach *Die Stellung der Frau in Menschheitsleben*, Munchen-Gladbach, 1906, for his statement that women "hier en daar soms met de mannen aan die (bisschops) verkiezing (deelnamen)" (here and there the women partook of the election of the bishops). In general, women in the early Church displayed great activity, f.i. as deaconesses and in other functions, assisted in baptisms and in the preaching and teaching of the gospel to those outside. This was one of the reasons the adversaries despised Christianity as the "religio pauperum and mulierum" (a religion of the poor and the women) *Evangelisches Kirchen Lexikon*, I 1346). The forces which pushed the women into the background and channeled their energy and charisms into the monasteries, were Asceticism, Heresy, and Hierarchy (Bavinck, page 36, 138). For many centuries however, women seem to have occupied in the women's orders high positions of authority also over priests and monks: "The right of abbesses to rule was not questioned until the time of the Renaissance, when there was a return to a Greco-Roman culture in which women had had a lower status than in Christian times." ("The Lady was a Bishop." Joan Morris, Macmillan 1973). The Reformation gave back to women a place of dignity as wife and mother, and initially involved her again in the work of the Church as deaconesses (Articles of Wesel, 1568). Luther went so far as to allow women even to preach in the emergency when men would not be available. (*evang. Kirchen Lexikon*, I 1348). In general however the Reformation did not succeed in transcending the view of women which it inherited from the Middle Ages. The Enlightenment changed the thinking of the world about the position of women, with eventual consequences for the Churches which followed the trend by granting women passive and active voting rights. Understandably, the more liberal Churches were the first to do so. Bavinck points out that we have to do here with an irreversable historical development (Women Emancipation Movement), in which are Biblical and acceptable elements which must not be rejected on the ground of the unbiblical and revolutionary stimulants which the movement received from apostate philosophies. By comparison we could think of the definite parallels between Reformation and

Humanism in the 16th Century, in spite of the fundamental differences.

B. Voting Rights

The Reformation returned to the principles of the early Church re the rights of the Congregation to choose its own office-bearers. Calvin refers to Cyprian to state that in that time, just like in N.T. times, "the call of a minister is lawful according to the Word of God, when those who seemed fit are created by the consent and approval of the people; moreover that pastors ought to preside over the election in order that the multitude may not go wrong either through fickleness, through evil intention or through disorder." According to Cyprian, the proof of a bishop's worth and fitness is by public decision and testimony. (Institutes, IV. Chapter III: 15). In the early Church no one was to be thrust into office who was not acceptable to all. The people had to approve of the office-bearer by their acclamation. The task of the clergy was to repress, if need be, the multitude's foolish desires. It could therefore happen that the clergy first elected the office-bearer they deemed fit; then the magistrate, senate and leading citizens ratified the election. "Then they brought the matter to the people, who, *although not bound by the previous decisions*, nevertheless could not raise a tumult." Neglecting the right and freedom of the people to choose their office-bearers renders an election and appointment void and invalid. (Institutes, IV. Chapter III.:11, 12.) (Calvin does not indicate whether women participated in the election. On the one hand it is hard to imagine that women were absent when candidates were presented to "all the people" for their approval; on the other hand, Calvin's reference to the Roman consuls who convened the assemblies of the people to receive the votes for creating new magistrates and only acted as moderators of the people in the election, may indicate that women were excluded from the election in the Church. Given the position of women in ancient Greece and Rome, it is highly unlikely that they were allowed to participate in the election assemblies.) Also the early Church Orders after the Reformation, starting with the Articles of Wesel (1568), are silent about the participation of women. Only in Art. 5 Ch. II, we may read a reference to the subject of the vote: "op die plaatsen echter waar het volk minder geschikt zal wezen om te kiezen, hetzij wegens het klein getal der gelovigen, hetzij wegens het gebrek aan geleerde en vrome *mannen* . . ." (transl.: "at those places however where the people will be less suitable to choose, either on account of their small number of believers, or on account of lack of learned and pious men . . .").

H. Bouwman, *Gereformeerd Kerkrecht*, tells us that A. Lasco (1599-1653) definitely excluded women from the vote while in England. Voetius did the same. He had no high regard of women anyway (*De dienst van de vrouw in de Kerk*, K. Deddens, page 57). By Voetius' authority the Church Political course was set for the following centuries. In the light of the general view of the position of women in society the exclusion of women from the vote must have been acceptable to all parties. It is the change of this view in society since the previous century which caused the Churches to reconsider its principles and practices. So far the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands with which the Canadian Reformed Churches are in correspondence, have resisted a change in voting practice.

C. Recent developments in the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands.

1. "Rapport inzake de materie van het VROUWENKIESRECHT nader gezien vanuit de H. Schrift- aan de Generale Synode van de Gereformeerde Kerken — Kampen 1975."

We quote from page 25: "Hebben de ambtsdragers het recht, om by de verkiezing van ambtsdragers ook een beroep te doen op de medewerking van de vrouwelijke belijdende leden? Er is vroeg en laat bij herhaling op gewezen, dat de Schrift op deze vraag geen antwoord geeft met een uitdrukkelijk verbod of voorschrift. We moeten hier concluderenderwijs te werk gaan. Daarbij is allereerst te letten op de aard van de medewerking van de zijde van de gemeente bij deze aanstelling. Welnu,

dan blijkt dat die medewerking wordt gevraagd bij en verleend aan *een deel van het leiding geven aan de gemeente*. Maar zulk leiding geven is aan de vrouw ontzegd krachtens Gods scheppingsordinatie." (Do the office-bearers have the right, when office-bearers are to be elected, also to call on the cooperation of the female communicant members? It has repeatedly been pointed out, early and late, that Scripture gives no answer to this question with an express interdiction or instruction. We have to go here by way of inference. Then first of all we have to observe the nature of the cooperation on the part of the congregation in this matter (of appointing office-bearers). Well then, it appears that this cooperation is requested for and rendered to a part of leading the congregation. But such leading is denied to the woman by virtue of God's creation ordinance).

Our Study Committee in its Report for Synod Smithville came basically to the same conclusion, page 31, conclusion 2 and 4: "... involved in the act of governing." Synod Kampen 1975 made no decision.

At Synod Groningen 1978 there was a majority report and a minority report.

2. Majority Report

- a. Notices that the debate in the Churches was dominated by the question whether voting is an act of governing or simply an act of giving an advice to the Church council. As background is seen a certain theological construction of which elements are found already in Voetius, but which mainly has been developed by A. Kuyper. Meant is the well-known distinction between a general office of the believers and a special office of the believers and the division of this office into the office of priest, prophet and king. Appointing office-bearers is seen as belonging to the ruling authority of the Church. Casting the vote is exercising ruling authority in the general office of all believers as kings. Women shall not rule in the Church. The report analyzes this theological construction and concludes that it is unscriptural and a deviation from the Scriptural notions of the Reformers concerning the nature of governing in the Church. Only Christ rules through his Word and Spirit.
- b. According to the Report, God is the one who calls the office-bearers and does this through the congregation. Christ is the one who gives the office-bearers. The congregation does nothing but recognizing the gifts which the Lord gives to certain brothers in order to have them appointed to the office. In the vote the congregation recognizes this action of the Lord. In the vote the congregation does not rule or exercise authority, but in fact implicitly declares itself willing to submit itself to the leadership of those whom it recognizes as given by the Lord.
- c. The Scriptural status of women is to follow and not to lead. 1 Cor 14 prohibits her to speak in the congregation, but this is meant in the sense of teaching with authority or enter into discussion with the prophets or interrupt them. The character of being silent must be understood in the light of texts like Luke 14:14; Acts 21:18; 21:14; 22:2.

Casting a vote is "speaking" of an entirely different nature. The women do not speak in that case to the congregation, but *together* with the other members of the congregation, joining her voice to the voice of all, like in prayer, or the submission of names or the approbation. The male members do not exercise authority either when they cast the vote. Voting is that the congregation as a whole expresses its opinion and insight regarding the gifts Christ has given to some brothers whom He wants to see installed in office to serve Him and the congregation.

Voting is not act of exercising authority or partaking of the government of the Church.

3. Minority Report.

According to the Minority Report the crucial question is not: "does the prohibition to speak (1 Cor 14) also apply to the act of voting by women?" but the question:

"Is casting a decisive vote in accordance with the status of women to be submissive?" To cast a decisive vote is a decision-making act. This is in conflict with the status of women.

The Minority Report agrees with the conclusion of Synod Arnhem 1930, but rejects with the Majority Report Arnhem's use of the theological construction concerning "general governing power" and "special governing power" ("algemene regeermacht" en bijzondere regeermacht").

4. Decision Groningen 1978. Acts 287.

In the vote the congregation gives its opinion, but this act of giving its opinion is of binding character as regards the Church council. It is not in accordance with the position of submissiveness of women to credit them with an independent decisive vote.

(N.B. Synod rejected with the Majority Report the Kuyperian construction which had been used by Synod Arnhem 1930, namely the above mentioned distinctions in the office of the believers and the nature of the governing power in the Church.)

5. Submission Classis Grootegast of Synod Groningen 1978.

This submission played a role in the discussions at Synod, Acts, Art. 277. According to Classis the submissive position of women according to the Scripture is the decisive factor in the matter. The meaning of this Scriptural notion is that women should not act independently. For this would break the splendid marriage-harmony. In a good marriage the insights and the voice of the wife will reach the Church council via the voice of the husband. This implies that she should not submit names for the nomination either, nor approach Council independently if, in the context of the approbation, she would have objections against elected brothers. This does not exclude the eventuality that women have to approach Council independently, namely, if they are single (widows, unmarried women), or in case the husbands refuse to do their duty. These however are exceptional cases, and a rule shall not be based on the exceptions.

D. Comment.

1. We take note of the fact that neither Synod Groningen, nor the Minority Report, nor the Submission of the Classis Gootegast, any longer support the position of Synod Arnhem regarding the nature of voting as an involvement in the act of governing the Church; nor do they support anymore the theological construction regarding a "general power to rule" and a "special power to rule." In this respect the conclusions of the Majority Report seem to have been convincing.
2. The denial of women's voting rights is now based on the view that voting is acting independently and a decisive acting which is binding on the consistory. This, though no longer considered to be participating in an act of governing the Church, must still be considered to be in conflict with the submissive position of women according to Scripture. The opponents of women's voting rights seem to have fallen back on Arnhem 1930's alternative position: "Is dat stemrecht van een leidinggevend, regeerend karakter, dan is het uit wat de apostel schrijft wel duidelijk, dat aan de vrouw zoodanig stemrecht niet toekomt. *En zelfs als het bloot adviserend ware, zou de toekenning aan, en de uitoefening van het stemrecht door de vrouw, nog in strijd komen met het sterke woord van de apostel in 1 Cor 14 en 1 Tim 2.*" (page 14/15) (If the vote is of a leading, governing nature, then it is clear enough from the apostle's word, that the women have no right to such vote. *And even if the vote were of mere advisory character, granting the vote to women and casting the vote by them, would still be in conflict with the strong word of the apostle in 1 Corinthians 14 and 1 Timothy 2.*
3. In our opinion, the abandoning of the position that voting is an act of governing, takes away an essential pillar on which, also historically, the denial of women's voting rights rested. It takes away the objective criterium that voting is ruling, which of

course Scripture denies to women. In the place of this objective criterium, different criteria are introduced, like acting independently and decisive acting which binds the consistory, which criteria only according to subjective judgment can or cannot be considered to be in conflict with the Scriptural position of woman.

4. Classis Grootegast shows whereto this leads. We cannot deny this Classis consistency when it denies woman also the right to submit names for the nomination and the right to bring forward objections against the elected candidates. It is now completely left to the subjective (male) judgment to decide what is and what is not in accordance with the submissive position of women. An element of arbitrariness is introduced which leaves the field wide open to judge a score of other activities which (though not considered acts of ruling with authority) are nevertheless felt to be in conflict with a submissive position.
5. In our opinion, the position of Classis Grootegast is untenable in the light of its own statements. If it concedes that there are situations in which the woman is forced to act independently, namely when she is a widow or an unmarried woman, or when the husband refuses to do his duty in the calling of raising Scriptural objections against chosen candidates or in the matter of submitting names for the nomination. In such cases the voice of the woman must address the consistory directly, not via husband, for he is not there or he does not function. Here Classis acknowledges that women have wisdom and insight, given by the Holy Spirit, which must not remain unfruitful for the upbuilding of the congregation. However, the question is why Classis does not apply this to the matter of the vote as well. It is fine to state, as Classis does, that the insight of the woman reaches the consistory via the voice of the husband and that in that way her input is made fruitful for the Church, but the question which Classis ignores, is: what if the woman's insight does *not* reach the consistory f.i. via the voice of the husband in case the insight of the woman is not shared by the husband and he votes for a different candidate than the woman had suggested. In that case the insight of the woman apparently must cede for the insight of the husband. That means that in the name of the marriage harmony the voice of the woman is stifled and her God-given wisdom kept unfruitful for the upbuilding of the Church. The rule of Classis: "the insight of the woman reaches the consistory via the husband," only applies if there is harmony of insight and wisdom (in which case the woman's insight is superfluous anyway), or if the husband sacrifices his insight for his wife's. The conclusion seems inescapable: denying the vote to women is stifling the God-given wisdom of the women, in the name of the marriage harmony while there is no harmony on this point of insight. If the Spirit is given to women no less than to men, it is difficult to see how it can be in accordance with the will of the Spirit that the (possible) unwisdom of the man (in case he lets himself be motivated in the vote by sinful considerations) must prevail over the wisdom of the woman, only because he is the male and she the female in the marriage relationship. If voting is no longer to be considered an act of governing with authority but an expression of insight, the insight of women must be considered as of equal value as the insight of men. In that case denying women to express their insight by their vote, cannot be defended on good grounds.

III. CHURCH POLITY

- A. The basis for Reformed Church polity is laid down by Calvin in Book IV ch. 3.:1 of the *Institutes*: Christ alone shall rule and reign. We mentioned already in this report Calvin's emphasis on the right and freedom of the Church to choose its own office-bearers. The clergy acts more as moderators of the election-process than as rulers of the Church who decide who will be office-bearers and who will not. The responsibility of the clergy is to see to it that the rule of Christ and of His Word is asserted concerning the office-bearers to be appointed in the Church. The consistory cannot appoint an office-bearer who is not acceptable to the people. The consistory on the other hand cannot appoint an office-bearer who is not acceptable to the consistory on scriptural grounds. Office-bearers can only be appointed by

the combined actions of people and consistory. In case of conflict the major assemblies would decide. (Wesel).

These principles which Calvin derived from the relevant passages in the O.T. and the N.T., found their way into the Confessions. Art. 30 B.C.: "We believe that the ministers of God's Word, the elders and the deacons ought to be chosen to their respective offices by a lawful election by the Church, with calling upon the name of the Lord, and in that order which the Word of God teaches." The original version of Guido De Brès read: "... to be chosen to their respective offices by a lawful election with calling upon the name of the Lord *and with the votes of the Church*, and after that ought to be ordained in their offices by laying on of hands: as the Word of God teaches." The underlined words were left out of the adopted version of the Confession because it was believed that the precise regulation as to how the election should take place belonged rather in a Church Order than in a Confession (H. Bouwman: C. Vonk, De Voorzeide Leer III B page 163). The change was not meant to take the vote away from the people. The idea that the election by the congregation is essential is also reflected in the Heidelberg Catechism L.D. 31, in the words: "... or who are thereunto *appointed by the Church*." The congregation appoints them, that is of course the congregation together with its office-bearers. This Scriptural principle found its way in the Church Order, be it initially in minimal form. The Articles of Wesel show that there was great concern about the "unruly crowds." Therefore Wesel saw as ideal a cooperation between the clergy and magistrate in the election and appointing of office-bearers. Absence of Christian magistrates made Wesel decide for what it considered the second best method (II Art. 3): to "add the common consent of the congregation to the authority of the elders."

Acts Synod Emden 1571 Art. 13, 14: Office-bearers shall be chosen by the consistories and be presented to the congregation "dat zij ofte door stilzwijgen van de gemeente aangenomen worden, ofte so daar yet ware daarom die gemeente in de Verkiezinge niet verwillegen en wilde, dat binnen 15 dagen ongevaarlijk voortgebracht werde." ("that they either by the silence of the congregation are accepted, or that — if there were something why the congregation would not consent to the election — this within 15 days would be undauntedly brought forward.")

Some Churches which had the custom of having the office-bearers chosen by the common people, were allowed to continue such for the time being.

Synod Dordrecht 1574 confirms the decision of Emden concerning the election of ministers, "dat de consistory het recht der verkiezinge zal hebben." (Art. 27). (that the right to elect office-bearers shall lie with the consistory). It was decided however in Art. 28: "de consistory zal dubbel getal der ouderlingen en diakenen der gemeente voorstellen dewelke de helft daaruit zal kiezen. (The consistory shall present to the congregation a double number of the elders and the deacons from which the congregation shall choose half).

Dordrecht 1578 (I, 12): "Het recht der benoeming zal bij de kerkraad staan, alzo dat een enkel getal kan voorgesteld worden om aangenomen te worden door de gemeente, of een dubbel getal waaruit de helft verkozen worden zal." (The consistory shall have the right to appoint, thus that a single number can be presented to be accepted the congregation or a double number from which half shall be chosen).

Middelburg (I, 5) 1581: "Ende men zal niemand der gemeente tegen haren danck opdringen." (And one shall not thrust anyone on the congregation against her wish). Further, in Art. 15, the terminology is interesting: "... soo veel Ouderlingen alsser van noode zijn der Ghemeijnte voor te stellen, om van deselue (ten ware datter eenich beletsel voorviele) gheprobeert! ende goet ghekent, ende met openbaren ghebeden beuesticht te werden: Of een dobbel ghetal, om het half deel by der Ghemeijnte gheprobeert op deselue wijze inden Dienst te beuestighen." (... to

present to the congregation as many Elders as are needed, to be approbated and approved by her (unless any obstacle would present itself), and to install them in a public worship service: Or a double number, to install in the same manner the half approbated by the congregation).

Den Haag 1586: “. . . om van deselve geaprobeert en goedgekeurd zinde ofte een dubbel getal om het half deel bij der gemeente verkoren . . .” (. . . being approbated and approved by the congregation, or a double number half of which chosen by the congregation . . .)

Waalse Synode Dordrecht 1577: “Om het kerkvolk bij zijn recht en vrijheid te handhaven, zullen de benoemde en geexamineerde dienaren in de volle samenkomst der gemeente worden uitgeroepen, en gedurende vijftien dagen zullen zij die erkend zijn voor ten avondmaal gerechtigde leden der kerk worden opgewekt om oprecht en in goede conscientie te verklaren of zij enige billijke oorzaak weten ter verhinderende dat de benoeming zou worden bekrachtigd en de benoemde personen hun als dienaars gegeven zouden worden, wat geschieden moet voor de kerkraad, aan het oordeel waarvan de redenen van bezwaar onderworpen zullen zijn. (appel op classis mogelijk). Als er geen bezwaren worden kenbaar gemaakt, zal het stilzwijgen van het volk gehouden worden voor goedkeuring.”

Walloon Synod 1577: “In order to maintain the right and freedom of the Church-people, the appointed and examined ministers shall be announced in a plenary meeting of the congregation, and during fifteen days those who have the acknowledged right to partake of the Lord’s Supper, shall be urged to declare, sincerely and in good conscience, whether they know any good cause to prevent the appointment from being confirmed and the appointed persons from being given to them as ministers, which (raising objections) must be done before the consistory to whose judgment the reasons of the objection shall be submitted. (appeal to classis is possible). If no objections are brought forward, the silence of the people shall be taken for approval.”

B. Comment:

1. where the decisions of Emden, Dort 1578, Middelburg 1581 mention single nominations, the rule of the Waalse Synode will have applied: approval and approbation by the communicant members. This includes women.
2. In case of conflict between congregation and consistory, the major assembly shall decide: the objection from a female-communicant member is not inadmissible just because she is a woman. In other words, the women were equally involved in the call to approve and approbate.
3. The decision of the Waalse Synode also teaches that the act of approbating is a positive act of giving consent and receiving as office-bearers those presented to the congregation. Non-communicant members, children and outsiders were excluded from the approbation.
4. The approbation is seen in this decision as necessary and essential in order to do justice to the “right and freedom” of the congregation. This is the terminology of the Institutes. The approbation without which the election is nul and void (Institutes), was to be done by all who were entitled to partake of the Lord’s Supper. This includes women.
5. Interesting is the terminology of Dort, Middelburg and Den Haag.
Dort 1578 : aannemen (accept)
Middelburg 1586 : approberen en goedkeuren (single number)
(approbate and approve)
Den Haag 1586 : approberen en goedkeuren
(approbate and approve)
Dortt : verkoren (chosen)

Middelburg	:approberen (approved)	(double number)
Den Haag	:verkoren (chosen)	

The terms "to approbate" and "to elect" are interchangeable. Dordt calls "election" what Middelburg calls "approbating," namely the half of the double number. This confirms the conclusion that the great principle was to maintain the freedom and right of the congregation to accept or to reject an office-bearer. The essential act of accepting or approbating an office-bearer could be done in two ways which were only alternative ways which were not seen as basically different from each other. The congregation could approbate (is: approve of and accept) a single nomination by its silence (not raising objections), or by acclamation (raising hands?), or whatever method, but the congregation could also approbate one of a double number presented to her, by way of voting, maybe also done in the way of raising hands. In that case a period of time was inserted before installing the office-bearer to give opportunity to those who voted against to bring forward lawful objections.

5. The question whether both ways of approbating were open to women as well, is difficult to answer. Approbation of the single number was open to women as well, according to the Waalse Synod (all communicant members). The approbation of the chosen candidate before his installation was also expected from the women. It would be logical if women also participated in approbating by way of voting from a double number. But this seems not to have been the case, generally, considering Bouwman's remark that A. Lasco in London excluded women from the vote. It is possible that the Churches in 1571 and following years followed his lead. If there was no uniform practice, this will have changed since Voetius decided the matter against women voting rights on the grounds that voting is an act of governing in the Church.

IV CONCLUSIONS

1. The great principle of the Reformation was that office-bearers cannot be forced upon the congregation against its will. The election of its office-bearers is the right and freedom of the congregation. The congregation's approbation therefore is essential. Voting from a double number is an alternative way of approbating. By letting the congregation vote, the congregation is not given increased "right and freedom," but a more convenient way of implementing its Scriptural "right and freedom." In the light of the Institutes and the early Church Orders, it is highly unlikely that in the early years of the Reformation the act of approbating or voting was seen as an act of governing in the Church. If the participation of the congregation in the election-process was restricted, it was out of fear of disorder and confusion by the unruly crowds, not out of uncertainty who actually should rule and govern in the Church. That was no question: Christ only, through His Word and Spirit. (This does not take away from the own responsibility of the office-bearers to see to it that in the election process everything is done according to the demands of Scripture, so that indeed Scripture rules).
2. The historical Church-political developments do not support the distinction the Study Report Smithville made on page 28 between approbation and election. The source of the objection is definitely fundamental: only communicant members were called to the act of approbation. (see Waalse Synode). The Committee's distinction seems to be based on the practice it experienced in our time. Historically and Church politically, however, the approbation was the essential positive act of accepting and receiving an office-bearer by the congregation. Non-communicant members and outsiders were excluded from this activity. Also the submission of names is an activity which is historically more significant than it has become in our present day practice on which the Study Committee seems to base its characterization. Submission of names, voting and approbation must be seen as a whole. In the submission of names the congregation says: these brothers we want as office-bearers. After the nomination of a double number by the consistory, the congregation nar-

rows its choice down by the vote, and the majority of the congregation says in the vote: this one we want as office-bearer. The vote is an extension of the submission of names. In the approbation of the chosen candidate the whole congregation confirms the choice of the majority, and says: this one we want and accept as office-bearer. The submission of names can be eliminated. The consistory can present a single or double number. The voting can be eliminated. But the approbation by the congregation remains essential.

The Advisory Committee at Synod Smithville has rightly shown that the Study Committee has not been able to define voting as an act of governing or involvement in governing. Indeed, the opinion that voting one way or the other is related to governing in the Church, has been abandoned in recent times also by the brotherhood in The Netherlands. If nevertheless voting is thought to be in conflict with the Submissive position of women, the consequence should be and indeed is drawn by Classis Grootegast — that submission of names and approbation likewise is unfitting women.

3. The principles of the Reformation have not been sufficiently implemented in the matter of voting rights, not even in the days of the Reformation itself. This can be explained in the light of the spirit of the times, which was unfavourable to a Scriptural view of the position of women. The view of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance prevailed. In other words: the time was simply not ripe for women voting rights. By way of comparison we could refer to a phenomenon like slavery. In the light of Scriptural principles regarding the relationship between man and his neighbour, slavery in which one man owns another man, cannot be seen as the ideal will of God. Yet, the N.T. times were not ripe for the abolition of slavery.

4. In this connection it may be helpful to consider the matter of women's voting rights from the viewpoint of Ethics. The definition of Ethics as given by K. Schilder is well-known among us: the theological discipline of the constant principles, the changing dispensations and the concrete actual situation for determining the will of God. (literally the definition reads: "Ethiek is de wetenschap van de constante rationes, de wisselende oeconomieën en de actueel concrete bepaaldheid der obligatie van de wil des mensen tot gehoorzaamheid aan Gods geopenbaarde wil).

The leading position of man in relationship to woman is a creation ordinance, and as such a constant ground, a constant principle which never changes. But this constant principle must be applied in the concrete actual situation of our times in today's world. We cannot ignore the developments in society in the course of the centuries. "What was possible in the past, is no longer possible today." (Dr. J. Douma. *Verantwoordelijk Handelen*, Ethisch Commentaar No. 7, page 49: "Wat vroeger kon, kan nu niet meer, zoals . . . slavernij." "Nieuwe omstandigheden laten een andere ethische houding toe." (page 50). (Different circumstances ask for a different ethical attitude). "Een vader huwelijkt zijn dochter niet meer uit zoals Paulus dat nog gewoon vindt in 1 Cor 7:38." (A father no longer marries off his daughter, like it was accepted practice in Paul's days). It was not considered unethical in O.T. and N.T. times to have slaves or to marry off one's daughter without her consent. In today's world no Church would still consider such practices ethically acceptable. We have to ask ourselves whether to deny women voting rights can still be considered in our time an ethically acceptable application of the "constant principle" of woman's secondary position as a creation ordinance. By putting this question we are not in the line of modern Situation Ethics, for *we do not let the situation dictate the will of God* (in that case today's evaluation of women and her position in society would dictate to allow her to be installed as elders and ministers). We only *take into account the new situation* of the changed times, which allows for woman to receive the place which Scripture never denied her, but which she could not receive in times (Biblical times included) in which this would not have accorded with the prevailing views concerning the position of women. Voting today is no longer seen in the Church as involvement in the act of government in the Church. The matter

must now be decided by a subjective judgment as to what is felt to be in accordance with the Scriptural position of women. In this situation the "actual concrete situation," the changed times, cannot be ignored as a factor. What was not unethical in the past, in casu the denial of the vote to women, may become unethical in present times in today's world.

SUMMARY CONCLUSION

Voting was not seen in the Scriptures, the Confession and the Church Orders, as act of ruling with authority over the Church, over the male members or over the consistory. This has been acknowledged in the Reports and decisions of the major assemblies of the corresponding Churches in The Netherlands. In our time, to allow women an equal voice with the men, to express their insight, cannot be seen to be in conflict with the Scriptural position of women. On the contrary.

V RECOMMENDATIONS

Synod decide:

that there are no Scriptural or Church-political grounds which forbid the consistories to call the sisters in the congregation to participate in the election of office-bearers by their vote.

Grounds:

1. voting is not an act of participating in the government of the Church.
2. women have received the Spirit of wisdom no less than men to exercise the congregational right and freedom to elect its own office-bearers.

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