

ACTS

General Synod 1980

OF THE

Canadian Reformed Churches

Smithville, Ontario



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*Front Row, from left to right: Rev. J. Mulder, Rev. M. VanBeveren, Rev. D. VanderBoom, Rev. J. Visscher, Rev. H. Scholten.
Second Row: Prof. H.M. Ohmann, Eld. A.H. Lubbers, Eld. F. Wildeboer, Rev. S. DeBruin, Eld. H. Aasman, Eld. E.C. Baartman,
Rev. C. Van Dam, Prof. J. Faber.
Last Row: Rev. Cl. Stam, Rev. J. Geertsema, Eld. W. VanAssen, Eld. C. Hoogerdijk, Rev. J.D. Wielenga, Eld. J. Bartels,
Eld. G. Van Woudenberg.*

ACTS

**GENERAL SYNOD of the CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
held at SMITHVILLE, ONTARIO from November 4 - December 5, 1980.**

MORNING SESSION — TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1980

ARTICLE 1

Opening

On behalf of the convening Church at Smithville, Ontario, the Rev. Cl. Stam calls the meeting to order. He requests that Psalm 16:1, 3, 4 be sung, after which he reads I Corinthians 12:1-11, and leads in prayer.

He addresses the delegates with the following words:

"Esteemed brethren in the Lord:

On behalf of the convening church, I may heartily welcome you all to the town of Smithville in the district of Niagara. Despite the widely advertised claim that we here form "the hub of the Niagara peninsula," the name of our town itself is quite unpretentious, the character of our people is simplicity, and it is in this spirit of unpretentious simplicity that we hope to serve you as convening and host church so that you may be fully enabled to do your important work as members of this General Synod.

We welcome you especially in the unity of the true faith, as fellow-saints in Christ with whom we have true communion in the Lord. We recognize that when you meet as delegates, you meet as brethren united by one Spirit in one purpose: to serve the edification of the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Although you are each separate individuals, each with his own character, personality and gifts, yet sharing in the same Spirit you will use your diverse talents for the common good of the Churches. May the Scripture portion which we read and which speaks so clearly and comfortingly about the communion of saints, the unity in diversity, be your foundation and your guideline and may you all give yourselves to this work to the best of your ability and strength. Then certainly we may expect the blessing of the Lord also over this work.

Since we in Smithville have been deeply involved in the preparations for this Synod, we have increasingly looked forward to this day. Undoubtedly all the churches have eagerly anticipated the actual meeting of Synod, for matters of common interest and concern are to be dealt with. Indeed, a Synod can be "eagerly anticipated" or perhaps fearfully dreaded, depending, I suppose, on the materials presented. I am sure that you will find much material which gives reason for joyous gratitude. I think especially of the work accomplished with respect to our Book of Praise. Perhaps there will also be some tense moments. I think here of the various appeals placed before Synod. But certainly the Lord will provide us with the necessary wisdom for which we will pray every day again so that we may discuss and conclude all matters in subjection to God's Word and our confessional standards, in accordance with the adopted Church Order, also in mutual appreciation and consideration. Be not afraid to speak openly and honestly with one another, yet do not forget kindness and gentleness — the willingness to listen and to comprehend — for it is of these things together that good Synods are made.

We welcome you in gratitude for the freedom and prosperity which the Lord gives to us all in this country. We remember God's children throughout the world, many of whom suffer persecution and affliction for Christ's sake. May we all use our freedom and prosperity for the coming of the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Brethren, may God richly bless you and in you our Churches. With these words I declare Synod Smithville 1980 as opened."

Rev. Stam requests that Psalm 133:1, 2 be sung.

He informs the brothers that the Free Reformed Churches of Australia, the Igreja Reformada of São José, Brazil and De Gereformeerde Kerken of The Netherlands, wish Synod the blessing of the LORD and the guidance of the Holy Spirit over all its deliberations.

ARTICLE 2

Credentials

The Chairman of the convening Church calls upon the brothers M. Hofsink and F. Ruggi, clerks of the convening Church, to examine the credentials. They report that the following delegates are present with proper credentials:

From the *Regional Synod East*:

Ministers: J. Geertsema, J. Mulder, Cl. Stam and M. van Beveren;

Elders: H. Aasman, J. Bartels, G. VanWoudenberg and F. Wildeboer.

Br. J. Bartels is present as an alternate in place of br. A. Koster.

From the *Regional Synod West*:

Ministers: S. deBruin, D. VanderBoom, J. Visscher and J.D. Wielenga;

Elders: E.C. Baartman, C. Hoogerdijk, A.H. Lubbers and W. VanAssen.

Br. W. VanAssen is present as an alternate in the place of br. M. Hooijmeyer.

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

ARTICLE 3

Executive and Constitution

The following officers are elected:

Chairman: Rev. D. VanderBoom

Vice-Chairman: Rev. M. van Beveren

First Clerk: Rev. J. Visscher

Second Clerk: Rev. J. Mulder

Synod is declared constituted.

ARTICLE 4

Time Schedule and Procedures

The Chairman addresses Synod. He thanks the brothers for the confidence that they have placed in the officers. He also expresses the appreciation of Synod for the way in which the convening Church at Smithville has prepared matters relating to the Synod. It is evident that much time and effort has been spent in sorting and mailing the material, in readying the facilities at the disposal of Synod and in arranging for the care of the delegates.

Synod is adjourned to give the executive the opportunity to arrange a time schedule and to set rules of procedure.

After re-opening, the following arrangements are adopted:

a) Morning sessions 9:00 - 12:30; Mondays 10:00 - 12:30;

Afternoon sessions 2:00 - 5:00;

Evening sessions 7:00 - 9:30;

Saturday sessions 9:00 - 12:30.

On November 7 Synod will adjourn at 3:30 p.m. in order to give the delegates

sufficient time to attend the Convocation Evening of the Theological College.

This schedule applies also to the meetings of the Advisory Committees.

If possible the evening sessions will be used for plenary sessions.

- b) Mail received after 12:00 noon, Monday, November 10, 1980, will not be dealt with by Synod.
- c) The Press Release will not be published until after Synod has adjourned.
- d) Motions and amendments shall be submitted in writing.
- e) The Advisory Committees of Synod shall provide each member with a copy of their reports prior to the session in which the matter will be dealt with and provide the First Clerk with three copies for the publication of the Acts.
- f) When the Advisory Committees meet, the meetings shall be opened and closed with prayer and thanksgiving in plenary session.
- g) There will be no smoking during the sessions.
- h) Copies of the respective documents will only be made available to members of the Synod.

ARTICLE 5

Foundation for Superannuation

The Board of the Foundation for Superannuation requests Synod not to meet on the morning of Saturday, November 8, 1980, in order that those members of the Synod who are delegated to this meeting can be in attendance.

This request is granted.

ARTICLE 6

Special Request from the Board of Governors

The Board of Governors comes with the request that Synod deal as soon as possible with certain matters regarding the Theological College.

This request is granted.

ARTICLE 7

Advisor — Rev. H. Scholten

It is proposed that the Rev. H. Scholten, emeritus minister of the convening Church at Smithville, be invited to serve Synod in an advisory capacity.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 8

Adoption Agenda

After some communications are added to the Provisional Agenda, it is adopted as follows:

Agenda

- I. Opening on behalf of the convening Church at Smithville.
- II. Examination of the Credentials.
- III. Election of Officers.
- IV. Constitution of Synod.
- V. Information from the convening Church.
- VI. Adoption of the Agenda.
- VII. Arrangement of Procedure and Time Schedule.
- VIII. Incoming Mail:

A. Theological College

1. Nominations for the Board of Governors
 - (a) Regional Synod West;
 - (b) Regional Synod East;
2. Report from the Board of Governors.
3. Additional Report from the Board of Governors with proposals and enclosures.
4. Second Additional Report from the Board of Governors.
5. Letter from the Church at Surrey re: admission requirements and enclosures.
6. Ninth-Eleventh Annual Reports, Board of Trustees.
7. Statement of Income, 1978.
8. Budgets: 1979, 1980, 1981.
9. Financial Statements, December 31, 1977-1979.

B. Book of Praise

1. Report of the Committee for the Revision Psalms and Hymns with enclosures re: Psalm section,
Hymn section.
2. Overture from the Church at Watford re: Book of Praise.
3. Proposal from the Church at Hamilton re: Psalm and Hymn section.
4. Letter from br. M. Menken re: Psalm and Hymn section.
5. Letter from br. S. VanderPloeg re: Psalm and Hymn section.
6. Letter from various organists re: Hymn section.
7. Letter from br. J.H.W. Vanderbrugghen re: Hymn section.
8. Report of the Committee on Translation and Revision of the Confessional and Liturgical Forms, June 1979, June 1980.
9. Additional Report from the Committee (with corrections).
10. Letter from the Church at Carman re: Apostles' Creed.
11. Letter from the Church at Barrhead re: Apostles' Creed.
12. Letter from the Church at Watford re: Apostles' Creed.
13. Letter from the Church at Cloverdale re: Apostles' Creed.
14. Letter from the Church at London re: Apostles' Creed.
15. Letter from the Church at Barrhead re: Belgic Confession.
16. Letter from the Church at London re: Belgic Confession.
17. Letter from the Church at Brampton re: Canons of Dort.
18. Letter from the Church at London re: Canons of Dort.
19. Letter from the Church at London re: Prayers.
20. Letter from the Church at Cloverdale re: Prayers.
21. Letter from the Church at Barrhead re: Use of the Lord's Prayer.
22. Letter from the Church at London re: Baptism, Profession.
23. Letter from the Church at Surrey re: Profession.
24. Letter from the Church at Burlington-East re: Lord's Supper.
25. Letter from the Church at Carman re: Lord's Supper and Marriage.
26. Letter from the Church at Surrey re: Lord's Supper.
27. Letter from the Church at Brampton re: Elders and Deacons.
28. Letter from the Church at Burlington-East re: Deacons.
29. Letter from the Church at Houston re: English style.

C. Translation Heidelberg Catechism

1. Report of the Committee on the Translation of the Heidelberg Catechism, June 27, 1979.
2. Letter from Rev. S. de Bruin re: Translation.
3. Letter from the Church at London re: Translation.
4. Letter from the Church at Barrhead re: Translation.

D. Revision of the Church Order

1. Report of the Committee on the Revision of the Church Order.

2. Additional Report from the Committee on the Church Order.
 3. Proposals from br. C. Groenewegen re: Church Order.
 4. Letter from the Church at Burlington-East re: Church Order.
- E. Contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church
1. Report from the Committee (plus Appendices I, II and III).
 2. Additional Report from the Committee, October 22, 1980.
- F. Women's Voting Rights
1. Report from the Committee (plus added letter).
 2. Letter from br. B. van Huisstede re: Women's Voting Rights.
 3. Letter from sr. G. van Weerden re: Women's Voting Rights.
 4. Letter from Rev. D. DeJong re: Women's Voting Rights.
- G. Bible Translations
1. Report of the Committee on Bible Translations (plus Appendix).
 2. Letter from the Church at Edmonton re: Report Bible Translation.
 3. Letter from the Church at Carman re: R.S.V.
 4. Letter from the Church at Cloverdale re: N.I.V.
- H. Correspondence with Churches Abroad
1. Report of the Committee, August 27, 1980 with an enclosure (Historical Review: Presbyterian Church at Korea).
 2. Additional Report from the Committee, October 28, 1980.
 3. Letter from the Deputies for Correspondence of the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands.
 4. Letter from the Church at Surrey re: Relationships with other Churches.
- I. Protests and Appeals
1. Appeal from the Church at Burlington-West re: *Acts* 1977, Article 91.
 2. Appeal from the Church at Watford (*idem*).
 3. Appeal from the Church at Grand Rapids (*idem*).
 4. Appeal from the Church at Lincoln (*idem*).
 5. Appeal from the Church at Smithville (*idem*), plus corrections.
 6. Appeal from the Church at Chilliwack (*idem*).
 7. Appeal from br. W.C. vandenHaak (*idem*).
 8. Letter from the Church at Chatham supporting part of the appeal of Burlington-West.
 9. Appeal from the Church at Neerlandia against the decisions of the Regional Synod West, held as of October 30, 1979 (plus appendices).
 10. Appeal from br. H.J. Endeman (*et al*) of Orangeville against decisions of the Regional Synod East, June 1980 (plus additional material).
 11. Appeal from br. and sr. J. vanOmmen.
 12. Appeal from Rev. C. Olij.
 13. Appeal from sr. C. Olij.
 14. Appeal from the Church at Chatham against the decisions of the Regional Synod East, June 1980. re: Article 19, Church Order.
 15. Appeal from the Church at London against the decisions of the Regional Synod East, June 1980. re: Article 19, Church Order.
 16. Appeal from br. L. vanZandwijk against the decisions of the Regional Synod East, June 1980.
- J. Request from the Church at Lincoln re: Delegation from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.
- K. Proposal from the Church at Lincoln re: Publication of the Acts.
- L. Request from the Board of the Foundation for Superannuation to hold a meeting on Saturday, November 8, 1980.

- M. 1. Report from the Church at Calgary re: Audit of the General Synod Funds (1977-1980).
- 2. Audit Report of the Finances re: General Synod Toronto 1974.
- N. General Fund of the Canadian Reformed Churches re: Audit Report.
- O. Overture from the Church at Cloverdale re: Article 19, Church Order.
- P. Report from the Church at Burlington-East re: General Address of the Churches.
- 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 1980.

ARTICLE 9

Advisory Committees

The following Advisory Committees are appointed:

- COMMITTEE I — Rev. D. VanderBoom, convener; Rev. J.D. Wielenga; Elder E.C. Baartman; Elder C. Hoogerdijk.
Material: Agenda VIII, B (1-7), I(10-13), I(14-15), O, P.
Book of Praise — Psalms and Hymns, Orangeville-Olij, Article 19, Church Order, General Address.
- COMMITTEE II — Rev. S. deBruin, convener; Rev. Cl. Stam; Elder J. Bartels; Elder A.H. Lubbers.
Material: Agenda VIII, B(8-29), D(1-4), F(1-4), H(1-4).
Book of Praise — Confessions and Forms, Church Order, Women's Voting Rights, Correspondence with Churches Abroad.
- COMMITTEE III — Rev. J. Mulder, convener; Rev. M. van Beveren; Elder G. VanWoudenberg; Elder F. Wildeboer.
Material: Agenda VIII, A(1-9), C(1-4), I(9), K, M(1, 2), N. Theological College, Heidelberg Catechism, Neerian-dia, Publication of the Acts, Financial matters.
- COMMITTEE IV — Rev. J. Geertsema, convener; Rev. J. Visscher; Elder H. Aasman; Elder W. VanAssen.
Material: Agenda VIII, E(1, 2), G(1-4), I(1-8), I(16). Bible Translations, Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Appeals on Article 91, Acts 1977, Appeal — br. L. vanZandwijk.

ARTICLE 10

Adjournment

The Chairman adjourns the meeting and the Advisory Committees meet.

EVENING SESSION — TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1980

ARTICLE 11

Request — Church at Lincoln

Committee IV presents:

A. Material — Agenda VIII, J — Request of the Church at Lincoln regarding the delegate of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

B. Observations

1. The Church at Lincoln requests Synod "to deal with the appeals, proposals, etc., concerning the Orthodox Presbyterian Church FIRST BEFORE granting any delegates of this Church privileges of the floor."

Lincoln explains this request by stating: "Synod must take note of and deal with the objections against the decisions of Coaldale 1977, Acts Article 91 BEFORE that decision can be executed by having such delegates address Synod and have other privileges."

C. Considerations

1. The Acts of the Synod Coaldale 1977, Article 91, III, Recommendation, reads: "Synod decide

To offer to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church a temporary relationship called 'ecclesiastical contact' with the following rules:

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;"

2. Article 91, IV, Recommendation of the same Acts of Synod Coaldale 1977 reads: "Synod decide

To continue the Committee for Contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church with the mandate:

a. to inform the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations of the decisions of Synod regarding the Orthodox Presbyterian Church;
b. to continue the contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church while taking into account the rules for "Ecclesiastical Contact;"

3. The Committee for Contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, executing its mandate, invited the General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church to send a delegate to this General Synod, who would receive the privilege of the floor.

4. This Synod cannot deny a delegate of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church the right to exercise the privileges of the floor once an invitation has been extended and accepted, and as long as the General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church has not been informed of any change in our relationship with them.

D. Recommendation

Synod decide:

not to accede to the request of the Church at Lincoln .

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 12

Theological College — Appointments

Synod meets in closed session, after which the following information is published:

Committee III presents:

A. Material — Agenda VIII, A, 2 — Report of the Board of Governors.

A, 3 — Letter from the Board of Governors, dated October 31, 1980, with enclosed copy of a confidential letter from the Senate of the College, dated October 23, 1980.

B. Observations

1. In accordance with Article XXI, sub 2 of the Constitution of the Theological College the Faculty served the Board of Governors with advice regarding:
 - a. the filling of the vacancy due to the retirement of Rev. H. Scholten, M.Th. as lecturer in Ecclesiology;
 - b. the forthcoming vacancy, due to the fact that Prof. Drs. H.M. Ohmann, Lic., has accepted the appointment of professor of the Old Testament at the Theologische Hogeschool at Kampen, The Netherlands;
2. The Faculty informed the Board of Governors that Rev. G. VanDooren, M.Th., lecturer in Diaconiology, although he has reached the age of 70, has declared himself willing to serve until the end of the academic year 1981/1982;
3. It appears to be the intention of the Board of Governors and the Faculty to come with a proposal to General Synod 1983 regarding the appointment of a fourth full-time professor of Diaconiology;
4. The Rev. W.W.J. VanOene, M.Th., was appointed in the academic course 1979-1980 as temporary lecturer in Ecclesiology and has served as such until now;
5. The Senate advised the Board of Governors:
 - a. to appoint the Rev. W.W.J. VanOene, M.Th., at Fergus, Ontario, as lecturer in Ecclesiology;
 - b. to appoint the Rev. C. Van Dam, M.Th., at Surrey, B.C., as professor of Old Testament as per July 1, 1981.

C. Considerations

1. The scholarly training at the Theological College be maintained.
2. According to Regulation No. 1, sub 2 of the Constitution the Rev. G. VanDooren, M.Th., can serve till August 13, 1982.
3. The Senate has provided the Board of Governors with extensive information and grounds for their recommendation regarding the proposed appointments in their confidential letter of October 23, 1980.
4. The appointment of the Rev. C. Van Dam, M.Th., as per July 1, 1981, does not appear to give sufficient time for preparing his lectures.
5. The Board of Governors and the Faculty are of the opinion that the future vacancy in the Department of Diaconiology should be filled by a full-time appointee as it is a very important part of the curriculum at our College and demands much preparation on the part of the instructor, too much to be combined with a full-time pastorate in a local Church.

D. Recommendations

Synod decide:

1. to express its thankfulness to the Rev. H. Scholten, M.Th., for the faithful and fruitful work done as lecturer in Ecclesiology during the first ten years of the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches;
ADOPTED
2. to appoint the Rev. W.W.J. VanOene, M.Th., at Fergus, Ontario, as lecturer in Ecclesiology;
ADOPTED
3. to express its thankfulness to the Rev. Drs. H.M. Ohmann, Lic., for his

faithful and fruitful labour as Professor of Old Testament since 1971;

ADOPTED

4. a. to appoint the Rev. C. Van Dam, M.Th., at Surrey, B.C., as Professor of Old Testament as per May 1, 1981;

ADOPTED

b. to invite Rev. Van Dam to meet with Synod.

ADOPTED

5. to take note with thankfulness of the willingness of the Rev. G. VanDooren, M.Th., to use his option to remain in service as lecturer in Diaconiology and to retire at the end of the academic year 1981/82, the Lord willing;

ADOPTED

6. to express the desirability that the following General Synod appoint a fourth full-time professor, preferably a professor of Diaconiology.

DEFEATED

The following motion, duly seconded, is discussed:

7. 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.

ADOPTED.

ARTICLE 13

Adjournment

The Chairman requests the brothers to sing Psalm 135:1 and leads in closing prayer. The Synod is adjourned.

MORNING SESSION — WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 1980

ARTICLE 14

Re-opening

The Chairman requests that Psalm 67:1 be sung. He reads from Psalm 67 and leads in prayer.

ARTICLE 15

Acts

The Acts, Articles 1-7, are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 16

Theological College — Appointments

Synod meets in closed session, after which the following information is published:

Synod decide:

To invite the Principal and the Chairman of the Board of Trustees for a possible discussion with Rev. C. VanDam regarding certain aspects of his appointment.

DEFEATED

The following motion, duly seconded, is discussed:

Synod decide:

1. to inform the Faculty, the Board of Governors and the Trustees of the Theological College of these appointments;

2. to request the Board of Trustees to advise Synod concerning any changes in the proposed budget as a result of these appointments, in order that Synod can consider such changes.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 17

Adjournment

The Chairman adjourns the meeting. The Advisory Committees meet.

EVENING SESSION — WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 1980

ARTICLE 18

Congratulations — Rev. C. Van Dam

The Chairman requests the members of Synod to sing Psalm 98:1, 2. On behalf of Synod and the Churches, he welcomes the Rev. C. Van Dam who has entered the meeting and congratulates him with his appointment as Professor of Old Testament at the Theological College. He expresses the fact that the appointment was a unanimous one on the part of Synod. He remarks that this joyous occasion is made even more so by the fact that Rev. C. Van Dam has been a student at the Theological College and that from our own Churches a man has come forward who is fully qualified to fill the coming vacancy. He wishes the Rev. C. Van Dam much wisdom from the Lord in coming to a decision that will be to His glory and to the upbuilding of the Churches.

The Chairman, the Rev. D. VanderBoom, then gives Rev. C. Van Dam the opportunity to address Synod. Rev. Van Dam expresses his thankfulness for the confidence that Synod has placed in him. He also thanks Synod for the invitation to come out from the West in order to meet with Synod. If he is led to accept this appointment he promises that he will endeavour to do the work for which he has been called to the utmost of his ability, in faithfulness to the Word and to the glory of the LORD.

Professor Dr. J. Faber, Principal of the Theological College, is given the floor and he too expresses his thankfulness for the appointment of the Rev. C. Van Dam. In addition to the fact that the College will now receive back one of its own "products," he also notes it is very important to appoint to this position a young man who will have, D.V., many years to contribute to the Old Testament Department. This Department has experienced its difficulties in the past, among them the passing of Professor F. Kouwenhoven and the two year vacancy that followed; however, now it has appointed a successor to Prof. Drs. H.M. Ohmann who will hopefully have a great future ahead of him. It is truly a historic moment in the life of the Churches.

The members of Synod receive the opportunity to congratulate the Rev. C. Van Dam with his appointment.

Thereafter, the Chairman states that seeing as Synod appointed Prof. H.M. Ohmann in 1971, it is only proper that Synod 1980 state its great appreciation for his many years of faithful labours at the College. He also congratulates Prof. Drs. H.M. Ohmann on his appointment to the chair of Old Testament at the Theologische Hogeschool, Kampen, The Netherlands.

Prof. Drs. H.M. Ohmann responds to the words of the Chairman by expressing his thankfulness with this moment. He congratulates his successor on his appointment and hopes that the future will reveal an even closer co-operation between Hamilton and Kampen. He is grateful for the work that he was able to do in Canada and extends the wish that the LORD will bless the federation of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

ARTICLE 19

Revision — Church Order

Committee II presents:

- A. Material** — Agenda VIII, D, 1 — Report of the Committee on the Revision of the Church Order;
D, 2 — Additional Report from the Committee on the Church Order.

B. Observations

1. Synod Coaldale 1977 gave the Committee for the Revision of the Church Order the following mandate:
 - a. to forward a complete draft along with brief explanations to the Churches within one year and invite comments on it.
 - b. to submit a final draft for the General Synod and to the Churches by January 31, 1980.
(Acts Coaldale, Article 71, Recommendation 3a & b)
2. The Committee has completed its mandate given by Synod Coaldale 1977 in Article 71, Recommendation 3a.
3. The Committee has not completed its mandate given by Synod Coaldale 1977 in Article 71, Recommendation 3b.
4. The Committee presents to General Synod a final draft consisting of 22 Articles of the Church Order, but this draft has not yet been sent to the Churches.
5. The Committee informs Synod that it will be happy to receive any suggestions and wishes in relation to the finalized 22 Articles.
6. The Committee comes to Synod with the following requests:

"That Synod:

 - a. Do not adopt at the present time any article of the Church Order in its revised form, but decide to wait until the complete Draft Revised Church Order is available;
 - b. Decide to continue the Committee for the Revision of the Church Order;
 - c. Instruct this Committee to send a 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 end-result of its work to General Synod 1983."

C. Considerations

1. Since the mandate under Acts Coaldale Article 71, Recommendation 3b has not been completed, it is not possible for Synod to adopt any of the 22 Articles presented.
2. Since none of these articles can be adopted by Synod and since remarks are yet to be solicited from the Churches, it serves no purpose that Synod offers any suggestions and wishes on the presented material.

D. Recommendations

Synod decide:

1. Gratefully to acknowledge the work done thus far by the Committee for the Revision of the Church Order;
2. Not to adopt at the present time any articles of the Church Order in its revised form.
3. To continue the Committee for the Revision of the Church Order with the 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. ADOPTED

ARTICLE 20

General Fund

Committee III presents:

A. **Material** — Agenda VIII, N — Report of the Church for the Administration of the General Fund, the Church at Carman, Manitoba.

B. Observations

1. The report does not state the exact amount per communicant member the Church at Carman asked of the Churches for the expenses of Committees appointed by General Synod, Coaldale 1977.
2. Total income \$9,778.50
Total expenses 6,545.90
Balance \$3,232.60
3. The consistory of the Church at Carman has audited the books of the treasurer of the Fund and found the books in good order.
4. Since the report does not state the exact amount charged per communicant member, it is not clear whether all Churches paid their share.

C. Recommendations

Synod decide:

1. To express its gratitude to Mr. H. Veldman, treasurer of the Fund, relieving him of all responsibilities for the past three years.
2. To thank the Church at Carman for the administration of this Fund and the auditing of the books of the treasurer.
3. To continue the mandate of the Church at Carman to administer this General Fund.
4. To recommend to the Church at Carman to mention in the reports to Synod the amount charged per communicant member and received from the Churches. ADOPTED

ARTICLE 21

Adjournment

Elder H. Aasman requests that Psalm 103:1, 2 be sung and leads in thanksgiving. Synod is adjourned.

MORNING SESSION — THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 1980

ARTICLE 22

Re-opening — Adjournment

The Chairman re-opens the Synod with the singing of Hymn 6. He reads from I John 1:1 — 2:6 and leads in prayer.

The meeting is adjourned and the Committees meet.

EVENING SESSION — THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 1980

ARTICLE 23

Re-opening — Acts

The Chairman calls upon the brothers to sing Psalm 145:1.

The roll call reveals that Elder H. Aasman is absent. The Acts, Articles 10-22 are adopted.

ARTICLE 24

Appointments — Date of Decisions

It is moved that the Rev. C. Van Dam and the Rev. W.W.J. VanOene be given until November 25, 1980, to decide on their respective appointments.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 25

Proposal — Lincoln re: Acts

Committee III presents:

A. **Material** — Agenda VIII, K — Proposal of the Church at Lincoln.

B. Observations

1. The Church of Lincoln proposes "that from now on the Acts of Synods will include ALL PROPOSALS, LETTERS, APPEALS, REPORTS, etc."
2. Lincoln uses as ground that "our church members may be able to study and evaluate synods' decisions adequately, instead of being faced with decisions only."

C. Considerations

1. Article 34 of the Church Order states that in all ecclesiastical assemblies a clerk shall keep a faithful record of all things worthy to be recorded.
2. It is in the discretion of the clerks of Synods to compose the Acts which are to be adopted by Synod.
3. The Church of Lincoln does not prove that "ALL PROPOSALS, APPEALS, REPORTS, etc." presented to Synods are "worthy to be recorded."
4. The Acts of Synods as presently submitted to the Churches do not only record decisions, but also observations and considerations in which the material presented to Synods is summarized.
5. Each Synod decides which material submitted to her shall be published as an appendix to the Acts.

D. Recommendation

Synod decide:

not to accede to the proposal of the Church of Lincoln.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 26

General Address Church

Committee I presents:

A. **Material** — Agenda VIII, P — Report of the Address Church, the Church at Burlington-East.

B. Observations

1. Synod Coaldale 1977 appointed the Church at Burlington-East as the "Address Church."
2. No documents were received by the Church at Burlington-East.
3. An organization under the name "The Canadian Reformed Fellowship," having no relationship with the Canadian Reformed Churches, and having been approached by the Church at Burlington-East, has changed its name.

C. Recommendations

Synod decide:

1. To thank the Church at Burlington-East for their diligence in this matter.
2. To re-appoint the Church at Burlington-East as the General Address for the Canadian/American Reformed Churches. ADOPTED

ARTICLE 27

Adjournment

Psalm 145:5 is sung and the Rev. S. deBruin leads in prayer. The Synod is adjourned.

MORNING SESSION — FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 1980

ARTICLE 28

Re-opening

The Chairman requests the brothers to sing Hymn 33:1. He reads from I John 2:7-17 and leads in prayer.

ARTICLE 29

Acts — Adjournment

The Acts, Articles 23-27, are adopted. The meeting adjourns and the Advisory Committees meet.

AFTERNOON SESSION — FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 1980

ARTICLE 30

Adjournment

After the singing of Psalm 118:1, 8, Elder A.H. Lubbers leads in thanksgiving prayer. Synod is adjourned.

MORNING SESSION — MONDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1980

ARTICLE 31

Re-opening

The Chairman requests the brothers to sing Psalm 136:1, 2. The Scripture reading is taken from I John 2:18-29. The Chairman leads in prayer.

ARTICLE 32

Agenda — Adjournment

The following letters have been received and are added to the Agenda:

- VIII, I, 12 Appeal from Rev. C. Olij.
 - 13 Appeal from sr. C. Olij.
 - B, 7 Letter from br. J. VanderBruggen re: Hymn Section.
 - I, 15 Appeal from the Church at London against decisions of the Regional Synod East, June 1980. re: Article 19, Church Order.
- The meeting adjourns and the Advisory Committees meet.

EVENING SESSION — MONDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1980

ARTICLE 33

Re-opening — Acceptance of Rev. W.W.J. VanOene

In the evening, Synod meets in plenary session. The Chairman requests that Psalm 119:9 be sung.

A letter has been received from the Rev. W.W.J. VanOene in which he states that he has accepted his appointment as lecturer at the Theological College in Ecclesiology. This is taken note of with gratitude.

ARTICLE 34

Proposals — Church Order

Committee II presents a Majority and Minority Report. The Majority Report reads as follows:

- A. **Material** — Agenda VIII, D, 3 — Proposals of br. C. Groenewegen.
D, 4 — Letter from the Church at Burlington-East.
- B. **Observations**
 1. Br. C. Groenewegen requests changes in the Church Order Articles 4, 11, 12, 13, 23, 27, 37, 42, 79, and 84. His primary concern is the position of elders and he would like to see this changed "similar to the practice of the RPCES."
 2. The Church at Burlington-East proposes changes in the Draft Church Order Articles 11, 19 (18), 23 (25, 16), 42 (40) and 58 (21).

C. Considerations

Since Synod 1980 (Acts, Article 19) decided to continue the Committee for the Revision of the Church Order with a mandate (in addition to the mandate received from Synod 1977, Acts Article 71) to solicit remarks on a complete, definite draft and to report to Synod 1983, it would be premature for Synod 1980 to deal with requests either for changes in the present Church Order or proposals for changes in the Draft Church Order.

D. Recommendation

Synod decide to pass on these proposals to the Committee for the Revision of the Church Order. ADOPTED

Consequently, the Minority Report is not voted on. It reads as follows:

- A. **Material** — Agenda VIII, D, 3 — Proposals of br. C. Groenewegen.
D, 4 — Letter from the Church at Burlington-East.

B. Observations

1. Br. C. Groenewegen suggests that Synod "adopt a policy similar to the practice of the RPCES" (Vol. I, page 6).
2. Br. C. Groenewegen does not really address himself to the Draft of the Committee for Revision, although he has sent his proposals to this Committee.

C. Considerations

1. When Synod New Westminster 1971 appointed a Committee for the Revision of the Church Order, it specified that the Committee "undertake a general revision of the presently adopted Church Order, as much as the "profit of the Churches demand it" (Article 86, Church Order), with preservation of the Reformed character of this Church Order; paying special attention to suggestions, submitted in the past by Churches and major assemblies concerning change, correction, updating and/or deletion of articles, as well as profitable additions."
2. Although br. C. Groenewegen has addressed himself to the Committee for the Revision of the Church Order, his proposals extend far beyond the mandate given to this Committee and as well beyond the intent of the revision as requested by previous Synods.
3. Since it is evident that the proposals have not been considered by the Churches, it is not in the province of General Synod to deal with them.

D. Recommendation

Synod decide not to accede to the requests of br. C. Groenewegen.

E. Observation:

The Church at Burlington-East proposes changes in the Draft Church Order Articles 11, 19 (18), 23 (25, 16), 42 (40) and 58 (21).

F. Consideration

Synod 1980 has decided (Acts, Article 19) "not to adopt at the present time any articles of the Church Order in its revised form" and "to continue the Committee for the Revision of the Church Order with the 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."

G. Recommendation

Synod decide to pass the proposals from the Church at Burlington-East on to the Committee for the Revision of the Church Order.

ARTICLE 35

Adjournment

Elder F. Wildeboer requests that the brothers sing Psalm 119:13 and leads in closing prayer.

MORNING SESSION — TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 1980

ARTICLE 36

Re-opening — Remembrance Day

The Chairman requests the brothers to sing Hymn 42:1. He reads from Revelation 5:1-10, leads in prayer and addresses the Synod with the following words:

"Beloved brothers,

Today is the official day of Remembrance on which our thoughts go to all the soldiers and the non-combatants who lost their lives during two world wars.

As Canadians, of whom many are of Dutch descent, we think especially about the liberation of the old country from the oppressive occupation by a hostile power. A liberation in which our fellow Canadians had such an important part.

We also remember how large parts of Europe were almost brought to death by starvation during a long occupation. A starvation which was not only a physical burden, but was more of a spiritual character.

That we now live in our country, which honours spiritual freedoms in watching for the welfare of the civil state and in the protection of the sacred ministry that so the Kingdom of Christ may be promoted, is the more reason for gratitude.

I, therefore, invite you to rise and sing our national anthem."

"O Canada" is sung.

ARTICLE 37

Acts — Adjournment

The Acts, Articles 28-35, are adopted. The Advisory Committees meet.

EVENING SESSION — TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 1980

ARTICLE 38

Request — Adjournment

A request from Advisory Committee IV is discussed. The discussion will be continued tomorrow.

The Chairman calls on Synod to sing Psalm 90:1, 8, and the Rev. M. van Beveren leads in closing prayer. Synod is adjourned.

MORNING SESSION — WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 1980

ARTICLE 39

Re-opening

The Chairman calls on the members of Synod to sing Hymn 54:1, 4 and reads from I John 3:1-10. He leads in prayer. He expresses the condolences of Synod to the Rev. Cl. Stam and Elder G. VanWoudenberg, whose father and father-in-law passed away early this morning after a lengthy illness.

ARTICLE 40

Request — Committee IV

The following motion is moved, seconded and voted upon:

Advisory Committee IV requests permission to ask advice from the Committee for Contact with the O.P.C., in order to be able to draft its Advisory report to Synod.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 41

Adjournment

The Chairman adjourns the meeting. The Advisory Committees meet.

EVENING SESSION — WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 1980

ARTICLE 42

Re-opening — Theological College

The Chairman invites the brothers to sing Hymn 53:1.

The Report of Committee III on the Theological College is extensively discussed. A letter is received from the Board of Trustees in which they inform Synod that the appointment of the Rev. C. Van Dam does not necessitate any changes in the proposed budget.

ARTICLE 43

Adjournment

Elder H. Aasman calls on the brothers to sing Hymn 48:1 and leads in closing prayer. Synod adjourns.

MORNING SESSION — THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 1980

ARTICLE 44

Re-opening — Theological College

The Chairman calls on the brothers to sing Psalm 48:1, reads I John 3:11-24 and leads in prayer.

The Rev. Cl. Stam informs Synod that he will be absent this afternoon and that his alternate, Rev. M. Werkman will be present.

I. RE: BOARD OF GOVERNORS

- A. **Material** — Agenda VIII, A, 1 — Nominations for the Board of Governors.
2 — Tri-annual Report from the Board of Governors.
3 — Second Additional Report of the Board of Governors.

B. Observations

1. a) The Regional Synod of the Canadian Reformed Churches in Western Canada, October, 1979, nominated the following brothers to serve as Governors of the Theological College:
Rev. D. DeJong, Rev. D. VanderBoom, Rev. J. Visscher.
Alternates: Rev. M. VanderWel, Rev. J. VanRietschoten, Rev. J.D. Wielenga, in that order.

b) The Regional Synod of the Canadian Reformed Churches in Eastern Canada, June 1980, nominated the following brothers to serve as Governors of the Theological College:

Rev. J. Geertsema, Rev. J. Mulder, Rev. M. van Beveren.

Alternates: Rev. Cl. Stam, Rev. P. Kingma, Rev. W. Pouwelse, in that order.

2. The work at the College could be continued without interruption. Lectures could be given even though the Faculty was short one member for some time.
3. Since Synod 1977, four students have graduated and now serve as ministers in the Canadian Reformed Churches. Five students were admitted this year bringing the total number to nine.
4. Regarding the conduct and diligence of the students, no complaints were raised, although it was feared that students holding part-time jobs may be hindered in their program of studies; however, it is acknowledged that this is a student's own responsibility.
5. Due to illness, the Rev. H. Scholten submitted his resignation as Lecturer in Ecclesiology.
Gratitude is expressed that the Rev. Scholten dedicated himself wholeheartedly to the task assigned to him.
Rev. W.W.J. VanOene was appointed as temporary instructor.
6. Rev. A.B. Roukema resigned as Associate Librarian for reasons of health. Gratitude is expressed for the work done by the Rev. Roukema.
7. The work done by the Administrative-Assistant, Miss Anne VanSydenborgh, is gratefully acknowledged and her activities and responsibilities have increased (e.g. as to the Library-cataloguing).
8. The lectures were regularly visited by Governors. The report notes that the instruction given is scholarly and scriptural.
Because of this, the wish is expressed that the College may become a source of blessing not only for the Churches who maintain this institute of learning, but also for others from our own and other continents.
9. To mark the Tenth Anniversary of the College, the College-evening and Convocation took place for the first time in Western Canada, Abbotsford, B.C.
From almost every church of the West, members were present.
10. The Board of Governors met four times since previous Synod. As secretary of the Board, Rev. W.W.J. VanOene was replaced by the Rev. M. van Beveren.
11. The Board of Governors expressed the desirability that General Synod 1983 meet in the spring of that year with a view to the appointments to be made.
12. The Board expresses its gratitude to the LORD "for His unceasing care and mercy . . . for the willingness given into the hearts of the members of the Faculty, Board of Trustees, as well as the Board of Governors to work in harmony.
We thank Him for the willingness of the membership to continue their support of our institution."

C. Recommendations

Synod decide:

1. Gratefully to acknowledge the work done by the Board of Governors,

Faculty, the Associate Librarian, the Rev. A.B. Roukema, and the Administrative-Assistant, Miss Anne VanSydenborgh. ADOPTED

2. To appoint as Governors of the College of *Western Canada*: the Revs: D. DeJong, D. VanderBoom, J. Visscher, and as alternates: the Revs: M. VanderWel, J. VanRietschoten, J.D. Wielenga, in that order;
Eastern Canada: the Revs: J. Geertsema, J. Mulder, M. van Beveren, and as alternates: the Rev: Cl. Stam, P. Kingma, W. Pouwelse, in that order. ADOPTED
3. To express its thankfulness that the number of students has considerably increased. ADOPTED
4. Gratefully to acknowledge the work done by the Rev. W.W.J. VanOene as temporary instructor in Ecclesiology and as Secretary of the Board of Governors. ADOPTED
5. Gratefully to note that the instruction given at the College is scholarly and scriptural. ADOPTED
6. To repeat the decision of Coaldale 1977 (Article 48, Recommendation 5) "to give into consideration of the Board of Governors to seek for ways and to encourage the Faculty in cooperation with the Board of Trustees to make our College better known also by the publication of Reformed material in order that also in this way more students may be attracted." ADOPTED
7. To add the tri-annual report of the Board of Governors to the Acts as an appendix. ADOPTED
8. To concur with the Board's expression of gratitude to the LORD for His care and mercy shown to the College.

II RE: ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- A. **Material** — Agenda VIII, A, 3 — Additional Report from the Board of Governors with proposals.
VIII, A, 4 — Letter from the Church at Surrey, B.C. re: admission requirements.

B. Observations

1. The Church at Surrey proposes that the following provision of Article XXIII, 2 of the Constitution of our Theological College be dropped, namely, "A person who is thirty years of age or over, who is a member of one of the Churches and who presents a good attestation of confession and life may be admitted to the Course of Study without being in possession of a Bachelor of Arts or equivalent degree if he possesses a High School diploma (Academic Course) or an equivalent level of education, and if he successfully passes an entrance examination, the requirements for which shall be set by the Senate and approved by the Board of Governors; provided that such requirements shall not exceed what is required of a candidate for the degree of Bachelor of Arts who takes the courses prescribed for that purpose by the Senate with the approval of the Board of Governors."
The Church at Surrey further proposes that Article XXIII, 3, 4, be amended accordingly.
2. Surrey argues:
 - a. Without this provision "the scholarly character of the education given

can be further safeguarded (cf. Acts 1977, Article 99, II)."

- b. The danger is not unimaginable that prospective students wait until they are 30 years or older and then apply to be admitted to the College in what may appear to be an "easier" way.
 - c. Exceptionally qualified persons can still enter the ministry by means of the provision of Article 8, Church Order.
3. The Board of Governors informed Synod in its Additional Report, that the Board decided, with the concurring advice of the Faculty, to *endorse* the proposal of the Church at Surrey, B.C. with the understanding that arrangements made by the Faculty in accordance with Article XXIII, 2, for a certain case, be maintained.

C. Considerations

1. The Churches' intention in establishing the Theological College was from the outset to have "a college with *full* academic training and standing" (cf. Acts, 1974, Article 171, Observation sub. 2).
2. Scholarly preparation for the admission to the studies at the College by an extended study program leading to a B.A. degree will enable the gradual building up of necessary knowledge in Hebrew, Greek, Latin and the history of Philosophy much better than a few fragmentary courses in these areas taken to pass an "entrance examination."
3. In Article 8 of the Church Order, the Churches have also provided an ecclesiastical way for exceptionally gifted persons over 30 years of age to be admitted to the ministry.
4. A provision as made in Article XXIII, 2 is acceptable when a Theological College is in its infancy and needs to attract students, being established by churches who are in need of ministers, but this provision becomes more and more superfluous when the College is well-established.

D. Recommendation

Synod *decide* to accede to the proposal of the Church at Surrey, endorsed by the Faculty and Board of Governors of the College, with the understanding that a present arrangement made by the Faculty be maintained. **ADOPTED**

III RE: BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- A. Material — Agenda VIII, A, 3 — Additional report from Board of Governors and proposals
- A, 4 — Second Additional Report from the Board of Governors
 - A, 6 — Ninth-Eleventh Annual Reports by the Board of Trustees, 1977, 1978, 1979
 - A, 7 — Statement of Income, 1978
 - A, 8 — Budgets 1979, 1980, 1981
 - A, 9 — Audited Financial Statements, December 31, 1977-1979

B. Observations

1. Trustees Activities Generally

The Board of Trustees could perform their task in harmony and health, and enjoyed the cooperation of the Churches, Board of Governors, Faculty and students.

During 1980 br. A.H. Oosterhoff resigned as member of the Board of Trustees and the remaining Trustees, in accordance with Article X, 5 of the Constitution, appointed br. C.M. Loopstra of Toronto to fill the vacancy.

No schedule of retirement exists.

2. Physical Plant

a. Renovations and Maintenance

Some repairs were made to the roof, plumbing and electrical system of the College building.

In the fall of 1979 br. and sr. C. Walinga wished to terminate their work as caretakers.

A replacement was found in br. G. Meyer on a contract basis. The Board reports that he performs his task in a commendable manner.

b. Other property

The Board of Governors report that in compliance with a decision of Synod 1977 (Acts, p. 18, sub. 3), the Board of Governors and the Board of Trustees have been looking for other properties, but thus far have not been able to come up with something considered suitable.

The Board of Governors did request the Board of Trustees to submit to the next joint meeting a detailed diagnosis of the present physical plant and a prognosis of future needs and possibilities.

c. Insurance

Insurance coverage of the College building was increased to \$175,000.00, extra expenses \$6,000.00, office contents to \$40,000.00, Library to \$100,000.00.

d. Student accommodation

Students occupied the facilities provided for their purpose on the third floor.

The residence fee of \$150.00 per semester (\$300.00 per academic year) was charged and received for each semester.

3. FACULTY

A. Salaries — report

The Professors and Lecturers were remunerated in accordance with the salary schedule as approved by Synod 1977:

Full-time professors' annual salary	\$22,500.00
Principal's allowance	1,000.00
Lecturers' stipend	3,000.00

The Board of Trustees did not see the necessity to increase salaries of the faculty members for the year 1979.

For 1980, the salaries were increased by a 8.4% "cost of living allowance."

b. Salaries — proposal

The Board of Governors, together with the Board of Trustees, proposes to General Synod that:

- i) a salary for a member of the Faculty be set once every three years and approved by Synod;
the salary remain in effect for this term until the next Synod;
On an annual basis, the Board of Governors and the Board of Trustees, in a joint meeting, shall review the salary and adjust the same, if the joint Boards deem it necessary to do so;
- ii) the salary of a professor be set at \$26,000.00;
the salary of an associate professor and a provisionally appointed professor be set at 10% less that of a professor;
the stipend for lecturers be set at \$4,000.00;

the additional stipend for the Principal be set at \$1,500.00.

c. **Pension Mrs. F. Kouwenhoven**

The pension for Mrs. F. Kouwenhoven was increased according to the Salary Schedule set by Synod 1977, and for the year 1980 increased by a 8.4% "cost of living allowance." Since Mrs. F. Kouwenhoven as per October 11, 1980 ceased to be a widow, pension payments have been terminated as per November 1, 1980.

4. **Organizational**

a. **Incorporation of the College**

With regard to the introduction of "Bill 4" in the Legislature of Ontario whereby the authority to grant degrees will be restricted to institutions that have been granted such authority by a special Act of the Legislature, the joint Boards *inform* Synod that an ad hoc committee has been formed consisting of Dr. J. Faber, Mr. C.M. Loopstra and Rev. J. Mulder with the mandate to pursue 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 the Board of Governors and Trustees.

For further information also a copy of a letter from the Ontario Minister of Education to Mr. C.M. Loopstra, dated June 5, 1980, and a copy of a letter of Mr. C.M. Loopstra to the Board of Governors, Trustees, Faculty dated, October 22, 1980, were added to the additional report of Board of Governors and Trustees.

b. **Constitution**

From this material it is *evident* that the present Constitution of the College has to be changed when the Private Bill, being passed, becomes a statute, and therefore an official law of the Province of Ontario, thus providing a *legal basis for the College as a degree granting institution*. Synod will retain the same role in the amended constitution as it now has under the existing constitution.

c. **Administrative Assistant**

The Administrative Assistant was remunerated in accordance with the Budget 1979, \$12,500.00 per annum.

For the year 1980 this salary was increased by 8% to \$13,500.00 per annum. For 1981 this salary has been set at \$14,560.00

d. **Caretaker**

The caretaker was remunerated \$152.00 per month according to contract. Additional services were provided at \$5.00 per hour.

5. **Financial**

a. **Contributions**

The Board of Trustees report that as to the sending of the contributions by the churches monthly or quarterly, there is improvement.

They thank those Churches which have cooperated in this respect and express the hope that all churches will do so in the future.

b. **Tuition Fee**

The tuition fee of \$100.00 per semester (\$200.00 per academic year) as set in September 1977, was charged to and received from each of the students.

c. **Audited Financial Statements**

Audited financial statements were sent to the churches and Synod as appendices to the Reports for the years 1978, 1979, 1980. A comprehensive statement for the years 1977-1979 has been sent to Synod.

d. Budget

For 1978 an increase in contribution from \$22.00 per communicant member to \$27.00 was necessary due to revision of salary schedule by Synod 1977.

For the year 1979 an increase in contributions was not necessary, but for 1980 an increase in expenditures necessitated an increase in contributions to \$29.00 per communicant member. For the year 1981 no increase is necessary.

C. Recommendations

Synod decide:

1. Gratefully to acknowledge the work done by the Board of Trustees and to approve of their actions as mentioned in the Reports. ADOPTED
2. Gratefully to acknowledge the work done by br. A.H. Oosterhoff, especially as to the drafting of the constitutive documents of the College. ADOPTED
3. To take note of the fact that br. C.M. Loopstra, Toronto, in accordance with Article X, 5 of the Constitution has been appointed as member of the Board of Trustees to fill the vacancy Oosterhoff, and that Synod confirm this appointment. ADOPTED
4. 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. ADOPTED
5. Gratefully to acknowledge the janitorial duties performed in a commendable way by br. and sr. C. Walinga for many years. ADOPTED
6. To take note of the fact that the Board of Governors and the Board of Trustees have been looking for other properties but could not come up with something suitable and therefore charge them to pursue this matter. ADOPTED
7. To accede to the proposals of the Board of Governors and the Board of Trustees that:
 - i) a salary for a member of the Faculty be set once every three years and approved by Synod;
the salary remain in effect for this term until the next Synod;
on an annual basis the Board of Governors and the Board of Trustees, in a joint meeting, shall review the salary and adjust the same, if the joint Boards deem it necessary to do so;
 - ii) the salary of a professor be set at \$26,000.00;
the salary of an associate professor and a provisionally appointed professor be set at 10% less that of a professor;
the stipend for lecturers be set at \$4,000.00;
the additional stipend for the Principal be set at \$1,500.00. ADOPTED

Prior to the adoption of 7(ii), the following motion was moved, seconded and voted on:

"To set the salary of a professor at \$28,000.00 per annum.

Ground: The salaries of the professors have not kept pace with the cost of living increase. The increase since 1978 has been a total of 16%, less than 5% annually." DEFEATED

8. To approve of the actions 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. ADOPTED

9. To request the Board of Governors and the Board of Trustees to serve the next General Synod with proposals as to the amendment of the present Constitution, if the Private Bill becomes an official law of the Province of Ontario. ADOPTED
10. To urge the Churches to remit their contributions to the College in advance, on a quarterly basis. ADOPTED
11. Gratefully to acknowledge the annual donations of the Women's Saving Action. ADOPTED
12. To take note of the Audited Financial Statements over the years 1977, 1978, 1979, to add them to the Acts of Synod as appendices and to relieve the treasurer of the Board of Trustees of all responsibilities for the three years ended December 31, 1979. ADOPTED
13. To approve the 1981 Budget. ADOPTED
14. To express thankfulness to the LORD for the fact that the Churches were able to furnish the necessary funds.

ARTICLE 45

Acts — Adjournment

The Acts, Articles 36-43, are adopted.
Synod adjourns. The Advisory Committees meet.

EVENING SESSION — THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 1980

ARTICLE 46

Adjournment

Rev. J.D. Wielenga calls upon the Synod members to sing Psalm 84:6, and leads in closing prayer. Synod adjourns for the day.

MORNING SESSION — FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1980

ARTICLE 47

Re-opening

The Chairman calls on the members of Synod to sing Psalm 111:1, reads from I John 4:1-12 and leads in prayer.

The roll call reveals that the Rev. M. Werkman is present as the alternate for the Rev. Cl. Stam.

The Rev. M. van Beveren, vice-chairman, speaks some well-chosen words to the Chairman, the Rev. D. VanderBoom, who celebrates his 65th birthday today.

The Synod adjourns and the Committees meet.

EVENING SESSION — FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1980

ARTICLE 48

Re-opening

The brothers sing together from Psalm 25:1. Elder M. Buist is present as an alternate. He will take the place of Elder H. Aasman for the duration of the Synod.

ARTICLE 49

Finances — General Synods 1974 and 1977

Committee III presents:

- A. **Material** — Agenda VIII, M, 1 — Report from the Church at Calgary, re: audit of the finances, General Synod Coaldale, 1977
M, 2 — Audit report of the Finances re: General Synod Toronto 1974

B. Information

1. General Synod, Coaldale 1977, requested the Church at Toronto to have the books of the finances of General Synod 1974 audited by the Church at Brampton, to forward the Balance of the Fund to the Committee of the Church at Coaldale and to send a report to General Synod 1980. (Acts, Article 112).
2. From the Report re: the finances of General Synod 1974, it appears that
the total income was \$11,010.79
total expenses 9,165.99
Balance \$ 1,844.80
3. 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.
4. The balance of \$1,844.80 has been transferred to the financial Committee General Synod 1977.
5. From the Statement of receipts and disbursements of the financial Committee, Coaldale 1977 it appears that the
total income was \$14,363.25
total expenses 10,101.41
Balance \$ 4,261.84
6. Comparing the balance forwarded by the financial Committee, Synod Toronto 1974 with the balance received by the financial Committee, Synod Coaldale 1977, it appears that there is a difference of \$111.73 (\$1,956.53 minus \$1,844.80 = \$111.73).
7. This amount of \$111.73, which should have been transferred to the Financial Committee, Synod Toronto 1974 by the Financial Committee, Synod *New Westminster* 1971, was after Synod Toronto 1974 apparently sent directly to the Financial Committee, Synod Coaldale 1977.
8. The Consistory of the Church at Calgary audited the Books of the Financial Committee, Synod Coaldale 1977, and reports that they were found in good order.

C. Recommendations

Synod decide:

1. To express its thankfulness for the work done by the Financial Committee, Synod Toronto 1974, and the Financial Committee, Synod Coaldale 1977. ADOPTED
2. To discharge the Financial Committees 1974, 1977, on the basis of the auditors reports of the Church at Brampton, Ontario, and Calgary, Alberta. ADOPTED

3. To appoint a Financial Committee, General Synod 1980, which will avail themselves of the Balance held by the Financial Committee, Synod Coal-dale 1977, and will pay the expenses made by Synod 1980 and after Synod send the balance to the Convening Church of the next Synod.

ADOPTED

4. To appoint upon the recommendation of the Convening Church, the Church at Smithville, the following brothers in the Financial Committee, Synod 1980: D. Bos (Fs), J.G. Feenstra, H. Linde (As).

ADOPTED

5. To appoint the Church at Lincoln to audit the books of the finances of Synod 1980 and to send a report to General Synod 1983.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 50

Appeals — Article 19, Church Order

The Report of Committee I is brought into discussion.

ARTICLE 51

Adjournment

Elder J. Bartels calls on the brothers to sing Psalm 25:4 and leads in closing prayer.

MORNING SESSION — SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 1980

ARTICLE 52

Re-opening — Acts

The Chairman requests that the brothers sing Psalm 75:1, reads from I John 4:13-21 and leads in prayer.

The Acts, Articles 44-47, are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 53

Appeal — br. L. vanZandwijk

The Synod meets in closed session. After a preliminary discussion on a proposal of Committee IV, Synod adjourns and the Advisory Committees meet.

ARTICLE 54

Adjournment

The brothers are asked to sing Hymn 35:1, 5, and br. W. VanAssen leads in prayer. Synod adjourns for the weekend.

MORNING SESSION — MONDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1980

ARTICLE 55

Re-opening

The Chairman requests the brothers to sing Psalm 43:3, reads from I John 5:1-12 and leads in prayer.

The Advisory Committees meet.

ARTICLE 56

Re-opening — Welcome: O.P.C. Delegate

The Chairman welcomes Prof. N. Shepherd, the official delegate of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, with the following words,

"Esteemed Prof. N. Shepherd,

I consider it to be a great honour that I as Chairman, speaking on behalf of the General Synod, Smithville 1980, may address and welcome you as the delegate of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

For the first time, after many years of contact via committees, we may see you in our midst as a result of decisions taken by a previous General Synod, namely Coaldale 1977, of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

During the past 25 years, the Canadian Reformed Churches had their own struggles and challenges, which have been formative for our confederation. The times of the "immigrant" character of our Churches have almost ended.

However, although we had to concentrate our attention on such internal matters, the Canadian Reformed Churches decided at an early date — to be exact 15 years ago — to appoint Deputies for Contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, with a specific mandate, and to also request the O.P.C. to appoint Deputies.

Synod 1968 decided "gratefully to acknowledge the fact that the Orthodox Presbyterian Churches can accept the Canadian Reformed Churches as true churches on the basis of their doctrinal standards and church government" and "to express its gratitude that it is evident that in many respects the good fight of faith is being fought in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church."

The Minutes of the General Assemblies of your Churches and the Acts of consecutive Synods of our Churches, show that there has been a constant contact by way of Deputies of both Churches.

During the years 1973 and 1974 letters have been sent from and to your Assemblies. Replies have been sent and discussed. These communications did not directly lead to any decision as far as a closer relationship was concerned.

Such a step was reached at Synod Coaldale 1977 where the decision was taken "with thankfulness to recognize the Orthodox Presbyterian Church as a true Church of our Lord Jesus Christ as confessed in Article 29 of the Belgic Confession," and to offer this Church a temporary relationship called "ecclesiastical contact" which has as one of its rules "to invite delegates to each other's General Assemblies or General Synods and to accord such delegates privileges of the floor."

As a result of these decisions, we have come to a historical moment in our Church life. Prof. Dr. J. Faber was able to attend the General Assembly of 1980, while you, Prof. Shepherd, are able to attend our General Synod of 1980.

On a previous occasion, we have welcomed a representative from our Sister-Churches in The Netherlands, with which we have full correspondence. Your presence is a *novum* in our Church life and we are glad to have you with us.

Honesty demands that we do not hide the fact that there are a number of appeals on the Agenda of this Synod which address themselves to this decision of Synod Coaldale. To us the task is given to evaluate such objections. We realize that we need and therefore pray for the guidance of God's Holy Word and Spirit.

Time has told us how the first contacts have grown into "ecclesiastical contact"; time will also tell us how this relationship will fair in the future.

Of one thing we are sure, Christ the Head of His Churches gathers those who are His for Himself. We, from our side, desire, in submission to His Word and in defence of Reformed doctrine and government, obediently and

gratefully to work for the unity of all those who truly depend on Him.

May your stay in our midst be pleasant for you, as well as for us, and contribute to such a fellowship as is beneficial to the Church of Christ on this continent and to the glory of our God.

Thank You"

Prof. N. Shepherd expresses his appreciation for the words of the Chairman. He is aware that the decision of Synod Coaldale has led the Canadian Reformed Churches in a new direction and he expresses the hope that it may be a blessing to both churches and lead to closer contact in the coming years. He wishes the Synod the blessing of the Lord in all its deliberations.

The Chairman calls on the brothers to sing Hymn 40:1.

ARTICLE 57

Appeals — Article 19, Church Order.

Committee I presents:

- A. **Material** — Agenda VIII, I, 14 — Appeal from the Church at Chatham against the decisions of the Regional Synod East, June 1980. re: Article 19, Church Order.
I, 15 — Appeal from the Church at London, re: the same matter.

B. Observations:

1. The Church at Chatham requests Synod to declare: "that R.S. Ontario of June 1980 should have granted Chatham's request by pronouncing that Classis Ont-South of May 28, 1980 made a wrong decision when it decided to give support ad Article 19, Church Order to a needy student, not only for his theological studies, but also for his needy family; on the grounds:
 1. that Chatham's request was in accordance with previous decisions of major assemblies re: the interpretations and application of Article 19, Church Order;
 2. a. that the basis of the decision of Classis Ont-South of May 28, namely that excluding the family of a needy student renders Article 19, Church Order "too restrictive," is not valid, since ad Article 19, Church Order speaks only about the student, and, accordingly, major assemblies wanted the support just to be restricted to the actual cost of the theological studies (Classis Ont-South April 1968 and General Synod, Orangeville 1968); and since
 - b. supporting a needy family in the Church, including that of a student ad Article 19, Church Order, is more on the way of a local church to which his family belonged before the time of the application for enrollment at the Theological College, as pointed out by Classis Ont-South of December 2, 1970.
2. The Church at London appeals the decision of Regional Synod, Acts, Article 7 as incorrect and based on faulty grounds; it expresses its concern about "a careless and indiscriminate use of Church funds and pleads for proper restrictions with regard to the support of needy students ad Article 19, Church Order."
3. The Church at London adduces the following grounds:
 - a. there is no principal difference between a special temporary fund as it existed in 1968 and the present situation. If there is, it should have been pointed out. As long as this has not been done, we should abide

by the advice of Synod Orangeville 1968 "to restrict this assistance to the actual cost of their theological studies," Article 172, Acts.

- b. While Article 19, Church Order speaks "neither exclusively nor inclusively of married or unmarried students," it does state that support should be restricted to "as far as necessary," both with a view to the churches and their theological students. The inclusion of these words reminds ecclesiastical assemblies to lay no greater burden on the churches than is necessary.
 - c. The addition of the Synod Utrecht 1905 (the words "as far as necessary") also makes clear that the primary responsibility for bearing the cost of theological study rests upon the student and his family (cf. Meulink and de Wolff, pp. 60-61). This implies that in general full support of families of theological students falls outside the jurisdiction of Article 19, Church Order.
4. As long as there is no principal change, we should abide by the previous decisions of Classis Ont-South December 2, 1970 (Acts, Article 6) and Synod Orangeville 1968 (Acts, Article 172), which maintain a limitation of the support given to the actual costs of the program of study.

C. Considerations

1. Article 19, Church Order leaves it in the freedom of the churches to decide in which way the support of needy students in theology be arranged.
2. The words "as far as necessary" in Article 19, Church Order are a sufficient guideline for the churches to set the standards for their support all according to the lesser or greater need in the churches for ministers of the Word.
3. The principal difference between a general fund (like the temporary fund of 1968) and the classically operated funds (the present situation) lies in the different instances which are in authority over these funds: General Synod over the general fund, Classis over the other. A rule made by one authority re: the funds under its jurisdiction is not binding on another authority re: the funds under its jurisdiction.
4. The recommendation of Synod Orangeville (Article 172A) "to instruct its deputies to restrict the financial assistance to the needy students at our own Theological College to the actual cost of their theological studies," was based on the "character and set-up of this General Fund" (Consideration 3), not on the character of Article 19, Church Order, and therefore cannot be understood as a generally binding interpretation of Article 19, Church Order for all the churches and their deputies *ad* Article 19, Church Order.
5. To understand the recommendation of General Synod Orangeville Acts, Article 172 otherwise than as an application of Article 19, Church Order for the funds under Synod's jurisdiction and as a rule binding on its deputies only, would lead to the conclusion that Synod Orangeville had changed the Church Order of the churches, by giving a binding rule where Article 19, Church Order itself gives freedom to the churches.

D. Conclusion

Since the fund under discussion is not a general fund, it is not in the province of General Synod to decide whether the classically cooperating churches should set restricted or less restricted standards for their support.

E. Recommendation

Synod decide: not to grant the requests of the churches at Chatham and London. ADOPTED

EVENING SESSION — MONDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1980

ARTICLE 58

Re-opening

The Chairman calls on the brothers to sing together from Psalm 65:1.

ARTICLE 59

Overture — Article 19, Church Order

Committee I presents:

A. Material — Agenda VIII, O — Overture from the Church at Cloverdale, B.C. on a matter relating to Article 19, Church Order.

B. Observation

The Church at Cloverdale, B.C. overtures General Synod to appoint a Committee for Needy Theological Students with the mandate:

- (1) to establish one set of guidelines for support to be applied equally to all theological students;
- (2) to receive and evaluate all requests for support;
- (3) to pass on the support to the student concerned;
- (4) to assess the churches on an annual basis;
- (5) to submit a report of their activities to each General Synod.

C. Consideration

1. The execution of the matter agreed upon by the Churches in Article 19, Church Order does not as such belong to the Churches in general.
2. For the execution of this matter, the Churches, at present, cooperate according to classical resort.
3. Before General Synod can take a decision regarding the overture of the Church at Cloverdale, the Churches in the minor assemblies should deal first with the question whether the matter of Article 19, Church Order should be executed by the Churches in general.
4. The Churches did not have the opportunity to form an opinion on Cloverdale's proposal.

D. Recommendation

Synod decide:

Not to adopt the recommendation of the Church at Cloverdale, B.C. to appoint a Committee for Needy Theological Students. ADOPTED

ARTICLE 60

Heidelberg Catechism — New Translation

Committee III presents:

- A. **Material** — Agenda VIII, C, 1 — Report of the Committee on Translation of the Heidelberg Catechism.
 - C, 2 — Letter from Rev. S. deBruin re: Translation.
 - C, 3 — Letter from the Church at London re: Translation.
 - C, 4 — Letter from the Church at Barrhead re: Translation.

B. Observations

1. Synod New Westminster 1971 appointed a Committee on the Translation Heidelberg Catechism with the following mandate (Article 83):

“to revise the text of the Heidelberg Catechism

- a. by replacing difficult and anachronistic words and expressions, as far as proper equivalents can be derived from today’s English.
- b. by recasting sentences, which are too complicated, into positive and independent sentences, which form a direct answer to the question, in close adherence to the original German text.”

2. Synod Toronto 1974 continued the Committee on the Translation of the Heidelberg Catechism with the following mandate (Article 85):

- a. “to prepare a second draft, with the use of comments etc. which were received by this Synod;
- b. to further solicit comments etc. which must be submitted to the Committee within the time-limit of six months after this decision has become public;
- c. to make this second draft available to the Churches one year after this Synod has come to an end, in order to give the Churches ample time to examine it.”

Synod further decide,

- d. to add to this mandate: to study the matter of the proof-texts added to the Catechism questions and answers, which study should include:
 - (1) establishing what the original proof-texts are;
 - (2) whether the selection of Scripture references can be improved by replacing, deleting and/or adding to the original ones.”

3. Synod Coaldale 1977 continued the Committee on the Translation Heidelberg Catechism with as mandate (Article 98):

- a. “to revise the second draft translation, taking into account the comments received, including those of the Advisory Committee for this Synod, and to use the following guidelines:
 - i. adhere closely to the original German text (third edition, 1563);
 - ii. replace difficult and archaic words and expressions if proper equivalents are available in today’s English;
 - iii. restructure sentences which are too complicated into positive, separate sentences which directly answer the question;
 - iv. provide reasons when deviation from the German text is necessary on theological grounds.
- b. to submit this revised draft together with reference notes to the Church

- ches and to invite comments to be submitted to the Committee by January 1980;
- c. to submit their report with recommendations to the Synod 1980;
 - d. to arrange for publication of this revised draft without comments in booklet form for use in the Churches on a trial basis by November 1978;
 - e. to establish what the original proof texts are and to see whether the selection of Scripture references can be improved by replacing, deleting and/or adding to the original ones and to include them in the publication, if possible;
 - f. to provide an index to cross-reference the Three Forms of Unity."
4. The committee reports that it was unable to fulfill its mandate. This was caused by the fact that part of the present committee has been involved in the preparation of the First Draft Translation, presented to Synod Toronto 1974, and part of the committee had worked on the Second Draft Translation, submitted to Synod Coaldale 1977.
 5. The problem according to our Committee was that the *work method used has been different*.
 - This difference concerns especially the *basis* for a new translation of the Heidelberg Catechism.
 - The First Draft had used both the German and Latin text of 1563 and had regarded also the Dutch Text of 1611. (selective method).
 - The Second Draft was mainly based on the German Text of 1563.
 - The result was that the changes in the First Draft were less than in the Second Draft, since the present English text in our "Book of Praise," as the Dutch Text, is closer to the Latin text of 1563 than to the German text of the same year.
 6. The Committee in its report states that Synod Coaldale 1977 did not make an informed and well argued choice for the one or the other method, although the mandate given by this Synod puts much emphasis on the original German text.
 7. The Committee requests Synod to give a clearer mandate as to which text to use as basis for a new translation.
 8. The Committee adds to its report a "Draft Translation 1979" covering Lord's Day 1-23 and informs Synod about the method followed, basically the one used to prepare the First Draft.
 9. The Committee did not finish this draft since it was not in accordance with the mandate given by Synod 1977, deviating more from the German text than was necessary on theological grounds.
 10. Rev. S. DeBruin asks Synod to make a few changes in the proposed translation.
 11. The Church at London writes Synod that "we would much sooner keep the present English text than accept the proposed revision."
 - As reasons are given that the proposed translation has
 - a. a considerable number of "Dutchisms,"
 - b. expressions which are too colloquial,
 - c. too many incomplete sentences,
 - d. in some instances altered the meaning,
 - e. changes which spoil the elegant style and rhythm.
 12. The Church at Barrhead proposes a number of changes in the "Draft Translation, 1979."

C. Considerations

1. Synod Coaldale 1977 gave as guideline for a revision of the "second draft translation" of the Catechism, that the Committee "adhere closely to the original German text (1563)." Synod New Westminster 1971 had given a similar guideline by stating that in the revision of the text of the Catechism, the Committee should do this "in close adherence to the original German text."

Synod Coaldale 1977, however, made this binding to the original German text more rigid by stating that the Committee should only deviate from this German text when this was necessary on theological grounds and, that in such a case, reasons for deviating from this text should be given.

Synod Coaldale 1977 did indeed give no further information nor any arguments for this definite choice.

2. The reasons why the present Committee wishes to put less emphasis on the original German text are sound:
 - a. Although the German text is the original, the Latin translation was already published before April 3, 1563 and was used by the National Synod of Dordt to judge the contents of the Catechism.
 - b. The Dutch text of 1611 (also used by the Synod of Dordt) can be regarded as more or less authentic.
 - c. The present English text of the Heidelberg Catechism, used in our *Book of Praise*, although never officially adopted, has by its use in Catechism preaching, teaching, etc. obtained an ecclesiastical character and is closer to the Latin translation of 1563 than to the German text of the same year.
 - d. Consequently, when the German text is chosen as main basis for a new translation this will lead to unnecessary deviation from the present English text which has been used for decades by the Churches.
3. The request of the Committee for a clearer mandate is therefore justified.

D. Recommendations

1. Gratefully to acknowledge the work done by the Committee for the Translation of the Heidelberg Catechism, appointed by Synod 1977.
2. To continue the Committee with 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 texts of 1563 and the Dutch text of 1611;
 - (ii) to replace difficult and archaic words and expressions, if proper equivalents are available in today's English;
 - (iii) to re-structure, 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.
- ADOPTED

ARTICLE 61

Adjournment

Rev. J. Geertsema requests that the brothers sing Psalm 25:6, 7 and leads in closing prayer.

MORNING SESSION — TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 1980

ARTICLE 62

Re-opening

The Chairman calls on the members of Synod to sing Psalm 23:1, reads from I John 5:13-21 and leads in prayer.

Rev. Cl. Stam is present again and his alternate, Rev. M. Werkman, has left the meeting.

Synod adjourns and the Advisory Committees meet.

EVENING SESSION — TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 1980

ARTICLE 63

Re-opening — Acts

Rev. D. VanderBoom, the Chairman, requests that Psalm 90:1 be sung. He welcomes the guests.

The Acts, Articles 48-62, are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 64

Women's Voting Rights

Committee II presents its report to Synod. The matter of Women's Voting Rights is discussed.

ARTICLE 65

Adjournment

It is proposed that Psalm 90:8 be sung. Elder C. Hoogerdijk leads in closing prayer. Synod adjourns.

MORNING SESSION — WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1980

ARTICLE 66

Re-opening

The Chairman calls on the brothers to sing Psalm 81:1, 2, reads II John 1-13 and leads in prayer.

ARTICLE 67

Women's Voting Rights

Committee II presents a Report on the matter of Women's Voting Rights. After some discussion, the following motion is made: "To refer the Report of Committee II back to the Committee with the charge to consider the motion of Rev. J.D. Wielenga, to re-consider pages 10 and 11 and the set-up of their Report in order to make it more suitable for recording in the Acts." ADOPTED

AFTERNOON SESSION — WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1980

ARTICLE 68

Re-opening — Departure of the O.P.C. Delegate

The Chairman re-opens the meeting and grants Prof. N. Shepherd the privilege of the floor. Prof. N. Shepherd states that he appreciates having been able to observe the workings of the Synod. Although he regrets that the matter of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church was not on the agenda while he was present, he is grateful for the fact that he was able to meet with Advisory Committee IV of Synod which is dealing with the O.P.C. He remarks that the members of the Orthodox Presbyterian Churches need to know more about the Canadian Reformed Churches, and that he hopes to contribute to a better understanding in the future.

He also notes that "ecclesiastical contact" is a temporary relationship which raises the question, "where do we go from here?" They, in the O.P.C., are watching with interest how we will proceed further in this matter. In connection with this, he states that the O.P.C. letter of April, 1976, was an attempt by them to show that the Westminster Standards are compatible with the Three Forms of Unity. As for our letter of October, 1978, the O.P.C. still needs to respond to that.

On a related note, he informs Synod that the O.P.C. is currently involved in merger talks with the Presbyterian Church of America and with the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod. As for the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, he reveals that a conference will be held between them and the O.P.C. with regard to the singing of Psalms, the place of Hymns and the use of musical instruments in the worship service. He states that the Canadian Reformed Churches have also been invited to this conference through the channel of their Committee for Contact, in the hope that they with their rich tradition of Psalm singing and the careful use of Hymns may make a contribution.

On a more personal note, he declares that he is grateful and awed by the gifts that the LORD has given to The Netherlands in the last century. He hopes that the rich gifts from this tradition may benefit the Church of Jesus Christ and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. He bids his farewell to the members of Synod.

The Chairman thanks Prof. Shepherd for his kind words and expressed the appreciation of Synod for the fact that we might have a delegate from the O.P.C. in our midst for several days. He wishes Prof. N. Shepherd the LORD's blessings, also in his work as Professor in Systematic Theology at Westminster Theological Seminary.

ARTICLE 69

Appeals — Rev. and Mrs. C. Olij, Members of the Church at Orangeville

The Synod meets in closed session.

Committee I receives an opportunity to present its report. The matter is discussed. Committee I states its intention to meet together as Committee after supper in order to consider the suggestions offered with respect to its report.

EVENING SESSION — WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1980

ARTICLE 70

Appeal — Olij and Orangeville

Synod meets again in closed session. Committee I informs Synod about several changes made in their report.

The session is opened. Rev. J. Mulder receives permission to be absent from Synod from Thursday, November 20, 5:00 p.m. to Friday, November 21, 7:00 p.m. in order to officiate at the funeral of one of the members of the Church at Toronto.

Elder G. VanWoudenberg requests that the brothers sing Psalm 139:1 and leads in prayer. Synod adjourns.

MORNING SESSION — THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1980

ARTICLE 71

Re-opening

The Chairman calls the meeting to order and requests that Psalm 121:1 be sung. He reads Ill John 1-14 and prays for the blessing of the Lord over the matters that have to be dealt with that day.

ARTICLE 72

Adjournment

Synod adjourns and the Advisory Committees meet.

AFTERNOON SESSION — THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1980

ARTICLE 73

Appeal — Olij and Orangeville

Synod meets in closed session in order to deal with the appeals of Rev. and sr. C. Olij.

EVENING SESSION — THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1980

ARTICLE 74

Re-opening — Appeal Olij

The Chairman calls on the brothers to sing Psalm 48:1. Synod meets in closed session. The following decision is taken:

Committee I presents: Appeal Rev. and Mrs. Olij

A. **Material** — Agenda VIII, I, 12 — Appeal of the Rev. C. Olij against the decision of the Regional Synod East, Burlington, June 11, 12 and 19, 1980, *re*: the decision of Classis Ontario North, of March 20, 1980 to accede to the request of the Consistory of the Church at Orangeville to release its minister in accordance with Article 11, Church Order, with an enclosure.

VIII, I, 13 — Letter of sr. C. Olij *re*: the same matter.

B. Observations

1. The Appellant objects to the decision of Regional Synod, Article 38, 1, a.b., that Regional Synod failed to recognize that Classis March 20, 1980 dealt with matters which had been dealt with already at previous Classes.

The addenda to the Consistory request to release the Minister are meant.

2. The Appellant objects to the decision of Regional Synod that "these two matters, although stemming from the same basic difficulty in the church at Orangeville, are certainly not the same" (Acts Regional Synod June 1980, Article 38, 1.c). He maintains that it was the same matter.

3. The Appellant objects to decision 1.c. of Regional Synod, in which, according to him, Regional Synod apparently accepts as fact that the basic problem in the Church at Orangeville is the method of preaching, without saying so and without ever having judged the validity of this allegation by examining sermon tapes or the testimony of some members of the congregation (Appeal p. 9, 2nd par.).

4. The Appellant complains that by not disclosing or judging this alleged basic problem, his name is brought under a cloud of suspicion which unjustly limits his possibilities for receiving a call from one of the other churches (Appeal p. 9 bottom).

5. The Appellant claims that ground a. and b. of Regional Synod's decision 2 are untrue, since Classis February 7, 13, 1980 also gave advice to the Consistory, on its request, as to how to deal with the brothers whose appeal had just been rejected by this Classis.

Regional Synod decision Article 38 2.a.b. limits the advice of Classis only to these brothers, thereby obscuring the fact that Classis gave advice to both parties in the Consistory to unite and to cooperate in harmony (Appeal p. 10).

6. The Appellant objects to decision 2.b.c., which decision is based on what the Appellant calls "the blatant lie" of Fact 17 (as stated in the Consistory decision of release) namely that efforts made by the Consistory and Church Visitors in the meetings of February and March to restore unity and cooperation, remained without results.

The Appellant claims that the real fact is that the three Elders (who released themselves) and the Minister (who had received temporary release) returned to the duties of their office, after they had admitted their error, so that good result was reached indeed in the restoration of unity and co-operation in the Consistory (p. 10).

7. The Appellant objects to Regional Synod decision 3 in which Regional Synod judges that it cannot conclude that Classis March 20, 1980 acted contrary to Article 11, Church Order in approving the release of Rev. Olij, among others, on the grounds that the Facts (mentioned in the Consistory Decision sub 1-17) show that real cooperation is considered

impossible by the Consistory. The Appellant claims that the Facts give a distorted picture of the real situation in the Consistory of Orangeville.

Fact 17 fails to mention what has been said in observation 6 (see above), which gives evidence that in reality cooperation was indeed possible, as also the two rejected proposals and their discussion at the Consistory meeting of March 7, 1980 show. Both proposals aimed at cooperation and peace in the spirit of the Classis advice to all the parties involved, but which have never been made known by Consistory to the Congregation as to their contents (pp. 11, 12).

8. The Appellant claims that the Facts are also misleading in this respect, that no mention is made of the proposal of br. VanOmmen immediately after the rejection of his appeal by Classis June/August, 1979 against the decision of the Consistory not to dismiss Rev. Olij. This new proposal is evidence of br. VanOmmen's unwillingness to hold the Classis decision for settled and binding without lodging an Appeal against it at Regional Synod.
9. The Appellant complains that the Regional Synod completely ignored his argument from Scripture that unity and cooperation are a divine commandment, which by the power of God can and must be kept (p. 1 bottom, p. 14 middle, pp. 13 and 17).
10. According to the Appellant, Regional Synod should have adopted the proposal of Article 37 Acts Regional Synod on the ground of God's commandment to live in harmony with one another and his promise to work by the Holy Spirit, by whom "miracles do happen" (p. 17 bottom).
11. The Appellant claims that the Regional Synod accepted the Facts of the Consistory as grounds for the dismissal, while at the same time denying this. The Facts, however, only show the apparent inability to cooperate in the Consistory, which inability as such can not be a ground for dismissal according to Article 11, Church Order, but asks for investigation by the major assemblies in order to find out about and deal with the real cause of this inability to cooperate (pp. 16, 17 bottom).
12. The Appellant claims that the decision to dismiss him was contrary to the intention of Article 11, Church Order. This article of the Church Order does not apply in the situation (pp. 14, 15, 16).
13. The Appellant deems the financial arrangements made by the Consistory with the approval of Classis and the concurring advice of the Deputies of Regional Synod unacceptable as being not in accordance with the promises made by the Consistory in the Letter of Call (p. 18).
14. Sr. C. Olij in her letter to General Synod complains that Rev. C. Olij, right from the start of his ministry in the Church at Orangeville, did not receive the assistance and understanding which might have been expected.
Regional Synod should never have accepted the proposal to dismiss Rev. Olij from elders who never personally approached the minister about it.

C. Considerations

1. Article 11, Church Order provides for situations in which it is obvious that a minister no longer can be considered to work fruitfully in his congregation, according to the judgment of the Consistory, with the approval of Classis and Deputies of the Regional Synod.
2. By adopting this Article in their Church Order the churches have agreed that such a release or dismissal, whereby the minister retains his title, is not in conflict with the promises and commandments of Scripture.

3. The *addenda* to the Consistory's request to Classis, March 20, 1980, although pertaining to matters dealt with by previous Classes, served not as grounds for the Classis decision, but as documentation for the one ground the Consistory adduced, namely "that real co-operation within the Consistory was not possible."
4. The proposal recorded in Article 37 of the Acts of Regional Synod, June 1980, did not point out a way to deal with the issue at stake, namely co-operation within the Consistory.
The Appellant has not proven that the commandment of love, which speaks about a relationship of brothers who have to accept each other, would then exclude dealing with the issue at stake.
5. The fact that Classis June/August 1979 judged the ground for the appeal against the decision of the Consistory not to dismiss the minister according to Article 11, Church Order insufficient, does not imply that at a later date (March 20, 1980) the Consistory, on different grounds, cannot be granted the request to do so. The Appellant fails to prove that both Classes dealt with the same request.
6. There was no compelling need for the major assemblies to investigate and judge the preaching, since the only *ground* was the apparent lack of cooperation within the Consistory, for which lack no one-sided blame was given (Acts, Article 10, Classis Ontario-North, June 26, 1980).
7. The advice which the Classis February 1980 gave to the Consistory, on its request during the Question Period ad. Article 41, Church Order, concerned the request as to how to deal with the brothers and the minister in connection with the *restricted* matter of the situation occasioned by the rejection of their appeals (Appeal p. 10 top).
8. The omission from the Facts (as mentioned in the Consistory's decision of release) of the contents of the two proposals which aimed at unity and cooperation, but were rejected by the Consistory, does not distort the picture of the real situation.
These proposals do not show that there clearly was a possibility to cooperate.
On the contrary, their rejection clearly demonstrate and confirm the inability to cooperate.
9. The omission from the Facts that br. VanOmmen, immediately after the rejection of his appeal by Classis June/August 1979, proposed to give the minister leave of absence for study purposes, is no distortion of the picture either. The proposal clearly shows that this brother abided by the Classis-decision regarding his appeal and proposed a different way than dismissal to solve the problems in the Church of Orangeville and restore unity and peace.
10. Rev. Olij's rejection of the proposal Kottelenberg at the Consistory meeting of March 7, 1980, in combination with the contents of his own proposal at that meeting lead to the conclusion that there was, at least also on his part, lack of cooperation to deal with the cause of the difficulties.
11. Fact 17 cannot be considered to be a "blatant lie," as the return to office by elders and minister, after admitting their error, in accordance with the advice of Classis February 1980, only opened the way to deal again together with the problems of disunity and lack of cooperation and their basic cause. Rev. Olij's proposal at the Consistory meeting of March 7, 1980 reveals that he himself acknowledges the still existing difficulties, in spite of his and the three elders' return to their respective offices. The

efforts to solve these difficulties remained indeed without results, as Fact 17 states, as evidenced by the rejection of the two proposals which aimed at the restoration of unity and co-operation. One of these two proposals was rejected by Rev. Olij himself as he admits in his appeal to General Synod (Appeal, pp. 13.12).

12. The Appellant's dissatisfaction with the financial arrangement made by the Consistory of Orangeville, with the approval of the Classis of June 1980, cannot be dealt with by General Synod (Article 30, Church Order).
13. The complaint of sr. C. Olij that elders who proposed the dismissal of Rev. Olij never personally approached the Minister, has not been dealt with by the minor assemblies nor does it appear that those assemblies were requested to deal with this complaint. It is not possible for General Synod to establish whether the alleged actions of the brothers concerned would render their proposal to release the Minister inadmissible.

The most General Synod can do is to take note of sr. Olij's grievances.

D. Recommendations

1. General Synod decides, on the ground of the above-mentioned considerations, that Rev. C. Olij has failed to prove that the decision of Regional Synod East-Burlington, June 1980, "not to grant the requests of the Rev. C. Olij" (Acts, Article 38), was contrary to Scripture and the Church Order.
2. General Synod decides to take note of the letter of sr. C. Olij.

ADOPTED

The Rev. Cl. Stam and the Rev. M. van Beveren abstain from voting, the former because of his involvement in various Committees dealing with this matter, and the latter because of his involvement as a Church Visitor.

The Rev. J. Mulder was absent.

The Chairman expresses the hope that the blessings of the LORD will be experienced by the Church at Orangeville and the Rev. C. Olij and his family in these difficult circumstances.

ARTICLE 75

Request — Adjournment

Synod meets in open session again. Committee II asks advice with regard to a matter of procedure.

Rev. Cl. Stam requests that the brothers sing Psalm 65:2 and leads in prayer. Synod adjourns.

MORNING SESSION — FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 1980

ARTICLE 76

Re-opening — Adjournment

The Chairman calls on the members of Synod to sing Hymn 38:1, 2. He reads a portion of Jude and leads in prayer. The roll call reveals that the Rev. J. Mulder is still absent. Synod adjourns and the Committees meet.

AFTERNOON SESSION — FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 1980

ARTICLE 77

Appeal — Orangeville

Synod meets in closed session.

Committee I presents:

- A. **Materials** — Agenda VIII, I, 10 — Appeal of br. H.J. Endeman (*et al.*) of Orangeville against a decision of the Regional Synod East June 1980, with enclosures:
- a. Confidential letter of the Consistory of Orangeville to the Congregation (September 15, 1979).
 - b. Appeal to Classis Ontario North, March 20, 1980 against a decision of the Consistory, signed by 57 communicant and 11 non-communicant members.
 - c. Acts of Classis Ontario North, March 20, 1980.
 - d. Letter of the clerk of Classis Ontario North, March 20, 1980.
 - e. Appeal of br. H.J. Endeman against a decision of Classis Ontario North, March 20, 1980.
 - f-k. Appeals of 8 brothers and sisters separately submitted to Regional Synod East, June 11, 12 and 19, 1980 against a decision of Classis Ontario North, March 20, 1980.
 - l. Acts of Regional Synod East, June 1980.
 - m. Letter of the Regional Synod East, June 1980 addressed to all appellants mentioned under f-k.
- 11 — Appeal of br. and sr. J. VanOmmen of Orangeville.

B. Observations

- I. 1. Br. Endeman requests General Synod to declare that "the Regional Synod deviated from the Word of God (and His commandment to accept one another in love as He loved us, John 13:34) by their pragmatic solution of parting company. We also request that General Synod declare that Regional Synod should have accepted the proposal of Article 37 of their Acts. This article certainly being much closer to what Scripture teaches us about the great commandment" (Appeal p. 7).

He also requests General Synod to state "that the trouble in the Church of Orangeville was not: co-operation was impossible, but there was an outright refusal to co-operate by some members of the consistory" (Appeal p. 3).

2. The appeal gives the following considerations for these requests:
 - a. The dismissal of the Minister was not in accordance with Article 11, Church Order, since this Article speaks of dismissal of a minister with his own consent and on the grounds mentioned in the Articles 10, 12, and 13 of the Church Order (call to another congregation; another vocation; incapacity — due to health).

The interpretation of Article 11 in the sense of decisions made by

Reformed Churches in the past is unlawful, since decisions made by the Churches in Holland since the Synod of Dort are not binding in the Canadian Reformed Churches (Acts, Synod 1968, sub P.S., p. 127).

The interpretation of Article 11 as applied by the Consistory of Orangeville is unlawful because "man is not allowed to make provisions for weaknesses or shortcomings of men, contrary to God's command of unity" (Appeal pp. 2, 7).

- b. The application of Article 11, Church Order in the sense of the Consistory and as upheld by the major assemblies, whereby God's command of unity is paralyzed by the alleged right to part if no cooperation seems possible, leads to the dangerous conclusion that the Church at Orangeville also has the right to split, if the two parties cannot find a way to solve their differences.
- c. A minister as a servant of God cannot be released from his God-given office, unless it is demanded by the Word of God. "All minor assemblies that dealt with this matter barely took this criterion into account" (Appeal, p. 1).

Regional Synod failed to apply the Word of God which demands members of one body to accept one another in love by the power of God, "who works in you both to will and to work" (Appeal p. 3).

- d. Article 11, Church Order requires that the consistory represents the congregation when deciding to release the minister, while in this case the Consistory only represented a part of the Congregation (Appeal p. 4).
- e. The Consistory failed to inform the Congregation of the motivations which led to its decision to dismiss the Minister. Matters were withheld from the Congregation, like the contents of the two proposals discussed at the Consistory meeting of March 7, 1980 and the contents of the appeal of br. VanOmmen to Classis June/August, 1979 (Appeal p. 5).
- f. Regional Synod should have considered the release of the Minister according to Article 13, Church Order, since it was obvious that the Minister was physically incapacitated to do his work fruitfully, due to the dealings of the Consistory (Appeal p. 3 bottom).
- g. Regional Synod in Ad. 5, consideration d., fails to recognize that cooperation was *made* impossible.
Classis, June/August 1979 had decided that it could not be proved that the cause of disunity was the method of preaching.
However, br. VanOmmen and others kept dealing with this issue at Consistory meetings, instead of "dropping it," in accordance with the Classis' decision (Appeal p. 6).
- h. Regional Synod failed to disclose what the basic problems were within Consistory and Congregation.
The alleged cause, the preaching, was never investigated; the true cause, the refusal of some members of the Consistory to cooperate, was never recognized or dealt with (Appeal pp. 6, 7).

- II. 1. Br. and sr. VanOmmen request Synod that Rev. C. Olij be restored to his office in the Church at Orangeville and subsequently be released according to Article 13, Church Order.
- 2. The following grounds are adduced for this request:
 - a. the committee of investigation, appointed by Classis June 1979, failed to inquire at the addresses of members of the Church at Orangeville who supported Rev. Olij;

- b. the Minister preached the Word of God faithfully for 20 years;
 - c. Scripture teaches us to show respect to God's servants, in spite of their weaknesses and deficiencies.
- III. 1. Regional Synod in its letter to appellants (June 1980) states the following:
- a. The decision of the Consistory to release the Rev. Olij for the reason stated, is not contrary to Scripture, with reference to Acts 15:39 and to the reasons for release as adopted by Reformed Churches in the past (Groningen 1899, Article 122 — Letter Regional Synod p. 5, sub Ad. 6d, e).
 - b. Article 11, Church Order does not give opening to remove a minister from his office, but only from his service in a particular congregation (letter p. 6, Ad. 6b).
 - c. The provision of Article 11, Church Order is necessary, because through the weaknesses and shortcomings of men situations can arise where cooperation is no longer possible within a Consistory or congregation (Letter p. 6, Ad. 6a).
 - d. Neither the Consistory nor Classis have in any form spoken of an incapacity of the Minister which would make Article 13, Church Order applicable; any such incapacity cannot be deduced either from information given by Rev. Olij himself or by any of the Appellants (Letter p. 1, Ad. 1a, b, c).
 - e. Approbation by the congregation prior to the release of a minister according to Article 11, Church Order is not required by the Church Order (Letter p. 3, Ad. 4a, b).
 - f. Even one Appellant has agreed that "All the grounds mentioned in the confidential letters of the consistory to the congregation (July 12, 1979; September 15, 1979 and March 10, 1980) had already been made known to us in the years before" (Letter p. 3; Ad. 4a, b).
 - g. Appellants have stated but not proved that Classis did not take "the letter with signatures" (to Classis March 1980, against the request of the Consistory re the decision of releasing the minister) into consideration.
- The Acts of Classis March 1980, in Article 13 and 17, show that this letter was read and discussed (Letter p. 4, Ad. 4 second a and b).
- h. It was the lack of the ability to restore cooperation which finally led to the adoption of the proposal to release the Minister according to Article 11, Church Order (Letter p. 5, Ad. 5d).
 - i. The material presented by appellants fail to prove that the facts as established by Church Visitors and committees are false. On the contrary, the facts are clearly dated and confirmed by official documents of Consistory and Classis (Letter p. 5, bottom, a, b).

C. Considerations

1. By "Dismissal" Article 11, Church Order, from the time of its adoption in the Church Order (1618-1619 Dort) means the release of a minister from his congregation on grounds other than the ones mentioned in the Articles 10, 12, 13 and 79, Church Order. The appellant has failed to give proof to the contrary.
2. By adopting this Article in their Church Order the churches have agreed that it is not contrary to Scripture to release a minister from his office in a particular church in situations for which this Article makes provision. As long as this Article of the Church Order has not been changed by the

churches on Scriptural grounds, no Scriptural grounds need to be adduced for the release of a minister according to Article 11.

3. The conclusion that a congregation has the right to split, if Article 11, Church Order gives the right to minister and congregation to part ways when cooperation has become impossible, ignores the duty of all the members of the Church to submit to the office bearers and to hold for settled and binding the decisions of the major assemblies (on the condition stipulated in Article 31, Church Order). It also ignores the fact that release according to Article 11, Church Order concerns the release of an office bearer from function in the Church and not the dismissal of a brother from the communion of saints.
4. The representation of the congregation by the consistory in Article 11 is restricted to the matter of providing for proper financial support of the minister.
5. Article 13, Church Order, does not apply in the difficult situation in the Church at Orangeville, because the impossibility for Rev. Olij to work fruitfully in the Congregation was not caused by ill health (as a result of the difficulties in the Consistory), but by the inability of the Consistory to co-operate in unity and peace, as a result of a problem that was already there before the Fall of 1977.
6. When the Consistory informed the Congregation of the grounds of its decision, it implicitly informed the Congregation of the motives leading to its decision. (Observation III, 1f).
7. The consistory is not supposed to inform the congregation about disciplinary matters and other actions which the Consistory considers confidential (Observation 1, 2e).
8. The decision of Classis June/August 1979 to reject the appeal of br. Van-Ommen does not imply that Classis said that it could not be proven that the method of preaching was the cause of the problems in the Church at Orangeville.

Classis decided that br. VanOmmen had not submitted sufficient evidence for Classis to decide against the judgment of the Consistory. (Acts, Classis, Article 25).

Continued efforts in the Consistory to solve the basic problem cannot be considered to be in conflict with the decision of Classis June/August 1979 (Observation 1, 2f).

9. The major assemblies cannot be blamed for not disclosing and investigating the basic problem.

The Appellant himself states that Consistory and Church Visitors acknowledged that the basic problem was the method of preaching. The task of the major assemblies was not to investigate, but to establish whether the inability to solve this problem had led to such an extent of disunity, that cooperation within the Consistory and a fruitful ministry by the minister in the Congregation could still be considered possible.

The fact that part of the Consistory was not prepared to ignore this basic problem, cannot be qualified as refusal to cooperate, contrary to the commandment of love.

10. The fact that the Classis did not act in accordance with the "letter with signatures" does not prove that this letter was not taken into consideration; the fact that Classis did not pronounce that the Minister at least could still work fruitfully in a larger or smaller part of the congregation, as the letter with signatures stated ("... could have worked in the largest part of the congregation") (Appeal Endeman, p. 6) does not prove that

either. The Appellant should have proven that the Minister could still work fruitfully in the Congregation as such, which is the calling of the Minister.

11. If generally speaking lack of specific gifts needed in a congregation, or weaknesses incompatible with the character of a certain congregation, lead to intolerable tensions and disunity, there is no promise of God to cure the situation by His power.

It must be considered whether in such a case love does not demand humbly to admit the impossibility to cooperate and to part as brothers.

12. Article 11, Church Order, which opens the way for the release of a minister, is not in conflict with the commandment of love, but is a special application of this commandment for the benefit of the congregation and the minister.
13. The facts, as documented and accepted by all parties, show that the Minister, because of his method of preaching, was at least partly the cause of the tension.
The Minister has not been able to take this cause away.
14. The endeavors of the Church Visitors by their advices and recommendations to Consistory and Minister have not been able to take this cause away either.
15. The Appellants do not prove their claim that the proposal recorded in Article 37 of the Acts of Regional Synod June 1980, which proposal was rejected, was more in accordance with the scriptural demand of love. This proposal did not point out a way to deal with the basic cause of the tensions, in order to come to a harmonious cooperation within the Consistory.
16. The complaint of br. and sr. VanOmmen in their Appeal to General Synod, that the Classis-committee-of-investigation failed to hear those members of the Congregation who defended the Minister regarding his method of preaching, is unfounded. The Committee of Advice (June 1979) had to investigate the Consistory's decision not to adopt the proposal to dismiss the Minister, which decision was appealed at Classis, and not to examine sentiments in the Congregation.
17. Respect, according to Scripture, for the servants of God in spite of their shortcomings and deficiencies, does not exclude the release of these servants, if these deficiencies lead to a situation in which their fruitful service is no longer possible, while keeping the way open for them to serve fruitfully in other congregations.
18. Regional Synod June 1980 concluded, on valid grounds, that Article 13, Church Order is not applicable in this case. (See Letter Regional Synod June 1980 Ad. 1a, b, c, and Consideration 4 above).

D. Recommendation

Synod decide:

on the ground of above observations and considerations, not to grant the requests of Appellants.

ADOPTED

Once again the Rev. Cl. Stam and the Rev. M. van Beveren abstain from voting (See Article 74). The Rev. J. Mulder is absent.

ARTICLE 78

Appeal — br. L. VanZandwijk

Synod continues to meet in closed session. The Report of Committee IV is voted upon. It reads:

"Synod decides to declare this appeal unacceptable."

ADOPTED

EVENING SESSION — FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 1980

ARTICLE 79

Re-opening — Acts

The Chairman proposes that Psalm 56:4 be sung.

The Acts, Articles 63-76, are adopted.

Rev. J. Mulder is present again.

ARTICLE 80

Women's Voting Rights

The following motion is moved, discussed and voted upon:

"Synod decide,

To leave the matter of Women's Voting Rights in the freedom of the Churches.

Ground:

1. Neither the Report of the Study Committee nor the Report of the Advisory Committee have given sufficient proof from Scripture that women should be denied this right.
2. Article 22, Church Order recognizes the right of approbation to women which is not proven to be essentially different from voting.
3. Article 22, Church Order leaves room to the local Churches to act according to local regulations, in accordance with what has been agreed upon by the Churches *re:* the matter of voting in Article 22, Church Order."

DEFEATED

ARTICLE 81

Adjournment

Rev. J. Mulder requests that Psalm 56:5 be sung and leads in prayer. Synod adjourns.

MORNING SESSION — SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 1980

ARTICLE 82

Re-opening

The Chairman calls on the members of Synod to sing Psalm 8:1. He reads Psalm 8 and leads in prayer.

ARTICLE 83

Women's Voting Rights

Committee II presents:

- I. A. **Material** — Agenda VIII, F, 1 — Report from the Committee on Women's Voting Rights.
F, 2 — Letter from br. B. van Huisstede.
F, 3 — Letter from sr. G. van Weerden.
F, 4 — Letter from Rev. D. DeJong.

B. Information

1. Synod Coaldale 1977 appointed a committee with the mandate
“ a. To make a thorough study of all Biblical and Church-political aspects regarding the question of women's voting rights.
b. To forward the results of their studies to the Churches one year prior to the next Synod and to invite comments to be submitted within six months after publication of the study.
c. To submit their report with recommendations to the next General Synod.”

In fulfilling its mandate, the Committee has provided General Synod with a report with the following conclusions:

“ A. Considerations:

1. With regard to the voting for office-bearers as we have it today, there is no clear evidence in the Scriptures that such a practice existed in the Church of the Old or New Testament (see: page 21, h, i).
2. The role relationship between man (husband) and woman (wife) under the Old Testament dispensation does not give any reason to assume that the women in the congregation had an active part in a form of decision-making as it takes place in the voting for office-bearers in the Church today.
In the New Testament we do not find evidence that the role relationship between man (husband) and woman (wife) in the Church has changed principally (see: page 21, g).
3. When the Church Order in Article 22 speaks about the choosing out of a double number of candidates by the congregation, it does not prescribe that all members, including women, must take part in the voting.
4. The procedures prescribed in Article 22, Church Order include a form of decision-making (or, an involvement in governing) with respect to the electing of office-bearers, and thus voting by women would be in conflict with the role relationship of man (husband) and woman (wife).
5. The history of De Gereformeerde Kerken in The Netherlands indicates that the General Synods in their decisions abide by the conviction that “convincing proof that the Scriptures demand women's voting rights has not been supplied, but the data which they do present to us seems to plead more against than in favour” (Arnhem 1930, see: p. 24) and accordingly, did not change the practice of excluding women from voting.

B. Recommendations:

1. Neither the stipulations of the Church Order nor Reformed

Church History indicate that women had a right to vote in the election of office-bearers.

2. That such a right cannot be deduced from the Holy Scriptures.

C. Decision: Synod therefore decides that the Churches should refrain from introducing the practice of women voting in their elections for office-bearers."

2. Br. B. van Huisstede addresses General Synod with "some remarks about the Report of the Committee on women's voting rights in the hope that Synod will take these remarks into consideration" in its decisions. These remarks are mainly a number of quotations from a published speech of Dr. B. Wielenga (1919) and references to other Reformed theologians who have spoken in favour of women's voting rights.
3. Sr. G. van Weerden has sent a copy of a letter previously submitted to the Committee in which she indicates disagreement with the Committee's conclusions.
4. Rev. D. DeJong requests General Synod "to acknowledge the right of our sisters who are confessing members of the Church to take part in the voting, since this is part of their prophetic calling according to Acts 2:17/18."

II. The Scriptural Data

A. Observations:

1. The Committee recommends that the right for women to vote "can not be deduced from the Holy Scriptures" and that "Synod therefore decides that the Churches should refrain from introducing the practice of women voting in their elections for office-bearers" (Final Report, Recommendation B2 and Decision C).
2. With regard to the voting for office-bearers as we have it today, the Committee considers, "there is no clear evidence in the Scriptures that such a practice existed in the Church of the Old and the New Testament" and "In the Scriptures we have no clear indication that voting, as we know it today, was used to determine which nominee was most able to serve." The Committee therefore has no reason to conclude that women "participated directly in the election process . . ." (Report, page 21, h; Final Report Consideration 1).
3. The Committee admits that "There is no Scripture passage that speaks directly to the subject under investigation, namely may women vote in the Church or not" (Report, page 21, i).
4. The Committee considers that "the role relationship between man (husband) and woman (wife) under the Old Testament dispensation does not give any reason to assume that the women in the congregation had an active part in the decision-making as it takes place in the voting for office-bearers in the Church today."

The Committee further considers that "In the New Testament we do not find evidence that the role relationship between man (husband) and woman (wife) in the Church has changed principally" (Final Report, Consideration 2; Report page 21 g).

B. Considerations:

1. If it is not known from Scripture how the voting was done or whether this included women, yes even that no Scripture passage addresses itself directly to this matter, the Committee's conclusion "that such a right can-

not be deduced from the Holy Scriptures" is not complete, for it could be added, such being the case, to **deny** such a right "cannot be deduced from Scripture" either.

2. This becomes all the more pressing when it is noted that various Scripture passages, speaking of **congregational** involvement in the election process, Acts 6:1-5; Acts 15:22, which denote "the **whole** Church" and the "**whole** multitude" and which could include the women (as the Committee itself admits, Report pages 10, 11) do not seem to support the Committee's recommendation "that such a right cannot be deduced from the Holy Scriptures."
3. Important is the Committee's reasoning with respect to the "role relationship" between man and woman. Since there is no clear, direct Scriptural data on the subject of voting, the biblical teaching concerning "role relationship" would seem to give the only Scriptural foundation for not granting or granting women the right to vote.

However, this "role relationship" (meant is: the different position and function of man and woman) does not offer much solid ground. At most the Committee can say, this role relationship under the Old and New Testaments "does not give any reason to **assume** that the women in the congregation had an active part in a form of decision-making as it takes place in the voting for office-bearers in the Church today." The lack of knowledge concerning the exact practices with respect to voting in the Old and New Testaments do not bear out an assumption either way whether women had an active part or not.

4. The Committee's conclusions with respect to the "role relationship" between man and woman are not unproblematic. While on the one hand the Committee states that there is no principal change in the role relationship between man and woman in the Old and New Testament, on the other hand the Committee does suggest that there are certain differences in this relationship before and after the fall (Report, Page 4), consequential even for the relationship of man and woman "within the church." Before the Fall it was a relationship of "leading and following," while after the Fall it is a relationship of "ruling and subjection." The Scripture passage referred to (I Timothy 2:12-14) does not cover this suggestion for there it is clear that the difference in relationship (position) is not because of the **Fall**, but of **creation**, "for Adam was first created," a difference which is **maintained** after the Fall ("Adam was not first deceived").

If it is true that that Fall has specific consequences for the role relationship within the Church ("The female is NOW placed in *subjection* to the male," Report page 4, see also note 7), it should have been investigated whether the redeeming work of Christ did have consequences for the "position of the woman" (see: the implications of Conclusion f, Report page 21).

5. The Committee has not proven that the role relationship between the man (husband) and the woman (wife) has a specific bearing on the matter of voting, only that this relationship implies that the woman may not "govern" or "have authority over the man" (I Timothy 2), and this ordinance is not merely in effect since the Fall, but since creation. Indeed **this** ordinance has remained unchanged throughout Scripture, but "assumptions" derived from this ordinance are inconclusive.

C. Conclusion:

The Committee on Women's Voting Rights recommends that the right for women to vote "can not be deduced from Scripture," but this recommendation

is not supported by the Scriptural data presented and therefore does not substantiate the proposed decision "not to grant women the right to vote."

III. The Church-HISTORICAL Data

A. Observations:

1. The Committee concludes that "the history of the Gereformeerde Kerken in The Netherlands indicates that the General Synods in their decisions abide by the conviction that convincing proof that the Scriptures demand women's voting rights has not been supplied, but the data which they do present to us seems to plead more against than in favour" (Arnhem 1930, see page 24) and accordingly did not change the practice of excluding women from voting (Conclusion 5).
2. The Committee recommends on the basis of Reformed Church History "that women had no right to vote in the election of office-bearers" (Recommendation 1).

B. Considerations:

1. The Committee does admit that "it is an established fact that Reformed Churches in various countries" (also The Netherlands) "have taken a different approach to the matter" and even that "certain Churches have later adopted women's voting rights" (Report, page 23).
2. The fact that some Churches did **not** accept women's voting rights is termed by the Committee as belonging to "exceptions," the main exception of interest to the Committee being De Gereformeerde Kerken in The Netherlands. The Committee then makes a **general** conclusion ("Reformed Church History indicates . . .") from a **specific** Church (Gereformeerde Kerken in The Netherlands) while admitting that it is an exception.

Normally the exception **confirms** the rule; here the exception has **become** the rule.

3. The further facts in the history of De Gereformeerde Kerken in The Netherlands indicate that indeed women in these Churches did not receive "the right to vote." But these facts also uncover more upon careful scrutiny, especially that this decision **not** to grant these rights (Arnhem 1930) has been severely criticised and oftentimes appealed. The tumultuous "Reformed Church History" in The Netherlands in this respect does not show such a consensus of opinion as might be gleaned from the recommendation of the Committee.

This is also alluded to by the communication from Br. B. van Huisstede.

C. Conclusion:

The Committee's conclusions with respect to Reformed Church History and women's voting rights — though in themselves correct when **restricted** to the history of De Gereformeerde Kerken in The Netherlands — do not give a complete picture and are therefore somewhat misleading, conflicting also with the material presented in the Report itself (page 23). As such these conclusions do not really contribute to solving the issue at hand.

IV. The Church-POLITICAL Data

A. Observations:

1. The Committee considers that "When the Church Order in Article 22

speaks about the choosing out of a double number of candidates by the congregation, it does not **prescribe** that **all** members, including women, must take part in the voting" (Conclusion 3, Final Report).

2. The Committee recommends that the "stipulations of the Church Order" do not "indicate that women had a right to vote in the election of office-bearers" (Final Report, Recommendation B 1).
3. The Committee considers that "the procedures described in Article 22, Church Order include a form of decision-making (or, an involvement in governing) with respect to the election of office-bearers, and **thus** voting by women would be **in conflict with** the role relationship of man (husband) and woman (wife), Conclusion 4, Final Report.

This consideration is preceded by an emphatic assertion that "voting is an involvement in the governing of the Church. It is not an involvement in the sense of **governing** or **ruling**, but of electing those who are to govern." So it is "**more** in harmony with Scripture if women are not called upon to be involved in the voting for office-bearers" (Committee Report, page 31).

B. Considerations:

1. When the Church Order in Article 22 speaks only of the **congregation**, it indeed gives no specific prescription concerning the participation of **women** in the election process. By the same token, however, the formulation of Article 22 does not specifically **exclude** women either.

Synod Coaldale 1977 considered that "Article 22, Church Order does not stipulate anything positive or negative about women's voting rights but refers only to 'the congregation.'" (Acts, Article 27, Consideration 1).

The Church Order speaks in one breath about nomination, election and approbation and each time the **congregation** is called to participate/cooperate.

When the Belgic Confession (Article 31) speaks of "lawful election by the **Church**," *the Scriptural references* which are alluded to (Acts 1:23; Acts 6:1-6), speaking of "the **whole** multitude" and "the **whole** Church," do not necessarily exclude women. The Committee has already admitted that we have no way of determining whether "the women took an active part in the meeting, although it seems doubtful" (Report, page 8). The Committee further admits that **no proof** has been given for the statement that women have "no part in the proceedings" (Report, page 8, note 13).

It may also be pointed out that also the **Form of Ordination** speaks of lawful election by the **Church**, without specifying either way whether women are included or excluded.

2. Whereas the Committee first states (Consideration 3, Final Report) that the Church Order does not **prescribe** that women shall vote, the Committee then makes a far more extensive claim (Final Report, Recommendation B 1) that the women on the basis of the **stipulations of the Church Order** have no **right** to vote. It is a result of faulty reasoning to **deny** someone a right merely because it has not been specifically prescribed.
3. The decisive question seems to be whether **voting** is to be seen as **governing**. The Committee here speaks in very uncertain terms of "a **form** of governing" or an "**involvement** in governing." The Committee feels that the truth of the matter lies "somewhere inbetween" (Report, page 29). To state that voting is merely "advising," the Committee feels, would be "devaluating" the vote; yet to say that voting is fully "governing" would be "to a certain extent an exaggeration" (idem, page 29). The in between solution means that voting is "more than advising" and still "less than governing."

As proof for the statement that voting is "an involvement in governing" is given the fact that the vote has a "**determinating** character" (page 29) for the consistory. This is true, but only to a degree. The consistory has the **first** say in the presenting of nominees out of which the office-bearers are to be **elected** and the **last** say in the installation of the office-bearers **chosen**. Before the presentation and installation, the **congregation** is called to participate in **all** aspects: nomination, election and approbation.

Meanwhile, the Committee admits that "no vote is ever **absolutely** binding" (page 29), while the final judgment is always to the Consistory. The Committee also speaks of the vote as being a "preference" but then adds, "the vote is **more** than simply expressing a preference" because the outcome is **binding**.

Of course the consistory, seeking the **cooperation** of the congregation, will **abide** by the outcome of the vote (the **preference of the congregation**) "unless any obstacles arise" (Article 22, Church Order), since it has requested the cooperation to begin with, as the Committee itself admits, "the *Consistory* has **allowed** the vote to become determinative" (Report, page 29). Therefore, to conclude from this binding character that voting "is an involvement in **governing**" goes too far.

Another important aspect must be considered here. If voting can indeed be considered **comparable** to governing, we have in essence a **Fifth Assembly** in the Church, namely the meeting of the eligible voters which "in a sense" governs the Church or at least is involved in the governing process of the Church. This "form" of democratic rule is basically strange to the stipulations of Article 22, Church Order.

It must be noted that participating in an election does not necessarily mean partaking in the government itself. The Committee cannot bridge that gap by speaking of a "form" of decision-making or an "involvement" in governing. The Committee has not solved the question whether voting is **governing** in the sense of I Timothy 2:12 ff. (see also the letter of sr. G. van Weerden).

C. Conclusion:

The Committee's reasoning is unsatisfactory and basically inconclusive. Voting is either fully a deed of governing or not. It is either in harmony with Scripture or not. A wording of "**more** in harmony" (versus **less** in harmony) with Scripture (Committee Report, page 31) does not seem to warrant the conclusion "in conflict with" the role relationship between man and woman.

The Committee has not been able to convince of the validity of its conclusions and recommendation.

V. Letter Rev. D. DeJong

A. Observations:

1. Rev. DeJong points out that voting "is not a matter of governing, neither of advising, but a matter of prophecy" and "that also women are called to prophesy" (Acts 2:17, 18). In connection with this he sees no difference between voting and approbation since both are considered "the prophetic application of the Word of God."
2. In connection with the above Rev. DeJong gives a definition of prophecy "i.e. pass on the Word of God you have heard or read and apply it in a certain situation, i.c. to persons to be nominated."
3. Rev. DeJong argues that when the Apostle Paul says, "Let your women keep silence in the churches" (I Corinthians 14:34 ff.), he does not deny

the women the right to prophecy (for this right has been previously recognized in I Corinthians 11), but the right to judge prophecy "by means of a teaching and ruling discussion."

4. On the basis of the Scriptural evidence adduced, Rev. DeJong requests Synod to "acknowledge the right of our sisters who are confessing members of the church to take part in the voting for office-bearers, since this is part of their prophetic calling according to Acts 2:17, 18."

B. Considerations:

1. Since Rev. DeJong alludes to various texts in which the verb "to prophecy" plays a key role, we are to investigate its usage in its context. It is to be noted that Rev. de Jong does not present any compelling proof that voting is to be seen as a matter of prophecy in the sense of Acts 2 and I Corinthians 11 and 14.
2. In accordance with Rev. DeJong's general definition of prophecy it remains doubtful whether this verb can be applied specifically to the act of voting (or approbation) **to the extent** that it would be decisive as to whether or not women have this right. The context of Acts 2 and I Corinthians 11 and 14 shows that prophecy is a matter of edification, encouragement and consolation, especially when used in the context of worship (I Corinthians 14:3, 19).

The verbs used in connection with voting (Acts 6:5, 14:23, 15:22) simply mean "to choose" or "elect by show of hands" or "to appoint to office." However, the exact method used is not clear from the Scriptural data.

3. It is not evident from Scripture that the activity of "judging the prophecy" (I Corinthians 14:29) denotes a **public** discussion of the prophecies uttered. It is also not evident or proven that in I Corinthians 14:34 ff. Paul begins with a "related yet different subject" such as a "teaching and ruling discussion." This "judging" could be done in silence. It could as well be that the Apostle indeed denies women the right to prophecy in the worship service.

C. Conclusion:

Rev. D. DeJong's assertion that voting is to be seen as a matter of prophecy cannot be sufficiently concluded from the Scriptural data which he supplies to support his statement.

VI. Summary

A. Observations:

1. The Committee on Women's Voting Rights has completed its work in accordance with the mandate received from Synod Coaldale 1977, Acts, Article 27.
2. Other than the three letters indicated, General Synod has received no further communication in favour of women voting. Similarly no communication has been received with the recommendation that the conclusions of the study report be forthwith adopted.

B. Considerations:

1. The Scriptural, Church-historical and Church-political data discussed do

not warrant a definite conclusion that the right for women to vote should be denied.

It is evident from the Report that women should not govern or exercise authority over men in the church. However, it has not become clear whether this has decisive implications for voting in the Church "as we have it today."

2. Those who have written in favour of women voting have failed to present clear Scriptural evidence that such a practice must be introduced.
3. Since Synod is unable to arrive at a well-founded decision in this matter, because of the inconclusive evidence presented, it is wise to retain the existing practice, but at the same time to continue working towards a warranted conclusion.

C. Recommendations:

Synod decide:

1. To thank the Committee on Women's Voting Rights for its work.
2. To refrain from recommending that the practice of women voting be introduced in the Churches.
3. To continue the Committee on Women's Voting Rights with the following mandate:
 - a) to re-examine 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. **ADOPTED**

ARTICLE 84

Adjournment

Elder A.H. Lubbers asks the brothers to sing from Psalm 93:1, 4, and leads in closing prayer.

MORNING SESSION — MONDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1980

ARTICLE 85

Re-opening — Acts

The Chairman calls on the brothers to sing Psalm 107:1. He reads from Isaiah 42:5-13 and leads in prayer.

The Acts, Articles 78-84, are read and adopted.

A letter is received from the Church of Burlington-West, the Church for the Inspection of the Archives, in which Synod is informed that the archives were found to be in good order. Ordinarily this letter would have been declared inadmissible due to the fact that it was received after the official closing date for mail;

however, seeing that it was given by the Church at Burlington-West to a member of Synod well-before the deadline, who in turn forgot to pass it on, Synod decides to accept it.

ARTICLE 86

Adjournment

Synod adjourns and the Advisory Committees meet.

EVENING SESSION — MONDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1980

ARTICLE 87

Acceptance — Rev. C. Van Dam

The Chairman announces that he has received word that the Rev. C. Van Dam has accepted his appointment as Professor of Old Testament at the Theological College. This is taken note of with deep thankfulness.

ARTICLE 88

Adjournment

Br. W. VanAssen notifies Synod that he has to return home earlier than originally expected. He will leave tomorrow at 12:00 noon. His alternate has been informed and hopes to arrive late tomorrow afternoon.

The Chairman thanks br. VanAssen for his work on behalf of the Synod and the Churches.

Elder E.C. Baartman calls on the brothers to sing Hymn 38: 1, 4, and leads in closing prayer. Synod adjourns.

MORNING SESSION — TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 1980

ARTICLE 89

Re-opening

The Chairman requests that the members of Synod sing Psalm 23:1, 3. He reads Isaiah 44:1-8 and leads in prayer. He welcomes the guests, especially the students of the John Calvin and Guido DeBrès schools.

ARTICLE 90

Appeals — Article 91, Acts 1977

Committee IV presents its report on the appeals. The discussion begins.

AFTERNOON SESSION — TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 1980

ARTICLE 91

Departure — Elder W. VanAssen

In the afternoon session, the roll call reveals that Elder W. VanAssen has left the meeting. His alternate has not yet arrived.

ARTICLE 92

Appeals — Article 91, Acts 1977

The discussion continues. Part I of the Report is adopted (see Article 97).

EVENING SESSION — TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 1980

ARTICLE 93

Re-opening

The meeting of Synod is re-opened with the singing of Psalm 144:1. Elder A.W. DeLeeuw is present as an alternate for Elder W. VanAssen.

ARTICLE 94

Appeals — Article 91, Acts 1977

The discussion continues. Part II of the report of Committee IV, with amendments, is adopted (see Article 97).

ARTICLE 95

Adjournment

Rev. S. DeBruin requests that Psalm 144:4 be sung and leads in closing prayer. Synod adjourns.

MORNING SESSION — WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1980

ARTICLE 96

Re-opening — Acts

The members of Synod are requested to sing Hymn 46:2. The Chairman reads Isaiah 44:24-28 and leads in prayer.

The Acts, Articles 85-95, are adopted as read.

ARTICLE 97

Appeals — Article 91, Acts 1977

The discussion continues. Part III of the report of Committee IV is adopted. The decision reads as follows:

Committee IV presents:

- Material** — Agenda VIII, I, 1 — Appeal of the Church of Burlington-West.
I, 2 — Appeal of the Church at Watford.
I, 3 — Appeal of the Church at Grand Rapids.
I, 4 — Appeal of the Church at Lincoln.
I, 5 — Appeal of the Church at Smithville.
I, 6 — Appeal of the Church at Chilliwack.
I, 7 — Letter from br. W.C. VandenHaak.
I, 8 — Letter from the Church at Chatham (supporting part of the appeal of the Church at Burlington-West).

I. A. Observations

1. The Appellants object to the fact that Synod Coaldale followed an incorrect procedure when it did not re-appoint some of the members of the Committee, appointed by Synod Toronto 1974, and when it did not allow the Committee to complete its mandate but rather gave it a "new mandate."
2. The Appellants object to the fact that Synod Coaldale did not do justice to the Committee's reply, and even appears to have removed this reply in order to come to the evaluation that the divergencies do not form an impediment (see Acts 1977, Article 91, II, h).
3. One of the Appellants objects to the fact that Synod Coaldale stated that the Committee was not able to react to the O.P.C. letter of April 14, 1976, since four meetings were held by the Committee and it submitted a draft reply to Synod Coaldale.
4. One of the Appellants further objects to the fact that Synod Coaldale stated that the Committee did not submit an evaluation of the O.P.C. letter of April 14, 1976, since the draft reply of the Committee does indeed give a critical evaluation of the O.P.C. letter.
5. One of the Appellants objects to the fact that Synod Coaldale stated that the Committee did not make a recommendation to continue the contact with the O.P.C., since Synod could not expect such a recommendation seeing that the Committee's mandate was still unfinished.

B. Considerations

1. Although it happens, in many cases, that members of Committees which could not finish their mandates are continued, and that Committees, if necessary, are fortified, this does not mean that a Synod which decides to proceed differently, acts incorrectly or unjustly or unsatisfactorily, since there are no rules which bind Synods to a certain procedure with respect to its Committees.

Synod Coaldale considered that the mandate of Synod Toronto 1974 should be completed and instructed its Committee accordingly. In that

way it heeded the mandate of the Synod of Toronto (see Acts 1977, Article 91, IV).

2. Synod Coaldale did not reject the drafts as study material *for* a reply, it only stated that it could not use this draft as a reply to the O.P.C.

The fact that Synod Coaldale did not regard the contents of the draft reply as forming an impediment to recognizing the O.P.C. as Churches of our Lord Jesus Christ, does not prove that Synod rejected the draft, since this Synod considered that "further discussion on divergencies in confession and church polity is desirable" (Article 91, IV, Consideration 2).

It should be noted that the Committee appointed by Synod Coaldale used a substantial part of the draft reply in its letter of October 13, 1978, to the O.P.C. Committee.

3. The Church at Grand Rapids states that the Committee did "react" to the O.P.C. letter by holding four meetings and by coming to Synod with a draft reply. Synod Coaldale, however, states that the Committee was not able to react *in the sense of sending a response to the O.P.C. Committee* [cf. Acts 1977, Article 91, I, Observation 3, "The Committee was unable to react . . . *but* submits to synod a draft reply" (emphasis — Synod)].
4. In the draft reply, the Committee did give an evaluation of sections of the O.P.C. letter of April 14, 1976. However, because it was incomplete it could not serve as a draft reply. The observation of Synod 1977, Acts, Article 91, I, 4, is a general statement, which though true, did not do full justice to the work done by the Committee.
5. Even though the Committee had not completed its mandate, it could have proposed to Synod Coaldale to continue the contact with the O.P.C. and asked for time to complete its mandate.

C. Recommendations

Synod decide:

1. Not to accede to the requests of the Churches:
 Burlington-West
 Watford
 Smithville
 Grand Rapids
2. To declare that Synod Coaldale was incorrect in stating: "The Committee does not submit an evaluation of the letter of April 14, 1976."

ADOPTED

II. A. Observations

(i) Objections to Considerations (a) to (l) of Synod Coaldale

1. The Appellants state that considerations (a) and (b) of Synod Coaldale 1977 which refer to Synod Edmonton 1965 have been used as a ground for establishing and continuing the contact with the O.P.C. and cannot be a basis for recognizing the O.P.C. as a true church according to Article 29 of the Belgic Confession. The fact that the divergencies had to be studied indicated that they were a stumbling block for such a recognition.
2. The Appellants state that consideration (c), taken from the letter of the

O.P.C. Committee, dated April 14, 1976, namely that the divergencies stem from different origins, cannot be a ground for recognition, since the question is "whether the divergencies *conflict with the Word of God*"; furthermore, the appellants state that Synod Coaldale by-passed the draft which contained a critical evaluation and that since 1971 the mandate to compare the divergencies "with the Word of God" was dropped before a clear evaluation was given.

3. The Appellants state with regard to consideration (d) and (e) that the evaluation of the Westminster Confession by the Dutch Sister-Churches as "een voluit Gereformeerd belijdenisgeschrift" cannot be used by our Churches as a ground for recognizing the O.P.C., because it is not binding, not proven to be correct, is not a statement of Synod Amersfoort 1967, but only an opinion of certain deputies, and not a guarantee that the O.P.C. is a "pure" church.
4. The Appellants state with regard to consideration (f) that they object to the fact that Synod Coaldale used decisions (b) and (c) of Synod Orangeville 1968 as a ground for recognizing the O.P.C.; whereas Synod 1968 itself used these decisions as a ground for a further examination of the divergencies with the Word of God (cf. Acts 1968, Article 154).
5. The Appellants state that with regard to consideration (g) that the words "commit," "wish" and "desire" used by the Synod of New Westminster 1971 in the Acts (Article 92, Conclusion 1) do not prove that the O.P.C. *practices* what it "wishes" and "desires" to do. Furthermore, Synod New Westminster added that the "divergencies in confession and church polity are serious enough to remain the subject of further and frank discussions," and requested the O.P.C. to terminate their relationships with Churches that have correspondence with the Synodical G.K.N. and are members in the R.E.S.
6. The Appellants state with regard to consideration (h) that they object to the fact that the O.P.C. letter of April 1976 confirms that the O.P.C. "wholeheartedly adheres to the Westminster Confession of Faith . . .," does not prove whether this is actually practiced. The appellants further object that Synod Coaldale based the recognition of the O.P.C. on the letter of April, 1976, while by-passing the draft reply of our Committee with its criticism, without proving that the criticism was wrong.
7. The Appellants state with regard to considerations (i), (j), (k) that the fact that the O.P.C. broke their correspondence relationship with the Synodical G.K.N. and refused to enter into "ecclesiastical fellowship" with these Churches, as well as the fact that they used their membership in the R.E.S. in a positive way, is not a valid proof that the O.P.C. is a true Church.

The Church at Lincoln quoting from a letter of the O.P.C. Committee, remarks "it is clear that the O.P.C. **cherishes** their relationship with the synodical churches in the Reformed Ecumenical Synod and considers this a **close** relationship."

The Appellants further object that Synod Coaldale ignored in its consideration the fact that the O.P.C. has close relations with the Christian Reformed Churches.
8. The Appellants state with regard to consideration (l) that the length of time during which the Canadian Reformed Churches and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church have had contact, is not a ground for recognizing the O.P.C. as a true church, because it does not state that the marks of the true church are present in the O.P.C. and many important questions are still unsolved.

(ii) **Objections to the Decision of Synod Coaldale**

Several Churches object to this decision of Synod Coaldale to recognize the O.P.C. as a true Church according to Article 29 of the Belgic Confession: The Church of Burlington-West, Watford, Grand Rapids, Smithville, Chilliwack and Chatham, as well as br. W.C. vandenHaak. They charge that Synod Coaldale did not prove that the marks of the true Church are present in the O.P.C. They come with the following objections:

a. Preaching and Doctrine

1. *The doctrine of the Church*

The distinction between the Church visible and invisible teaches two Churches.

2. *The doctrine of the Covenant*

The Westminster Standards teach two covenants, one with the elect, and one with the believers and their seed.

3. *The doctrine of Faith*

The Westminster Standards teach that "assurance" is not an essential element of true faith. This is contrary to Scripture (Hebrews 11:1; Romans 4:18-21; Ephesians 3:12) and conflicts with Lord's Day 7 of the Heidelberg Catechism.

4. *The doctrine of the observance of the Law*

The Westminster Standards teach that the Sabbath is also based on the law of nature. The omission of "schools" is not in harmony with the Heidelberg Catechism Lord's Day 38.

5. *The doctrine of the immortality of the Soul*

This doctrine is not found in Scripture nor in our Confessions and has been refuted by our Churches when they rejected the decisions of Synod Sneek-Utrecht 1942.

6. *The distinction between office-bearers and common believer:*

The common believer is not bound by the Confession; whereas the office-bearers are bound.

b. Sacraments

1. The dual conception of the Church and Covenant may lead to a two-fold meaning of baptism for a "double seed."

2. There is the fear that the Lord's Supper is not kept "holy" when people are admitted who (only) believe in Jesus as their Saviour and that the Lord's Supper is "open."

c. Discipline

1. The O.P.C. obstructs its own discipline because common believers are not bound by the confessional standards, and because they have an "open table," and permits believers of "any" denomination to partake in the Lord's Supper over whom the session has no authority.

2. The O.P.C. has contact with the Christian Reformed Church which includes pulpit exchange and joint worship services.

3. The O.P.C. does not take a firm stand regarding membership in Free Masons and Unions.

d. Church Polity

It is incorrect to take as starting point for the government of the Church, the Church Universal of which the denominations and the particular Churches are "manifestations." Speaking about "levels" of manifestations is objectionable because it leads to:

- elders receiving authority outside their local Church in the Presbytery;
- higher judicatories supervising the lower ones;
- higher judicatories doing that which belongs to the local Church;
- Presbyteries acting as "cooperate superintendent" instead of being the Council of a local Church according to I Timothy 4:14.

B. Considerations

(i) Objections to Considerations (a) to (l) considered

1. From Synod Edmonton 1965 to Synod Coaldale 1977, the divergencies have been discussed, studied and evaluated. In their Report to Synod 1971 the Committee for Contact with the O.P.C. concluded that the divergencies "are not of such a nature that they should prevent the Canadian Reformed Churches from recognizing the Orthodox Presbyterian Church as a true Church of the Lord Jesus Christ (see Acts, Synod 1971, Article 92, Observation 3 and Appendix Supplement V).

Synod New Westminster 1971 concluded: "To acknowledge gratefully, 1. that the Orthodox Presbyterian Church is a group of Churches that commit themselves to the Scriptures as the infallible Word of God, and that wish to maintain the Creeds, based on this Word of God; 2. that the Orthodox Presbyterian Church desires to regulate and order the government of the Church in accordance with the Scriptural confession, namely that 'all its decisions should be founded upon the revealed will of God' (Form of Government, Chapter I, 7)."

This conclusion was a positive response and general evaluation to Observation 3 of Synod 1971, Acts, Article 92, although this decision does not give a clear and detailed evaluation of the divergencies.

2. Since 1971, the mandate to compare the divergencies with the Word of God was no longer deemed necessary, because of the evaluating Report of the Committee to Synod 1971 and the Conclusions 1 and 2 of that Synod. Although it is regrettable that Synod 1971 did not give a detailed evaluation.

In coming to the statement that the divergencies are due to different origins, Synod Coaldale indicated its disagreement with the critical evaluation as given by the Committee appointed by Synod Toronto and gave an evaluation in line with the Report to Synod 1971 and with the conclusions of Synod 1971.

When Synod Coaldale stated that "continued discussion" of the divergencies is "desirable," it indicated that these divergencies are not of such a nature that they are an impediment for recognition; they are weaknesses and imperfections in the Westminster Standards and Form of Government of the O.P.C. which would benefit from a careful amendment.

3. The fact that Synod Amersfoort 1967 used the conclusion of the Deputies of the Regional Synod of Groningen, namely that the Westminster Confession of Faith is "een voluit Gereformeerd belijdenis-geschrift" as a ground in coming to correspondence with the Korean Presbyterian Church (Koryu-pa) shows that this statement was taken over by Synod Amersfoort.

Although this statement, which was taken over by Synod Amersfoort, is not binding as such on the Canadian Reformed Churches, they can and may use the Synodical considerations of Churches with which they have correspondence.

4. Since the divergencies have been studied, examined and evaluated after 1968, the statements of Synod Orangeville 1968 (Acts, Article 154, B, C) can also be used for recognition of the O.P.C.
5. The fact that Synod New Westminster 1971 did not give a detailed evaluation of the divergencies as dealt with in the Report of the Deputies for Contact with the O.P.C., but at the same time made certain very positive statements about the O.P.C. appears contradictory; nevertheless, the statements of Synod 1971 cannot be interpreted in such a way so as to deny the conclusions of the Report of the Deputies for Contact with the O.P.C. to Synod 1971.
6. The fact that the letter of April 1976 confirms that the "O.P.C. wholeheartedly adheres to the Westminster Confession of Faith . . ." is not a statement of the letter of the O.P.C. Committee, but a conclusion of Synod Coaldale from this letter.

Although Synod Coaldale gave a positive evaluation of the letter of the O.P.C., it is regrettable that this Synod, in dealing with the draft reply of our Committee, did not give a clear and detailed evaluation of its criticisms of this reply.

7. In terminating their relationship with the Synodical G.K.N., the O.P.C. removed one of the impediments that lay in the way of our having correspondence with it (cf. Synod 1968, Article 154, E, 4) and Synod Toronto 1974 called this decision "a cause for gratitude" (Acts, Article 149, 3, a). On the other hand, the membership of the O.P.C. in the R.E.S. and the indirect contact that this implies with the Synodical G.K.N. continues to remain a cause for concern.

In this regard, it has to be admitted that while Synod 1971 requested the O.P.C. "brotherly and urgently . . . to also terminate their relationship with Churches, that maintain correspondence with the (Synodical) Gereformeerde Kerken in The Netherlands, as well as membership in the Reformed Ecumenical Synod," Synod 1974 and 1977 charged the Committee for Contact "to discuss and evaluate the relationships of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and with other Churches, as the Reformed Presbyterian Church (Evangelical Synod) and the Christian Reformed Church" (Acts 1974, Article 149, Recommendation 3, c; Acts 1977, Article 91, IV, d), thereby creating confusion as to our course of action as Canadian Reformed Churches with respect to the O.P.C. and their relationship with the R.E.S. and the Christian Reformed Church.

It can not be denied that the fraternal relationship which the O.P.C. has with the Christian Reformed Church continues to pose a problem; however, this matter has been given to our Committee for Contact with the O.P.C. for study and evaluation, a mandate which has yet to be completed.

At the same time, it must be acknowledged that in the exercise of these relationships, there is no proof given that the O.P.C. fulfills its responsibilities in such a way so as to produce compromise in its Scriptural and confessional position.

The membership of the O.P.C. in the R.E.S. and its relationship with the Christian Reformed Church, while being a cause for concern and a reason for further discussion, is not of such a nature that it prevents us from calling the O.P.C. a true Church.

8. Although the Appellants are right in remarking that the time element as such is no ground for recognizing the O.P.C., Synod Coaldale took into consideration the fact that during those 12 years Committees have given reports of their findings to several Synods and that Synods

1971, 1974, 1977 have come to certain conclusions regarding the contact; however, it is regrettable that a detailed and clear evaluation has not been given.

(ii) Objections to the decision of Synod Coaldale considered

Regarding the objections mentioned under II, A, (ii) a, b, c, d, of the observations, the following must be considered:

1. Previous Synods of the Canadian Reformed Churches in their positive statements about the O.P.C. have acknowledged that the grace of God has also been given to these Churches (Galatians 2:9).
2. The Westminster Standards have traditionally been recognized as belonging to the Reformed Confessions. Also, our Sister-Churches in The Netherlands have since the Secession of 1834 recognized these Standards as Reformed and welcomed to their Synods delegates whose Churches had the Westminster Standards as part of their creedal basis.
3. The fact that a Church is called "a true Church according to Article 29 of the Belgic Confession" does not mean that it is a "pure" or "perfect" Church (cf. Revelation 2 and 3). A true Church can still have weaknesses but yet fight the good fight of faith and listen to the voice of the Good Shepherd.
4. Notwithstanding the fact that the Westminster Standards use expressions and distinctions that are absent in Scripture (invisible and visible church, covenant with the elect, assurance of faith is not essential, law of nature), it has not been proven that these expressions and distinctions warrant the evaluation that a Church that adheres to such Standards cannot be called a true Church.
5. Notwithstanding the fact that the Form of Government of the O.P.C. reveals a number of differences when compared with our Church Order, it has not been proven that this difference in church polity prevents a Church from being called a true Church (cf. Article 85, Church Order).
6. That some Churches still have doubts and reservations, impressions and fears, does not *prove* that the O.P.C. violates the second mark of the true Church.
7. The Report of our Committee for Contact with the O.P.C. to Synod New Westminster 1971 "learned on inquiry that the Communion Table in the O.P.C. is neither 'open' in the sense that everyone who presents himself as a believer is admitted to the Lord's Table, nor 'closed' in the sense that exclusively communicant members of the O.P.C. are allowed to partake in the Lord's Supper. The officers of each local church decide whether or not one who is not a member of the O.P.C. on his request is to be admitted to the Table of the Lord." Admitting non-members, after an examination, to the Lord's Supper is not a sufficient reason for denying that the O.P.C. is a true Church.
8. It has not been proven that the O.P.C. condones membership in Free Masons and Unions.
9. Because of the history of the O.P.C. and the help that it has received in the past from the Christian Reformed Church, it is understandable that it is difficult for the O.P.C. to sever all ties with this Church, and seeing that the contact between the O.P.C. and the Christian Reformed Church is still under investigation by our Committee, Synod is unable to say at this point that it forms an impediment to calling the O.P.C. a true Church.

C. Recommendations

Synod decide:

1. To express regret that the evaluation of the divergencies, as discussed in the letter of April, 1976, was not explained in detail by Synod Coaldale 1977, before stating that these divergencies "do not form an impediment to recognize the Orthodox Presbyterian Church as Churches of the Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts, 1977, Article 91, Consideration h).
2. To admit that this neglect may have given the impression in the Churches that this recognition was "premature."
3. For the benefit of our Churches a detailed evaluation of these divergencies, showing them not to be an impediment in recognizing the Orthodox Presbyterian Church as a true Church, should yet be provided.
To incorporate this task in the mandate of the Committee for Contact with the O.P.C.
4. To declare that this does not imply that the statement made by Synod Coaldale 1977 re: the Orthodox Presbyterian Church as a true Church was wrong.
5. Not to accede to the requests of the Churches at Watford, Grand Rapids, Smithville, Lincoln and Chilliwack and of br. W.C. vandenHaak.

ADOPTED

III. A. Observations

1. The Appellants object to the fact that Synod Coaldale, in creating a new relationship called "ecclesiastical contact," gave no grounds as to the need and desirability of such a relationship.
2. The Appellants also object because they are of the opinion that Synod Coaldale 1977 has undermined the norms for an ecclesiastical relationship on the basis of Scripture and our Reformed Confessions, like our Churches had maintained them in the rules for correspondence, by establishing a form of ecclesiastical contact with Churches which allow indirect and direct relationship with other Churches that have become false or are deviating from the Reformed standards (see: Christian Reformed Church, the Reformed Ecumenical Synod, the Synodical Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland).
3. The Appellants state that this relationship of ecclesiastical contact conflicts with the decision of Synod Toronto 1974, Recommendation 2, "Not to take a decision regarding the fraternal relationship since Synod does not know what exactly is the contents of such fraternal relationship." Synod had to await a clarification from the Committee.
4. One of the Appellants fears that such a temporary relationship, as created by Synod Coaldale, may become a permanent one.
5. The Appellants object to the fact that "ecclesiastical contact" allows for a delegate of the O.P.C. to be present at our General Synods and to receive privileges of the floor, since this is only possible in a sister-church relationship; it conflicts with Article 33 and 50, Church Order and makes it possible for such a delegate to influence or rule our Churches and poses a danger because the O.P.C. has contact with the Christian Reformed Church and indirectly with the Synodical G.K.N.
6. The Appellants request Synod, on the basis of their objections, to declare that the decision of Synod Coaldale to "offer to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church a temporary relationship called 'ecclesiastical contact' " is unfounded and ill conceived and/or "no longer effective" and to continue contact in the manner prior to 1977.

B. Considerations

1. In considerations a, b, c, of the Acts 1977, Article 91, III, Synod Coaldale expressed the need and desirability of a new temporary relationship, after having concluded that it could recognize the O.P.C. as true Churches, when it pointed at:
 - (a) the prayer of Christ for unity;
 - (b) the desirability of having official rules for practical use;
 - (c) the need for an interim relationship, since a correspondence relationship cannot be reached at this time.

The Appellants have not proven these grounds to be invalid.

2. Synod Coaldale, by establishing a new form of official contact (ecclesiastical contact) created a relationship with requirements different from the only relationship known in the Canadian Reformed Churches up until 1977 (correspondence). However, Synod Coaldale established this "ecclesiastical contact" relationship, not to conflict with or to undermine, but to lead to, a correspondence relationship (see Article 91, III, Consideration e, Recommendation c).

It is regrettable that Synod Coaldale did not give a clear evaluation of the relationship of the O.P.C. with other Churches, especially with the Christian Reformed Church and its membership in the R.E.S., *before* coming to a decision to establish a temporary form of contact (see II, B, 7).

Nevertheless, our Churches have the calling to recognize the grace of our Lord and Saviour in gathering and preserving His Churches also outside our own federation, where that grace is at work. Our Churches must not deny this grace of our Lord on the basis of existing differences. Our Churches, in humble awareness of their own shortcomings and imperfections, must also be patient with regard to relationships which the O.P.C. has with other Churches, since these relationships are the consequence of a different origin and/or a different history.

3. Ecclesiastical Contact is not in conflict with the decision of Synod Toronto 1974, since this Synod could not accept fraternal relations, because it did "not know what exactly is the contents of such fraternal relationship" (see Acts 1974, Article 149, Recommendation 2).

Ecclesiastical Contact is not identical with fraternal relations; since it is not permanent, does not include pulpit exchange, intercommunion, joint action, etc.).

4. Synod Coaldale 1977 in its decision regarding "ecclesiastical contact" states "with the hope and intent that eventually full correspondence, expressing the unity of the true faith can be established" and decided "to offer to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church a temporary relationship" (Acts 1977, Article 91, Consideration e, and Recommendation).
5. Up until 1977 our Churches promised in their rules for correspondence to admit delegates of our sister Churches to our Synods. This promise and its reality in 1974 (Ds. S.S. Cnossen of The Netherlands) was *never* appealed as conflicting with Article 33 and 50 of the Church Order.

The fact that Synod Coaldale included such a provision in the rules for "ecclesiastical contact" with the O.P.C. does not prove that it is in conflict with the Church Order (cf. Article 85, Church Order). Giving such a delegate the privilege of the floor, but no vote, has not been proven to be "ruling" or "influencing" the Churches.

6. Notwithstanding the fact that Synod Coaldale 1977 did not give a clear evaluation of the divergencies and the relationship of the O.P.C. with other Churches, it has not been proven that "ecclesiastical contact," as a

temporary relationship in order to come to correspondence, is of such a nature that it needs to be rescinded.

In any case, it would be difficult to un-do the decision of Synod Coaldale 1977 to offer "ecclesiastical contact" to the O.P.C. now that this form of relationship has been accepted by the O.P.C. and is functioning, and whereas the Dutch sister-Churches have also adopted this form of contact (see Acta, Groningen-Zuid, Article 139).

C. Recommendations

Synod decide:

1. Not to accede to the requests of the Churches: Burlington-West, Watford, Grand Rapids, Lincoln, Smithville, Chilliwack, Chatham.
2. Not to accede to the request of br. W.C. vandenHaak. ADOPTED

ARTICLE 98

The Apostles' Creed

Committee II presents its report on the revision of the Apostles' Creed. After an extensive discussion, the Committee withdraws its report for further consideration.

ARTICLE 99

Closed Session — Appeal of the Church at Neerlandia

Synod decides to deal with the appeal of Neerlandia in a completely closed session. Rev. Cl. Stam requests that his objection to this procedure be recorded in the Acts.

AFTERNOON SESSION — WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1980

ARTICLE 100

Appeal — the Church at Neerlandia

Committee III presents its report on the appeal of the Church at Neerlandia against certain decisions of the Regional Synod West, Oct./Nov. 1979. The discussion begins.

EVENING SESSION — WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1980

ARTICLE 101

Re-opening — Adjournment

After a short discussion, Synod decides to meet in Committees, thereby giving Committee III an opportunity to revise its report.

ARTICLE 102

Adjournment

Elder H. Buist asks the brothers to sing Psalm 47:1 and leads in closing prayer. Synod adjourns.

MORNING SESSION — THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 1980

ARTICLE 103

Re-opening — Acts

The Chairman calls on the brothers to sing Hymn 21:1. He reads Isaiah 53:1-6 and leads in prayer.

The Acts, Articles 96-102, are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 104

Adjournment

Synod adjourns and the Advisory Committees meet.

EVENING SESSION — THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 1980

ARTICLE 105

Re-opening — Letter of Acceptance from Rev. C. Van Dam

Roll call is held.

The letter of acceptance from the Rev. C. Van Dam is read.

ARTICLE 106

Request — Committee I

Committee I requests advice in the matter of giving the floor to members of the *Book of Praise* (Psalm and Hymn Section) Committee. This request is granted by means of an adopted motion.

ARTICLE 107

The Apostles' Creed

Committee II presents:

- A. **Material** — Agenda VIII, B, 8 — Report from the Committee, June 1979, June 1980.
- B, 9 — Additional Report with corrections.
 - B, 10 — Letter from the Church at Carman re: The Apostles' Creed.
 - B, 11 — Letter from the Church at Barrhead re: The Apostles' Creed.
 - B, 12 — Letter from the Church at Watford re: The Apostles' Creed.
 - B, 13 — Letter from the Church at Cloverdale re: The Apostles' Creed.
 - B, 14 — Letter from the Church at London re: The Apostles' Creed.

B. Observations:

1. The Committee has presented General Synod with a proposed Revised edition of the Apostles' Creed on the basis of the mandate received from Synod Coaldale 1977, Acts, Article 60.

2. a) In its submission to Synod, October 30, 1980, the Committee proposes the following changes in the Apostles' Creed as it appears in our present *Book of Praise*:
 - "Creator" instead of "Maker";
 - "I believe" instead of "and (in Jesus . . .)";
 - "only" instead of "only begotten";
 - "died" instead of "dead";
 - "into the realm of death" instead of "into hell";
 - "arose" instead of "rose again";
 - "there" instead of "thence";
 - "the" instead of "a (holy catholic church)"
- b) It is to be noted that the numbering (I-XII) has been changed to I, II, III (Trinitarian Division).
3. a) Several of the churches submitted proposals which now agree with the Committee's Revised Proposal.
- b) The Church at Cloverdale proposes a comma after "God, (the Father)," but provides no reason.
- c) The Church at Watford prefers "only begotten" or "only born" to the suggested "only Son."
- d) The Church at Barrhead proposes, "He suffered, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, dead and buried."
- e) The Churches at London and Watford prefer "hell" to "hades."
- f) The Church at Carman proposes "realm of the dead." The Church at Cloverdale explains why the word "hell" should be discarded in favour of "the place of death."

The Church at Cloverdale seems to prefer "rose" instead of "arose" and "I believe in a holy catholic church" instead of the proposed "I believe the holy, catholic church."
- g) The Church at Watford prefers "a" instead of "the" (church), and also prefers "flesh" to "body."

C. Considerations:

1. The Committee has not provided Synod with adequate reasons for all the proposed changes:
 - a) 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 Committee is "convinced" but does not provide proof that the early Christian Church understood the word "Hades" only in terms of "the realm of death." There are Scripture passages which use the word "Hades" in the sense of "hell" (e.g. Luke 10:15; Luke 16:23).

Although the "Reformed" explanation of the term "Hades" may perhaps be historically doubtful (taking it as a summary of Christ's suffering rather than a chronological occurrence), the explanation of this article as found in the Heidelberg Catechism is Biblically sound.

Synod sees no reason to incorporate this change. If the version "realm of death" is not adopted, the word "died" is better rendered as previously "dead and buried."
 - b) The definite article "the" (with respect to the church) may be in the International Consultation Text, but is not found in the original manuscripts. It is not clear how the addition of the word "the . . . church" would more express the unicity of the Church.

Synod sees no reason to incorporate this change.

2. A change which may very well be adopted is the version "only Son" in accordance with the original Latin text (unicus) and various Scripture passages (e.g. John 1:14).

This change 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?"

3. The other suggested changes are not so much matters of revision but simply matters of translation and pose no problems for adoption.

4. The new numbering (I-III) is suitable in the light of Lord's Day 8 of the Heidelberg Catechism and may well be introduced.

5. a) The Church at Barrhead suggests placing a comma after "suffered." According to Barrhead, the "fact that Jesus suffered under Pontius Pilate . . . is corrected more or less in Answer 37 of the Catechism."

However, Barrhead overlooks the fact that, although Question 37 deals with the meaning of Christ's suffering, Question 38 deals specifically with His suffering under Pontius Pilate.

b) The Church at Cloverdale overlooks the fact that "to believe in" implies "to trust upon," which trust may only be in God (Jeremiah 17:5, 7).

c) The Church at Watford proposes to accept "flesh" instead of "body," whereas, Cloverdale proposes to retain "body" in the place of "flesh." Since the reasons given are not decisive either way, it is best to retain the existing version which is also in keeping with the International Consultation Text.

D. Recommendations:

Synod decide:

1. To adopt the "Revised Committee Proposal" of the Apostles' Creed as amended by Synod.

2. To accept the numbering I, II, III. ADOPTED

The adopted revision of the Apostles' Creed reads as follows:

I. I believe in God the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

II. I believe in Jesus Christ,
His only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
and born of the virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead and buried;

He descended into hell.

On the third day He arose from the dead;

He ascended into heaven,

and sits at the right hand of God the Father almighty;

from there He will come to judge the living and the dead.

III. I believe in the Holy Spirit;
I believe a holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.

ARTICLE 108

Bible Translations

Committee IV presents its report on Bible translations. The discussion begins.

ARTICLE 109

Adjournment

Rev. Cl. Stam asks the brothers to sing Hymn 61:1, 3, and leads in prayer. Synod adjourns.

MORNING SESSION — FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 1980

ARTICLE 110

Re-opening

Rev. D. VanderBoom, the Chairman, calls the Synod to order. He requests that Hymn 19:1, 5, be sung; he reads Isaiah 55:1-5 and leads in prayer.

ARTICLE 111

Bible Translations

Committee IV presents:

- A. **Material** — Agenda VIII, G, 1 — Report of the Committee for Bible Translations, appointed by Synod Coaldale 1977, plus appendix.
- G, 2 — Letter from the Church at Edmonton re: *Revised Standard Version*.
- G, 3 — Letter from the Church at Carman re: *Revised Standard Version* and *New King James Version*.
- G, 4 — Letter from the Church at Cloverdale re: *New International Version*.

B. Observations

1. The Committee on Bible Translations was mandated by Synod Coaldale (Acts, Articles 104-5) "to continue to make recommendations to the Standard Bible Committee for changes considered necessary in the Revised Standard Version translation"; "to keep the Churches posted as to the developments in new editions of the Revised Standard Version"; "to make a comparative study of the New American Standard Bible and the New International Version with the Revised Standard Version and the King James Version in order to determine which one translation can be positively recommended for use by the churches, whereby the criteria are: Faithfulness to the original text and linguistic character of the translation"; "to report to the next Synod on the progress or the result of its work."
2. The Committee reports that it concentrated its efforts on the comparative study and for that reason made no recommendations for changes to the Standard Bible Committees of the R.S.V.
3. As a result of its comparative study, the Committee reports:
 - (1) "None of the four translations can be qualified as unscriptural.

- (2) The KJV cannot function any longer as a translation in contemporary English and as the best rendering of the original text.
 - (3) It is generally felt that the NIV is the most appealing but not the most exact one.
 - (4) The NASB, in spite of its closeness to the KJV in sticking to the letter of the accepted text, misses the appeal which the KJV once had because of the beauty of its language and style and the clarity of expression.
 - (5) The RSV is acknowledged as a scholarly, sound translation in dignified English. A weak point in the rendering of textually disputed places in the Prophets is that the RSV in more than one instance, without absolute necessity, gives preference to the readings of the ancient versions over the readings of the Hebrew masoretic text in its first edition of the Old Testament."
4. The Committee understands its mandate in such a way that *one* modern translation should be recommended to the Churches. It asks the question: "did our study of the NASB and the NIV result in a preference of one of these modern translations above the RSV?" It answers, "on the basis of our comparative study our answer is negative."
- It states that the KJV has become "obsolete," that the N.A.S.B. is "too literal to be lucid and clear," that the N.I.V. is "too free for use in the pulpit."
5. As for the R.S.V., the Committee notes that previous Synods have left it in the freedom of the Churches, that the R.S.V. recommends itself as a scholarly word for word translation, that the English of the R.S.V. is dignified and best suited for liturgical use, that it has broad acceptance, and that the future offers good hope for more improvements.

On the basis of the afore-mentioned, the Committee recommends that Synod decides:

- 1a. "to use the Revised Standard Version for the Scripture quotations in the linguistic modernization of the Creeds and the Liturgical Forms as much as possible.
- 1b. to recommend to the churches, for the sake of desired uniformity, to use this translation in the worship services and for catechism instruction."

Furthermore, the Committee recommends,

"to leave it in the freedom of the churches to use the King James Version, The New American Standard Bible or the New International Version, if the acceptance of the Revised Standard Version meets with insurmountable objections.

Grounds.

- a. The use of one and the same Bible Version, though desirable, is not an ordinance of God nor a rule of the Church Order.
 - b. The question which version should be used by the churches has been a controversial point within the churches for decades. To make the use of one particular version binding does not solve the controversy and does certainly not promote peace and unity in and among the churches."
6. A Minority Report of the Rev. W. Huizinga is also included with the Committee's report. It states "that a completely acceptable translation has not come as yet." The K.J.V. is "outdated," the R.S.V. is "scholarly and sound" but "its faithfulness to the original text is the problem," the N.I.V. "is one of the most faithful However . . . it tends to be too interpreta-

tive, and in this sense is not always as faithful to the original text as it should be."

The Minority Report recommends that the use of the K.J.V. "cease," unless a local church has insurmountable objections to the other translations. It desires to leave the churches "free to use any of the three modern translations which were investigated — R.S.V., N.A.S.B., N.I.V."

It further recommends that a new committee be appointed to make recommendations to various translation boards, to keep the churches posted, to continue the comparative study, to invite submissions and to report to the next Synod.

7. The Church at Edmonton asks Synod to consider adopting the Minority Report.

It states that it has certain misgivings about the Majority Report due to the fact that the "work of our previous Committees (1974/1977) was not weighed sufficiently," that emphasis is placed on "dignified and contemporary English instead of on accuracy in translation." It also states that "we have absolutely no assurance whatsoever that its Committee on Translation will faithfully translate from the accepted Hebrew and Greek text without adding all kinds of emendations." This fear is added to by an enclosure sent to Synod dealing with the intent of a certain Task Force in which a call is made to remove "sexist" language from the R.S.V.

8. The Church at Carman expresses concern about "unnecessary corrections and emendations" in the R.S.V., gives several examples of this, and urges Synod to warn its Committees to be on their guard.

It also requests Synod to include in the mandate of the to-be appointed Committee the New King James Version, because "If this edition combines the old faithful honoring of the text of the A.V. with the gain of present availability of manuscripts unknown in 1611, it is worth looking at."

9. The Church at Cloverdale recommends that Synod "refrain from leaving the use of the N.I.V. to the freedom of the churches." It bases this recommendation on the fact that the N.I.V. with its dynamic equivalent approach promotes greater clarity at the expense of faithfulness and fidelity to the original text (cf. Matthew 13:32; Luke 9:51-53; John 3:5; Acts 10:20; 11:12; James 1:2), that its method of translation makes it doubtful whether this translation can be left free for liturgical use, and that its "recent" character which means that it is still undergoing examination and "has yet to pass the test of durability and general ecclesiastical acceptability," makes it premature to leave such a version in the freedom of the churches.

B. Considerations

1. The Committee has fulfilled a part of its mandate, namely with regard to making a "comparative study" of various translations. It saw no need to inform the Churches concerning new editions of the R.S.V., since none were produced during the last three years. It was unable to make further recommendations for change to the Standard Bible Committee of the R.S.V., due to its concentration on the comparative study. This part of the mandate remains uncompleted.
2. The comparative study reveals that none of the four translations investigated can be called unscriptural; however, each translation suffers from some shortcomings. According to the Committee, the K.J.V. "cannot function any longer," the N.I.V. is "not the most exact," the N.A.S.B. lacks in "the beauty of its language and style and the clarity of expres-

sion," the R.S.V. has "a weak point in the rendering of textually disputed places in the Prophets."

3. The Committee has correctly interpreted its mandate so as to result in the expression of a preference for one of the translations. It has declared that it cannot express a preference, since the result of the comparative study was "negative." Nevertheless, the Majority Report of the Committee does express a "preference" for the R.S.V.
4. The Majority Report of the Committee bases this preference on the fact that the R.S.V. is a "scholarly word for word translation," that the English of the R.S.V. is "dignified and best suited for liturgical use," and that the future offers good hope for more improvements. Furthermore, the Majority Report expresses the opinion that the R.S.V. best lends itself "for the Scripture quotations in the linguistic modernization of the Creeds and the Liturgical Forms," and that the use of the R.S.V. should be recommended to the Churches so that uniformity results as to which translation should be used in the worship services and catechism instruction.
5. The Minority Report of the Committee does not wish to express any preference but to leave the Churches free to use the R.S.V., the N.A.S.B., and the N.I.V. It calls the K.J.V. "outdated" and wants its use "to cease." It designates the R.S.V. as "scholarly and sound," yet goes on to state "its faithfulness to the original text is the problem." The N.I.V. is said, on the one hand, to be "one of the most faithful in using the original text," but, on the other hand, it "tends to be too interpretative" and is "not always as faithful to the original as it should be." This Report speaks in a contradictory fashion regarding the R.S.V. and the N.I.V. Neither does it address itself to the matter of linguistic modernization of the Creeds and Liturgical Forms, nor to the issue of uniformity, as far as translation is concerned.

Furthermore, its recommendation that a new committee be appointed to make recommendations to various translation boards is unrealistic if one takes into account the amount of time and personnel this would take.

6. The Church at Edmonton, although requesting that Synod adopt the Minority Report, does not detail its criticisms of the Majority Report, does not base its fears on an accomplished fact but on what *may* happen in the future with the R.S.V.
7. The Church at Carman, in urging Synod to warn "its Committees to be on guard" with respect to "unnecessary corrections and emendations" in the R.S.V., is urging Synod to do something which is already included in the mandate of the Committee (see Acts 1977, Article 104, Recommendation 2, a).

In addition, its request for a study of the New King James Version (Nashville: Nelson) is based, not on a submission which proves that this translation is worthy of consideration, but on an "if" ("If this edition . . ."). Such a basis does not form a proper ground for adding to the mandate of the Committee on Bible Translations.

8. The Church at Cloverdale, in requesting Synod to refrain from leaving the use of the N.I.V. in the freedom of the Churches, points to its translation method which results in greater clarity at the expense of faithfulness and fidelity, and on the "recent" character of this translation.

The Majority and the Minority Reports of the Committee both point to a lack of exactness and faithfulness with respect to the N.I.V. for its "free" translation.

The recent character of the N.I.V. also warrants consideration since it is a known fact that over the years a number of translations that have

been widely endorsed and that have enjoyed favourable sales, have later faded on the ecclesiastical scene (cf. A.S.V., Berkeley Version, Jerusalem Bible).

C. Recommendations

Synod decides:

1. To thank the Committee on Bible Translations for its faithful labours.
2. a) To use the Revised Standard Version for the Scripture quotations in the linguistic modernization of the Creeds and the Liturgical Forms as much as possible.
b) To recommend to the Churches to use this translation in the worship services and for catechism instruction in order to come to uniformity of practice.
3. To leave it in the freedom of the Churches to use the K.J.V. and the N.A.S.B., if the acceptance of the Revised Standard Version meets with insurmountable objections.
4. To re-appoint the Committee on Bible Translations with the mandate:
 - a) To continue to make recommendations to the Standard Bible Committee for changes necessary in the Revised Standard Version translation;
 - b) To keep the Churches posted as to the developments in new editions of the Revised Standard Version;
 - c) To report to the next Synod.
5. To send the letter of the Church at Carman to the Committee on Bible Translations asking it to take into account the emendations mentioned.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 112

Adjournment

Rev. S. DeBruin requests permission to be absent this evening. This request is granted.

Synod adjourns. The Advisory Committees meet.

EVENING SESSION — FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 1980

ARTICLE 113

Re-opening — Acts

The Chairman requests that Hymn 5:1, 2, be sung. The roll call reveals that Rev. S. DeBruin is absent.

A word of welcome is extended to the brothers W. Helder and G. VanDooren who have received the privilege of the floor as members of the *Book of Praise* (Psalm and Hymn Section) Committee.

The Acts, Articles 103-112, are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 114

Book of Praise

Committee I presents its report on the *Book of Praise* (Psalm and Hymn Section). The discussion begins.

ARTICLE 115

Adjournment

Rev. J. Visscher calls on the brothers to sing Psalm 107:1, 2, and leads in closing prayer. Synod adjourns.

MORNING SESSION — SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 1980

ARTICLE 116

Re-opening

The Chairman requests that Psalm 85:3 be sung and reads Psalm 85. He leads in prayer.

The roll call reveals that Rev. S. DeBruin is present again.

ARTICLE 117

Book of Praise

The discussion continues.

Brs. W. Helder and G. VanDooren are thanked for their advice.

ARTICLE 118

Adjournment

Elder J. Bartels requests permission to be absent from Synod on Monday morning. Permission is granted.

Elder G. VanWoudenberg proposes that Psalm 138:1, 3, be sung. He leads in prayer. Synod adjourns.

MORNING SESSION — MONDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1980

ARTICLE 119

Re-opening

The Chairman requests that Hymn 24:7 be sung, reads from Romans 5:1-11 and leads in prayer.

Elder A. Koster is present in place of Elder H. Buist who is unable to attend any longer.

Elder J. Bartels is absent, as is the Rev. M. van Beveren.

ARTICLE 120

Adjournment

Synod adjourns. The Advisory Committees meet.

AFTERNOON SESSION — MONDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1980

ARTICLE 121

Re-opening

Elder J. Bartels is present again; whereas the Rev. M. van Beveren is still absent.

ARTICLE 122

Book of Praise (Psalm and Hymn Section)

Committee I presents:

- A. **Material** — Agenda VIII, B, 1 — Report of the Committee for the Revision Psalms and Hymns with enclosures: Psalm and Hymn Section.
- B, 2 — Letter from the Church at Watford re: Committee on Church Book.
- B, 3 — Proposal from the Church at Hamilton re: Psalm and Hymn Section.
- B, 4 — Letter from br. M. Menken re: Psalm and Hymn Section.
- B, 5 — Letter from br. S. Vanderploeg re: Psalm and Hymn Section.
- B, 6 — Letter from various organists re: Hymn Section.
- B, 7 — Letter from br. J.H.W. Vanderbrugghen re: Hymn Section.

B. Observations

I. Hymn Section

1. Synod Coaidaie 1977 gave the Committee the following addition to its mandate:
 - a) to coordinate the work of the Committees on the Church Book (Committees for Psalm and Hymn Section and for Doctrinal and Liturgical Forms).
 - b) to seek ways and means to make available to the membership of the Churches, the harmonization of the Psalms and Hymns which will be found in the definite edition of the *Book of Praise* and, if at all possible, insert those harmonizations in the *Book of Praise*.
 - c) to have their complete and definite reports ready by January 31, 1980, so that copies of these reports can be in the possession of the Churches nine months before the convening of Synod 1980, as provided by the Synod of Orangeville, 1968, Acts, Article 41 (see Acts, 1977, Article 60).
2. From the report of the Committee it appears that:
 - a) The completion of the Hymn Section received preference over the Psalm Section.
 - b) As far as rhyming is concerned, all suggested changes and remarks have been considered and evaluated; some proposed changes were not acceptable because of incorrect wording or prosody (see Appendix I).
 - c) In spite of the request to change "archaic" language in some Hymns, the Committee decided to keep these rhymings without change because otherwise a totally new rhyming of these Hymns would have been needed.
 - d) There were definite reasons for the deletion of some hymns and the addition of others, since some were unnecessary duplications, while others were "borderline cases" as far as truthfulness to Scripture is concerned (Old Hymns 20 and 27). The need for adding some hymns resulted from following the order of the Apostles' Creed.
 - e) The Committee on the *Book of Praise* presents the final draft of the Hymns to Synod in an enclosure (Green Booklet).

- f) Criticisms and requests for reinstating certain tunes were met as far as possible.

The matter of the choice and notation of the hymn tunes created difficulties. Many reactions, often critical, were received and advice was asked for and received from brothers whom the Committee "considered knowledgeable." The "Vereniging van Nederlandse Kerkorganisten" was approached and found willing to verify the work of the Committee. From the advice received, differences with respect to the aesthetical (lay-out) and technical (time signatures, notation, accidentals and rests) aspects became apparent.

- g) The final draft of the music of the Hymn Section has been prepared which shows that a number of melodies have been replaced and some well-liked tunes from the Hymn Section 1972 have been inserted (Appendix II).
3. Eight organists have directed a series of requests to Synod since they — for one reason or another — were too late in writing to the Committee. They request:
- a) not to adopt the Hymn Section as final;
 - b) to review the relevant material;
 - c) to give direction to achieve more uniformity;
 - d) to return to the melodies in the manner in which we used to sing them.
- They base their requests on the following:
- a) The Committee proposed to have 80 hymns in the final edition;
 - b) there are many differences in the music notation between Hymn Section 1979 and the "Music Edition of the Book of Praise";
 - c) there is a lack of uniformity in the "rest values";
 - d) the "new melodies" in the Hymn Section are not an improvement.
4. Br. M. Menken requests Synod to bring the Old Hymn 29 back into the *Book of Praise*, and to delete Hymn 1.
5. Br. J.H.W. Vanderbrugghen "cannot appreciate or agree with many melodies and musical notation." He gives a long historical review and a technical description of tempos, rests, and time-signatures and makes recommendations on these points.

He further touches upon matters similar to the ones mentioned in the letter of the organists and offers severe criticism on Hymn 1 and 38. He recommends Synod "not to accept the Provisional Hymn Section in its present form."

II. Psalm Section

1. The remarks received by the Committee on the Psalm Section were few in number. All the rhymings have been scrutinized and some Psalms have been "changed substantially," others have been "replaced completely," almost none have been left untouched to "stay as close to the unrhymed text as we could."
2. Br. S. Vanderploeg feels "that some problems have not been dealt with adequately"; his prime concern lies with the "word-tone relation":
 - a) long notes were used by the composers of the Genevan tunes to emphasize key-words in the text;
 - b) the tunes were so constructed that the melodic climaxes coincided with textual climaxes;
 - c) as a result, the text does not have its intended effect and the melody loses its character.

He, therefore, requests that the *Book of Praise* "not be made a permanent one in order that some of the drawbacks may be rectified in future editions."

3. No further material which deals specifically with the Psalms has been submitted to Synod.
4. The Committee presents the final draft of the Psalm Section to Synod in an Enclosure (Yellow Book), in which must be incorporated the changes mentioned in Appendix III, B (list of alterations).

III. *Book of Praise* (both sections)

1. The Committee on the *Book of Praise* (Psalm and Hymn Section) considers it to be imperative that the definite text be approved and that their mandate has been fulfilled, "realizing that all work is imperfect and that there is always room for improvement."

They do not propose to appoint or continue the Committee for the *Book of Praise* (Psalm and Hymn Section).

2. Since the last Synod, 1977, there was a change in membership. Rev. C. Van Dam resigned because of his move to another Province.
3. The contact with the Australian Deputies was continued; their remarks and suggestions were taken into account.
4. A letter was passed on to the Committee drawing the attention to a forthcoming conference on Psalmody (Appendix IV).

The Committee "would appreciate Synod's judgment on the desirability of representation at such a conference."

5. It appears that the interest for the *Book of Praise* is growing, also in circles outside the Canadian Reformed Churches.
6. Synod Coaldale 1977 appointed a Committee to "coordinate the work of the committees working on the contents of the *Book of Praise*" (Acts, Article 60).
7. From the contact with these Committees "it has become evident that our Church book cannot be issued (as yet) in the form as we would like to see it." It, therefore, "does appear advisable to include in the next printing of the *Book of Praise* revised forms . . . as may be approved by your assembly."

The advice is given "to have the revised rhymings of the Psalms and Hymns as adopted by Synod in one book with the Confessional and Liturgical Forms as we have them at the moment, and to publish adopted Forms in a separate booklet to prevent confusion."

8. The suggestion is made to insert into the *Book of Praise* four different "Suggested Order of Worship." Suggested, because Synod should not adopt a specific Order which is mandatory for the Churches.
9. The Churches, when adopting the final *Book of Praise* (Psalm and Hymn Section) must ensure that the rights of the Churches be safeguarded in order to keep control over the *Book of Praise*. The Committee deems it necessary that a standing Committee be appointed, that such a Committee be incorporated and receive a specific mandate:

1. The Committee shall be called: Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise* of the Canadian Reformed Churches.
2. The Committee shall hold the copyright of the *Book of Praise* on behalf of the Canadian Reformed Churches.
3. The Committee shall consist of five members, to be appointed by General Synod.
4. The Committee shall have the following duties:

- a. to prepare the contents of the definitive *Book of Praise* (Psalms, Hymns, Prayers, Forms, Creeds) for printing and publication according to synodical decisions and directives;
- b. to arrange by contract for the printing, binding, and distribution of the *Book of Praise* under the best-possible conditions and guarantees;
- c. to see to it that the *Book of Praise* remains at all times available to the Churches at reasonable prices;
- d. to incorporate in future printings of the *Book of Praise* any changes, corrections, deletions, and additions as decided by General Synods;
- e. to supervise the sale of the contents of the *Book of Praise* in whole or part to other interested parties in agreement with the copyrights;
- f. to meet as often as the fulfilment of this mandate demands, and to arrange for reimbursement of any expenses incurred in the course of its work;
- g. to report on all its activities to each General Synod in due time.

The Committee has obtained legal advice regarding this matter (Appendix V). "It is proper to mention to your assembly that the substantial legal fee (which was paid by your Committee) has been returned to us as a donation."

- 10. For the purchase of copyrights and rhymings the Committee was authorized to appeal to the Churches for financial means; the actual printing has been done by a separate Publication Committee. The money from the Churches was used solely for the contents of the *Book of Praise*. For the printing of the Hymn Section 1979, a collection was asked of the Churches (Appendix VIII).
- 11. The decision of Synod Coaldale 1977, Acts, Article 60, Recommendation 7 "to seek ways and means to make available to the membership of the churches the harmonization of the Psalms and Hymns which will be found in the definite edition of the *Book of Praise*, and if at all possible insert those harmonizations in the *Book of Praise*" was not executed. The grounds for this decision are:
 - a) harmonizations of the Psalms are readily available and harmonization of the Hymns has been made available in a Music Edition;
 - b) Reformed Churches have never produced Psalm books with a four-part setting;
 - c) by showing a four-part setting in our Church book, we could be opening doors to church-choirs and the importance of congregational unison singing, insisted upon by our churches since the Reformation of the 16th century, is diminished.
- 12. The Committee requests Synod that two members of the Committee be given the privilege of the floor when Synod discusses the *Book of Praise* (Psalm and Hymn Section).
- 13. The Church at Hamilton proposes "that the Revised Psalm and Hymn Section submitted be accepted **provisionally** only, and not be approved as a final product, and that it be used and tested by the churches until such a time as the complete Church book can be finalized."

For this proposal Hamilton gives the following grounds:

 - a) it is extremely difficult to examine the revised Psalms and Hymns in the short period before Synod;

- b) only the consistories received the revised Psalm Section: the congregations did not have an opportunity to try and test them;
 - c) the complete Church book is not ready.
14. The Church at Watford overtures Synod to re-appoint the Committee on the Church book, on the ground "that the churches were not able to scrutinize the material in the short time made possible for it."

C. Considerations

I. Hymn Section

1. Considering the mandate given to the Committee by Synod Coaldale 1977, combined with the mandates given by Synod New Westminster 1971, namely "to complete the *Book of Praise*," and Synod Toronto 1974, namely "to further improve the Hymn Section of the *Book of Praise*; and for this purpose evaluate the remarks and criticisms which have already been received and may be received," it must be concluded that the Committee has fulfilled its mandate. It has become imperative that the Churches, after having gone through several "provisional editions" and additions, receive a final edition for use in the worship services.
2. The deletion of rhymings and the addition of others has been done on the basis of decisions of Synod Orangeville 1968 (Acts, Article 87, 7b): "to delete those rhymed versions which lack the close conformity to the Scripture-text and those which lack simplicity and clarity of expression" and "those which are not scriptural in content" (e.g. Hymn 3, 16, 27, 28, 48, 55) and which show a serious omission (Hymn 31: omission of the second last verse of Psalm 139).

As to the deletion of duplicates: see — Synod Edmonton, 1965 Acts, Article 35, Decision 3g.

3. The final draft of the music shows that many remarks have been taken into consideration. Although it is regrettable that the matter of the choice and notation of melodies has created some difficulties, Synod can be grateful for the result in the "Green Booklet" and as presented in Appendix II, B.
4. Your Advisory Committee has scrutinized the latest proposed changes in rhymings and melodies and considers that:
 - a) An alternate melody for Hymn 1 is desirable, since there still are complaints about the existing one as being too "gregorian."
 - b) There should be consistency in the use of rests at the end of musical lines.
 - c) The first note in Hymn 9 should be 1/4 instead of 1/2 note.
 - d) Hymns 8 and 10 are not very suitable for congregational singing in rhyming as well as in melody. They indicate a recitative story which is too long and it does not serve the purpose for which the Hymn Section is prepared (Synod Orangeville 1968, Acts, Article 87, Recommendation 7, b sub 3: to delete those tunes which are not considered conducive to the purpose of the singing of the covenant people, namely: "the praise of the Lord").
 Further, it "lacks simplicity and clarity of expression required for the songs of the covenant" (Acts, Article 87, Recommendation 7, b sub 1). Since Hymn 10:1, 9, 10 are suitable for congregational singing, this Hymn should be retained.
 Hymn 8 should be deleted.
 - e) In Hymn 25 one note should be added in the 5th and 7th bar to make the tune to fit all stanzas.

- f) In Hymn 37 the melody does not fit the text of "Praise the Holy Spirit," since this melody is not a "song of Praise." Another tune should be found.
 - g) Hymn 38 should be sung on the melody of old Hymn 53, since many complaints are voiced and the tune has an unresolved ending.
 - h) Hymn 39 should not be sung on the proposed tune (in Appendix II, B), but on the one used in the present Hymn Section.
 - i) Hymn 48 can better be sung on the setting of old Hymn 54 in the blue edition.
 - j) In Hymn 55 the word "John's" should be replaced again by "our."
 - k) Hymn 64 should be deleted and be replaced by old Hymn 29.
 - l) Hymn 2 should be replaced by old Hymn 46.
 - m) In Hymn 34:4 the proposed change in Appendix I namely "The Author" into "Precursor" should *not* be taken over.
5. It has become apparent from the Committee report and the appendices that the requests of the organists have been anticipated and/or are inserted under Consideration 4.
 6. Synod Coaldale 1977 did not *decide* to have 80 hymns as *proposed* by the Committee; the Committee "estimated" that with the addition of rhymed portions of Scripture the number would become 80.
 7. The difference in music notation in the Hymn Section and the "Music Edition" is of no concern to Synod, since the edition of a Music Edition was not in the mandate given to the Committee.
 8. The grounds adduced by the Churches at Hamilton and Watford are not sufficient to decide to adopt the Hymn Section only "provisionally," thereby postponing the printing of a complete Psalm and Hymn section unnecessarily, or "to re-appoint the Committee on the *Book of Praise* (Psalm and Hymn Section)."

D. Recommendations

Synod decide:

1. Thankfully to adopt the Hymn Section of the *Book of Praise* as the final edition for use in the worship services of the Canadian Reformed Churches, with the understanding that:
 - a) the considerations 4, a-m are incorporated;
 - b) room is left open for necessary changes in future editions.

ADOPTED
 2. Not to accede to the request of the 8 organists "not to adopt the Hymn Section as final."
 3. Not to accede to the request of br. Vanderbruggen "not to adopt the Hymn Section in its present form."
 4. Not to adopt the proposal of the Church at Hamilton "to provisionally accept . . . the Hymn Section and approve it as a final product."
 5. Not to adopt the proposal of the Church at Watford. ADOPTED
- A motion to include Hymn 29 (old Hymn section) is adopted.
 Motions to retain Hymn 8 (new Hymn section) and Hymn 33 (old Hymn section) are defeated.

C. Considerations

II. Psalm Section

1. The Committee, in scrutinizing, changing and replacing of Psalm rhy-

ings, has fulfilled the mandate given since General Synod Toronto 1974 when the two sections were accepted by Synod. (Toronto 1974, Acts, Article 159, C; Recommendation 2, a, b: "to remain diligent with respect to possible improvements of this section.")

2. The mandate given by Synod Coaldale 1977 "to have their complete and definite reports ready by January 31, 1980" (Acts, Article 60, Recommendation 8) has been fulfilled.
3. The fact that the Psalm revision (Yellow Book) was received later than anticipated and planned is understandable since "being diligent with respect to improvements was a painstaking and time consuming work" (Report Committee to Synod Coaldale 1977, I, 1), and "more time is needed before . . . a committee can come with a proposal for a definite version" (Report III, 4).
4. The difficulty with the "word-tone relation" is partly caused by the fact that the Genevan tunes were used for French texts which causes problems for English texts.

However, the recommendation of br. VanderPloeg "not to make the *Book of Praise* a permanent one" is valid and room must be left for future changes.

5. It has become imperative that the Churches receive a final edition for use in the Worship Service, since "it appears advisable to do our utmost endeavour to see to it that the Synod 1980 can make the final decisions on a complete *Book of Praise*, which will contain not only the rhymings of Psalms and Hymns but also the Confessional and Liturgical Forms and the Church Order" and "the Churches should be provided with a definite edition of the *Book of Praise* as soon as possible" (Synod Coaldale 1977, Acts, Article 60, Considerations 1 and 5).

D. Recommendations

Synod decide:

1. Thankfully to adopt the Psalm Section of the *Book of Praise* as the final edition for use in the Worship Service of the Canadian Reformed Churches, with the understanding that room be left open for necessary changes in future editions. **ADOPTED**
2. Not to adopt the proposal of the Church at Hamilton "that the revised Psalm and Hymn Sections be accepted provisionally only and not approved as a final product." **ADOPTED**

C. Considerations

III. The Publication of the Book of Praise — Psalm and Hymn Section

1. The proposal "not to continue the Committee (Psalm and Hymn Section)" is well-founded.
2. The Committee does not make any suggestions as far as the "desirability to represent Synod at a conference on Psalmody" is concerned. Since interest has been shown in wider circles, such representation may be conducive to future improvements and may generate more interest for the *Book of Praise*.
3. The coordination of the work of the Committees on the *Book of Praise* had the attention of previous Synods which considered that "a standing committee for the Church book has to take care of the distribution . . ., has to prepare the next edition and to include the finalized edition of the Church Order" (Synod New Westminster 1971, Acts, Article 28, Consideration h, 2 and Recommendation J, 2). This Synod has to decide how this coordination shall be executed.

4. The progress in coming to a complete Church book should not be held up. The advice of the Committee to have the Psalm and Hymn Section printed with the existing Forms is well presented. The publication of the final Psalm and Hymn Section should not wait until the Forms are adopted.

5. The matter of "Suggested Orders of Worship" has never been in a mandate given to the Committee. The order of Worship is in the freedom of the Churches.

However, these suggested orders may well serve as models of Reformed Liturgy in the *Book of Praise*.

6. The matter of safeguarding the rights of the Churches was already considered at Synod New Westminster 1971.

This Synod made a decision: "after the first printing has been made available a standing committee for the Church Book has to take care of distribution, has to be the address for remarks etc., has to prepare, when necessary, the next printing and to include a finalized edition of the Church Order" (Acts, Article 28, Recommendation 8). Synod Toronto 1974 decided: "to add to the mandate . . . to take such measures that the churches retain full control over the contents of the *Book of Praise*." (Acts, Article 159 J, Recommendation 2, a).

7. The matter of the legal ownership in the property of the Churches has to be resolved by giving a Standing Committee a legal personality as a body dependent on Synod and with a close relationship between Synod and the work of this Committee.

8. For the proposal of the Church at Hamilton reference is made to II. Consideration 4 of this report.

9. It is a reason for thankfulness that the financial obligations could be met.

D. Recommendations

Synod decide:

1. Thankfully to adopt the Psalm and Hymn Sections, with the understanding that room is to be left open for changes, deletions and additions in future editions. ADOPTED

2. To express special thanks to the brothers Rev. G. VanDooren and M.M. DeGroot who have been members of the Committee on the *Book of Praise* since Synod Homewood/Carman 1954, and to thank all the brothers who during the past years have been members of the Committee and were involved in the work of composing a Genevan Psalter, with an added Hymn Section, especially the brothers Dr. W. Helder, W. VanderKamp and the Rev. W.W.J. VanOene, M.Th. ADOPTED

3. To appoint a "Standing Committee for the *Book of Praise* of the Canadian Reformed Churches" and to authorize this Committee to incorporate itself. ADOPTED

4. To give this Committee the following instructions:

a) The Committee shall be called: Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise* of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

b) The Committee shall hold in trust and protect the copyright of the *Book of Praise* on behalf of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

c) The Committee shall consist of five members, to be appointed by General Synod.

d) The Committee shall have the following duties:

i) to prepare the contents of the definitive *Book of Praise* (Psalms, Hymns, Creeds, Forms, Prayers, and Church Order) for printing and publication according to synodical decisions and directives;

- ii) to arrange by contract for the printing and binding of the *Book of Praise* under the best possible conditions and guarantees;
- iii) to handle the sale and distribution, in whole or part, of the *Book of Praise* and to deal with all other related activities to the best interest of the Canadian Reformed Churches;
- iv) to see to it that the *Book of Praise* remains at all times available to the Churches at reasonable prices;
- v) to incorporate in future printings of the *Book of Praise* any changes, corrections, deletions, and additions as decided by General Synods;
- vi) to supervise the sale of the contents of the *Book of Praise*, in whole or part, to other interested parties in agreement with the copyrights;
- vii) to meet as often as the fulfilment of this mandate demands, and to arrange for reimbursement of any expenses incurred in the course of its work;
- viii) to provide each General Synod with a financial statement and to report on all its activities. ADOPTED

5. To urge this Committee to use as an example for lay-out and music notation the Dutch "Liedboek der Kerken," in order to achieve uniform notation and a suitable format. ADOPTED

- 6. a. To include the suggested Orders of Worship in the edition of the *Book of Praise*,
- b. To make certain that the Creeds, the Confessional and Liturgical Forms and the Church Order are included in a new edition as soon as these have been adopted by General Synod. ADOPTED

7. To request the present members of the Committee on the *Book of Praise* to remain in function, until the Standing Committee has taken up its duties and work together during a transition period so that continuity can be achieved. ADOPTED

8. To publish the Report of the Committee on the *Book of Praise* (Psalm and Hymn Section) in the Acts of Synod. ADOPTED

9. To thank the Committee on the *Book of Praise* for the work done with respect to the financing and to discharge this Committee of its responsibilities. ADOPTED

10. To request the Church at Brampton, Ontario to audit the books of the Standing Committee. ADOPTED

11. To rescind the recommendation of Synod Coaldale 1977, Acts, Article 60, Recommendation 7 and return to the decision of Synod Toronto 1974, not to prepare a four-part music edition and use it in the entire *Book of Praise*. ADOPTED

12. To have the Churches represented at the Conference on Psalmody by one of the members of the Standing Committee. ADOPTED

EVENING SESSION — MONDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1980

ARTICLE 123

Book of Praise (Confessions, Prayers and Forms)

Committee II presents:

I. The Belgic Confession

- A. Material** — Agenda VIII, B, 8 — Report of the Committee on Translation and Revision of the Confessional and Liturgical Forms, June 1979, June 1980.
- B, 9 — Additional Report from the Committee (with corrections).
- B, 15 — Letter from the Church at Barrhead re: The Belgic Confession.
- B, 16 — Letter from the Church at London re: The Belgic Confession.

B. Observations

1. a) The Committee on Translation and Revision of the Confessional and Liturgical Forms has submitted to General Synod the revised Articles 1-23 of the Belgic Confession in accordance with the mandate received from Synod Coaldale 1977, Acts, Article 60, Recommendation 3, a, b, and c.
- b) The Committee did not complete its mandate and has yet to submit a revision of the Articles 24-37.
- c) The Committee served Synod with a "Revised" edition of the first 23 articles.
- d) The Committee recommends also with respect to the Belgic Confession (letter October 30, E, 2) that the revised articles be "checked on language and style by a sub-committee"
2. The Church at Barrhead requests:
 - a) that the word "souls" in the Title be changed to "man."
 - b) that the original title, "The Belgic Confession" be retained as a subtitle ("Commonly known as the Belgic Confession").
 - c) that in Article IV the word "epistles" be replaced by "letters" to concur with modern usage.
3. The Church at London proposes changes in several articles; a number of these changes have already been incorporated into the Committee's Revised Edition and will therefore not be mentioned.
 - a) London suggests that in Article II the pronoun "Him" be replaced with "God" and "the creation" by "His creation." It prefers the word "characters" instead of "letters."
 - b) London considers that in Article III the word "Himself" is not necessary.
 - c) London prefers the term "sacred" to "holy" in Article VI.
 - d) London suggests that consistency be maintained when referring to "Holy Scriptures" in Article VII.
 - e) London prefers the term "incommunicable properties" to "distinctive personal properties" in Article VIII. It also considers that in this article the words "co-eternal" and "co-essential" are not adequately reproduced in the expression of the Committee, "eternally equal in one and the same essence."

- f) London is not pleased with the new rendering "towards us" in Article IX instead of the old version "feel within ourselves." It is also pointed out that the original "dwelling in" should not be replaced by "indwelling in."
 - g) London requests that "Scripture" should be plural in Article XI for desired consistency.
 - h) London prefers "several offices" in Article XII to "specific functions."
 - i) London prefers "righteous judgments" in Article XIII to the proposed "righteous decisions."
4. Advisory Committee II observes:
- a) The word "written" has been omitted from the heading of Article III.
 - b) The Committee has deleted the words "fourteen," "seven letters of the other apostles" and "the apostle John" in Article IV. No reason has been given for these deletions.
 - c) The word "Mohammedans" is used in Article IX.
 - d) The *textus receptus* of Article XI has "Scriptures" in the plural, while the Committee has rendered this in the singular.
 - e) The Committee has opted for "sleep in their sin" in Article XV instead of the old rendition "rest securely" or the *textus receptus* "in de zonde gerust slapen."
 - f) The rendition "trembling all over" in Article XVII appears awkward denoting outward, physical trembling.
 - g) The Committee renders Hebrews 10:14 (R.S.V.) as "for all times."
 - h) The Committee retains the old version of Article XXII, "When (those benefits) they **become** ours"

C. Considerations

1.
 - a) The Committee has completed its mandate regarding the Articles 1-23 of the Belgic Confession and should therefore be discharged for this portion of its task.
 - b) The Articles 1-23, having been corrected or revised by Synod 1980, can be provisionally adopted subject to linguistic review (see Observation 1, d).
 - c) Since the Committee has served Synod with a final "Revised" edition of the Articles 1-23, a number of requests or suggestions from the Churches need no longer be dealt with. These suggestions have already been incorporated by the Committee into its Revised Draft.
 - d) Synod agrees, in accordance with the grounds adduced by the Committee, that the *textus receptus* of the Belgic Confession is the authorized Dutch and French text of Dort 1618-1619.
 - e) It is indeed essential to appoint a new Committee of language experts so that the churches may receive Forms (and Prayers) which are linguistically correct. In this way also the Revised first 23 Articles of the Belgic Confession can be checked regarding style and language before their final adoption by a future General Synod.
2.
 - a) It is indeed desirable that the title "The Belgic Confession" be retained in the form of a sub-title ("Commonly known as the Belgic Confession") since this would help in preserving the church-historical bond.
 - b) It is in agreement with modern Bible translations (e.g. the R.S.V.) that the word "epistle" be replaced by "letter," cf. I Corinthians 5:9; II Corinthians 3:2; Colossians 4:16, etc.

3. a) The title of Article II makes London's proposal (to replace "Him" by "God") unnecessary. The preference for the word "characters" (over "letters") is not substantiated, whereas the word "letters" seems to correspond more with "written" in Article III.
- b) Careful reading of Article III shows that the word "Himself" should be retained since it refers to God's **own** writing of the Law "with His own finger."
- c) The word "holy" in Article VI conforms with modern English e.g. "The Holy Bible," and there is no reason why it should not replace the word "sacred."
- d) The context will determine whether the word "Scripture" should be rendered in the singular or the plural. In the case of Article VII the *textus receptus* shows a singular.
- e) The Committee's translation in Article VIII is questionable, even if the word "incommunicable" has become somewhat obsolete in modern English. Another version is preferred.
The Committee's translation which replaces the word "co-eternal and co-essential" in Article VIII is inaccurate (better — "equally eternal").
- f) The translation "feel within ourselves" in Article IX is in accordance with the *textus receptus*. The Committee has not given reasons for the change in the expression "towards us."
There is a notable change from "the testimonies of Holy Writ" to "the three Persons."
"Indwelling in" is an unnecessary repetition of "dwelling in."
However, *indwelling* is a proper verb.
- g) In the *textus receptus* the word "Scripture" in Article XI is used as a plural (see also Consideration d above).
- h) "Specific task and function" in Article XII is a circumscription of the word "ambten" (French: *offices*) but is acceptable since it refers to created objects and beings other than man, so that by their use man may fulfill his office.
- i) The rendering "judgments" is literally more in accordance with the *textus receptus*.
4. a) The *textus receptus* requires that the last part of Article IV should read as follows, "The fourteen letters of the apostle Paul, namely . . . Philémon, and one to the Hebrews; seven other letters: James, I and II Peter, I, II and III John, Jude; and the Revelation to the apostle John." The number "fourteen" should be replaced by "thirteen," since no scholar of repute considers the letter to the Hebrews as having been written by Paul (The Committee has also made this obvious). The words "and one" should then be replaced by "the letter to the Hebrews," as shown by the Committee.
- b) The word "Mohammedans" is no longer an accurate expression and should be replaced in Article IX by "Muslims."
- c) There is no reason why the singular is used for "Scripture" in Article XI of the Revised Committee Report.
- d) The expression "sleep in their sin" in Article XV is a somewhat weak translation of the *textus receptus*. The addition of the word "peacefully" conveys the literal meaning.
- e) The Committee has made an attempt in Article XVII to translate the *textus receptus* which speaks of the total fear of man immediately after the fall.

However, this proposal, "trembling all over," lends itself to the idea as if the trembling was only physical. Since this trembling was in body and soul (for man "made himself wholly miserable") it may be better to have it read, "fleeing from him in utter fright" or "in complete trepidation."

- f) The quotation from Hebrews 10:14 (R.S.V.) should read "for all time."
- g) The textus receptus in Article XXII has "geworden zijnde." It is more accurate to translate "benefits **have** become ours."

D. Recommendations

1. To thank the Committee for the work done thus far.
2. To charge the Committee:
 - 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 24-37 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. ADOPTED
3. To pass on to the Committee the following suggested emendations:
 - a) To use the words "Commonly known as the Belgic Confession" as a sub-title to "True Christian Confession."
 - b) To replace the word "epistle" by "letter" in the articles applicable.
 - c) To render Article IV as follows, ". . . the thirteen letters of the apostle Paul . . . Philemon; the letter to the Hebrews; the seven other letters . . . and the Revelation to the apostle John."
 - d) To use the word "Scripture(s)" in the singular or plural as it appears in the textus receptus.
 - e) To re-consider the translation of the words "incommunicable," "co-eternal" and "co-essential" in Article VIII.
 - f) To render the beginning of Article IX as follows, "All this we know from the testimonies of Holy Scripture as well as their effects, primarily from those which we feel within us." To change the wording "indwelling in" to "dwelling in." To use the name "Muslims" rather than "Mohammedans."
 - g) To adopt the more literal translation, "sleep peacefully in their sin" in Article XV.
 - h) To change the Committee's proposal, "trembling all over" to "fleeing from Him in utter fright."
 - i) To amend the words "for all times" to "for all time" in accordance with Hebrews 10:14 (R.S.V.) in Article XXI.
 - j) To amend the words in Article XXII, "When those benefits become ours" to "When those benefits have become ours"
 - k) To reconsider the translation "decisions" in Article XIII. ADOPTED

II. The Canons of Dort

- A. **Material** — Agenda VIII, B, 8 — Report of the Committee on Translation and Revision of the Confessional and Liturgical Forms, June 1979, June 1980, October 1980.
- B, 9 — Additional Report from the Committee (with corrections).

B, 17 — Letter from the Church at Brampton re: The Canons of Dordt.

B, 18 — Letter from the Church at London re: The Canons of Dordt.

B. Observations

1. a) The Committee on Translation and Revision of the Confessional and Liturgical Forms has in accordance with its mandate (Synod Coaldale 1977, Acts, Article 60, 3, a, b, c) served Synod with "a newly translated text of the Chapters I-V of the Canons of Dordt" (Letter October 30, 1980).
- b) The Committee has used as the basis for its translation "the original and authentic" Dutch and Latin texts established by the Synod of Dordtrecht (1618-1619). The Committee has given "equal weight to the Latin and Dutch texts and decided each case on its merits" (Letter June, 1979).
- c) The Committee points out that since the "sub-headings were not part of the official text, they should be printed in italics."
- d) In Chapter I, 6 the Committee has taken away the reference to Acts 15:18, and in I, 7 it has added the words "in Christ" to "chosen" in agreement with the Latin and Dutch texts.
- e) The Committee was not able to complete the revision of the Rejection of Errors of the Canons of Dordt "in time for this Synod" (Letter, October 30, 1980, sub B).
2. The Church at Brampton has served Synod with various remarks concerning the language and grammar of the Committee's draft proposal (Second through Fifth Head of Doctrine).
3. The Church at London has made various remarks which have already been dealt with by the Committee (Letter October 30, C, 1).

C. Considerations

1. It is obvious that the Committee in presenting the revised text of the Chapters I-V of the Canons of Dordt to Synod, would like these articles to be adopted, subject to final correction by a sub-committee appointed to check on the linguistic quality of the translation.
2. It is equally obvious that Synod has certain questions and remarks regarding the presented text (see Appendix) and that these remarks should be dealt with before the translation is finalized for use in the churches.
3. Since the Committee is yet to finalize the "Rejection of Errors" and to submit also that revision for scrutiny to the mentioned sub-committee, it is possible that the Advisory Committee's suggestions regarding the Chapters I-V be considered for the final draft of the translation of the Canons of Dordt.
4. In proposing to subject the final draft to linguistic correction, the Committee itself has already answered the request of the Church at Brampton.

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 Dordt.

2. 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.
3. To charge the Committee to complete the revision of the Rejection of Errors and to present the whole, corrected by a sub-committee of linguistic experts, to the Churches nine months prior to the next Synod and to the next General Synod for final adoption for use in the Churches.

ADOPTED

III. The Prayers

- A. **Material** — Agenda VIII, B, 8 — Report of the Committee on Translation and Revision of the Confessional and Liturgical Forms, June 1979, June 1980, October 1980.
- B, 9 — Additional Report from the Committee (with corrections).
- B, 19 — Letter from the Church at London re: Prayers.
- B, 20 — Letter from the Church at Cloverdale re: Prayers.
- B, 21 — Letter from the Church at Barrhead re: Use of the Lord's Prayer.

B. Observations

1. The Committee on Translation and Revision of the Confessional and Liturgical Forms presents Synod with a "revised text of the Prayers" with a request "to give tentative approval of the text of the prayers as submitted for provisional use in the Churches" (Report, October 30, sub A, 5).
2. The Committee informs Synod that it wanted to "stay as closely as possible to the prayers as found in the Book of Praise (pp. 475-495)" and therefore "did not use the new Dutch version of the prayers, which extensively differs from the old version."
3. The Committee further notes, "In our revision we:
 - a. updated the language and broke up long sentences;
 - b. shortened the prayers wherever this was possible without damage to the contents;
 - c. added some petitions related to our present day needs. We did so particularly in the prayer for all the needs of Christendom;
 - d. left out some expressions which tried to convey the scriptural truth of the remaining sinfulness of the believer, but proved exegetically untenable; for example on page 475, line 5ff. of the *Book of Praise* we read: "We are deeply conscious of the fact that on account of our original sin, we are unclean before Thee and children of wrath." The words: "... on account of our original sins, we are unclean before Thee and children of wrath" were left out, because we *were* unclean ... by original sin, but by God's grace *are* not so any longer, Ephesians 2:3;
 - e. left out the text preceding and following the prayer before and after meals, because these texts are not part of the prayers themselves. On account of the private character of these prayers we also left out the Lord's Prayer with which they close in the old version.
The Lord's prayer in the public prayers was originally meant to be used in unison by the congregation."
4. The Church at London has come with critical remarks on six of the revised prayers.

5. The Church at Cloverdale has come with extensive comments on almost all of the revised prayers.
6. The Church at Barrhead proposes to leave out in all . . . prayers the Lord's Prayer which was not given "to use it in its entirety as an addition to our prayer which already deals at length with the particular occasion."

C. Considerations

1. Synod Coaldale 1977 did not specifically include in its mandate a request for the revision of the **prayers**; neither is it clear that these prayers are to be included under the "Liturgical Forms" (Acts, Article 60, sub 4-6).
It is nevertheless commendable that the Committee decided to include in its mandate "a revised text of the prayers."
2. Since no specific mandate for revision of the prayers was given by Synod Coaldale 1977, the Committee had to formulate and explain its own rules for revision (Observations 2 and 3 a-e). It remains questionable whether such rules which touch the entire updating of the *Book of Praise* should be drafted by a committee and not by a Synod which appoints the committee.
3. Synod, being faced with letters from the Churches at London and Cloverdale, containing extensive criticism/remarks on the revised prayers, may be thus forced to do the work of the Committee.
4. Since the Committee requests that the final draft, also of the prayers, is to be submitted to a sub-committee "consisting of experts in the English language and one member of the Committee," Synod itself need not yet adopt a final revision of the prayers as presented.
5. Since the Committee itself has already stated that "we also left out the Lord's Prayer with which they close in the old version," the proposal of the Church at Barrhead with respect to the Prayers has been answered. Synod concurs with the Committee's suggestions in this respect.
6. Synod is not convinced of the validity of the omission of Observation 3, d (see: the Forms of Baptism and the Lord's Supper).

D. Recommendations

Synod decide:

1. a) Not at this time to approve the submitted texts of the prayers for provisional use in the Churches;
b) To request the Committee on Translation and Revision of the Confessional and Liturgical Forms to present the next Synod with a completed, linguistically corrected, final draft of the prayers.
2. To update not only the language of the prayers fully in accordance with the requirements of present-day English, but also the contents with respect to present-day circumstances, taking into account also the new Dutch version of the prayers.
3. To continue to abide by the rules set in Observation 3, c and e.
4. To pass on the proposals of the Churches at London and Cloverdale to the Committee for consideration.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 124

Adjournment

The Rev. J.D. Wielenga calls on the brothers to sing Psalm 118:6 and leads in closing prayer. Synod adjourns.

MORNING SESSION — TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1980

ARTICLE 125

Re-opening

The Chairman asks that Psalm 105:1 be sung, reads Romans 6:1-11 and leads in prayer.

The Rev. M. van Beveren is absent.

ARTICLE 126

Adjournment

Synod adjourns. The Advisory Committees meet.

AFTERNOON SESSION — TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1980

ARTICLE 127

Re-opening — Acts

The roll call reveals that Rev. M. van Beveren is still absent.

The Acts, Articles 113-126, are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 128

Book of Praise (Liturgical Forms)

Committee II presents:

I. General

- A. **Material** — Agenda VIII, B, 8 — Report of the Committee on Translation and Revision of the Confessional and Liturgical Forms, June 1979, June 1980.
- B, 9 — Additional Report from the Committee (with corrections).
- B, 22 — Letter from the Church at London re: Baptism, Profession.
- B, 23 — Letter from the Church at Surrey re: Profession.
- B, 24 — Letter from the Church at Burlington-East re: Lord's Supper.
- B, 25 — Letter from the Church at Carman re: Lord's Supper and Marriage.
- B, 26 — Letter from the Church at Surrey re: Lord's Supper.
- B, 27 — Letter from the Church at Brampton re: Elders and Deacons.
- B, 28 — Letter from the Church at Burlington-East re: Deacons.
- B, 29 — Letter from the Church at Houston re: English style.

B. Observations

1. The Committee has completed its mandate with respect to the Liturgical Forms, as given by Synod Coaldale 1977 (Acts, Article 60, sub 3b, 3c, 4, 5, 6, and 8) and provides Synod with "a revised text of the Liturgical Forms

- and a new Abbreviated Form for the Administration of the Lord's Supper."
2. The Committee recommends with respect to the completed material:
 - a. "to use the R.S.V. translation of the Bible for the quotations from Scripture in Creeds and Forms, in agreement with the recommendation of the Deputies for the Bible Translation;
 - b. to make the use of the Lord's Prayer at the close of forms and prayers optional, and to leave it in the freedom of the churches to pray the Lord's Prayer in unison;
 - c. to leave it in the freedom of the churches to profess their faith in the words of the Apostles' Creed through the recital by the minister, through a recital by the congregation, or by congregational singing;
 - d. to give tentative approval to the text of the Liturgical Forms . . . as submitted, for provisional use in the Churches."
 3. The Committee also recommends to appoint a new committee with the mandate:
 - a. "to have the submitted Forms . . . checked on language and style by a sub-committee appointed by Synod and consisting of two experts in the English language and one member of the Committee;
 - b. to publish — if feasible in cooperation with the Committee for the *Book of Praise* — the checked Forms . . . for tentative use by the churches;
 - c. to forward five copies of this publication for information to deputies of sister-churches, for correspondence with sister-churches abroad."
 4. The Church at Houston recommends the following:
 - a. "General Synod appoint a committee of persons who are experts in the English language;
 - b. give this committee the mandate to edit the forms, prayers, and anything else that is to be included in the *Book of Praise*, and has not yet been properly edited by persons qualified in the English language;
 - c. charge this committee, that after it has completed its initial work, it is to consult with the respective committees in order to make sure that their proposed alterations do not significantly add to or detract from the content of the respective writings."

C. Considerations

1. Synod Coaldale 1977 decided with respect to Bible quotations that the Committee shall "submit a correct and up-to-date translation of all quotations from Scripture contained in our Liturgical Forms" (Acts, Article 60, Recommendation 3, b).
 Synod Smithville decided with respect to the quotations, "To use the Revised Standard Version for the Scripture quotations in the linguistic modernization of the Creeds and the Liturgical Forms as much as possible" (Acts 1980, Article 111, C, 2, a).
2. a) The Church at Barrhead (Agenda VIII, B, 22) remarks that "the Lord Jesus gave this (the Lord's) prayer as a model, to teach how to pray, but not to use it in its entirety as an addition to our prayer which already deals at length with the particular occasion."
 b) Although the Lord's Prayer has long been added as a conclusion of the prayers, this addition is not in itself necessary.
 c) The Lord's Prayer, using the plural (our-us) is quite well suited to be prayed "in unison."

3. The use of the Apostles' Creed in general in the worship services has as such nothing to do with the Revision of the Liturgical Forms (except in the Forms for the Celebration of the Lord's Supper). The manner in which the Creed is used in the worship services is not subject to Synodical regulation but is in the freedom of the churches.
4. Since the Liturgical Forms have been completely revised by the Committee, it is possible for Synod, having taken into account the remarks made by the churches, to give tentative approval to these forms for provisional use in the Churches.
 These forms can be published either separately or together with the Revised Psalm and Hymn sections of the *Book of Praise* (if adopted by Synod) but should be made available to the churches as soon as possible in 1981.
5. It is necessary that the Liturgical Forms be checked on language and style by a language sub-committee before publication and presentation to the churches, but it is not necessary that Synod itself appoint such a sub-committee.
 To ensure consistency in style in the *Book of Praise*, the final draft of the forms approved by Synod should be submitted to the same panel of "language experts" to be appointed by the Committee for the Translation and Revision of the Heidelberg Catechism (See Acts, Synod Smithville, Article 60, Recommendation D, 2, b).
6. It is in accordance with the adopted rules for correspondence (sub a and c) that the sister-churches abroad are informed concerning the revision of the Liturgical Forms.

D. Recommendations

Synod decide:

1. To thank the Committee on Translation and Revision of the Confessional and Liturgical Forms for the work done on the revision of the Liturgical Forms. ADOPTED
2. To leave the use of the Lord's Prayer in the Liturgical Forms (and the manner in which this prayer is used) in the freedom of the Churches. ADOPTED
3. a) To give tentative approval to the text of the Liturgical Forms, after having taken into account the remarks made by the churches and the recommendations of the advisory committee. ADOPTED
 b) To request the Committee on Translation and Revision of the Confessional and Liturgical Forms to submit this approved text for language correction to the sub-committee appointed for that purpose. ADOPTED
4. To charge the Committee to have the adopted and linguistically corrected Liturgical Forms published either separately or with the adopted Psalms and Hymns sections of the *Book of Praise* as soon as possible in 1981 for provisional use in the churches. ADOPTED
 To charge the Committee to provide the Deputies for Correspondence with sister-churches abroad with ample copies to fulfil their mandate in this respect. ADOPTED
 The following motion, duly seconded, is discussed:
 "To replace Consideration 2, c. with 'There is no need to follow the suggestion of the Committee: "To leave it in the freedom of the Churches to pray the Lord's Prayer in unison",' and to leave out in Recommendation 2 that which is between the brackets." DEFEATED

ARTICLE 129

Book of Praise (Liturgical Forms)

II. Form for the Baptism of Infants

A. **Material** — Agenda VIII, B, 8, 9, 21, 22.

B. Observations

1. a) The Committee has served Synod with a corrected revision of the Form for the Baptism of Infants in accordance with its mandate (Synod Coaldale, 1977, Acts, Article 60, 3, b and c, 4).
- b) The Committee has maintained the present "set-up" of the Form, but has shortened the sentences. Several text references have been put in the margin in order "to indicate that every part is solidly founded in Scripture" and "to promote the study of this (and the following) Forms."
2. The Church at Barrhead requests that the words "of our souls" (2nd paragraph, Draft Revision) be removed, "since it is not only our soul which is impure, but our body as well."
3. It appears from the Committee's own correspondence (October 30, 1980) that the Letter from the Church at London has already been dealt with.

C. Considerations

1. In the sentence "since every covenant contains two parts," add "a promise and an obligation."
2. Barrhead's suggestion overlooks the point of comparison: as water washes the body, so the blood and the Spirit of Christ purify our souls, "spiritually cleansed," Heidelberg Catechism, Answer 73.
3. The verb "counted" is not an exact rendering of the Dutch "gerekend"; better is the old version "*accounted*."
4. To re-phrase "we may not *therefore* exclude them from baptism" (*italicized word* should be inserted).
5. "Need not despair" should be "*must* not despair" (Dutch: moeten).
6. "Are in duty bound" can be rendered more simply, "their parents have the duty."
7. In the prayer before baptism, the Scripture reference (Romans 6:5) should be added and the sentence should read, "buried with Him *by baptism* into death."
8. In the prayers, before and after baptism, the words "we beseech" could be rendered more simply: "we pray" (Dutch: wij *bidden* U).
9. The words "a constant death" should be changed as follows "no more than a constant death."
10. Consistency should be maintained with respect to "summarized in the Creeds."
11. The prayer after baptism (first and second line) should read "we thank and praise Thee that Thou."

D. Recommendation

Synod decide to adopt the corrected Revision Form for the Baptism of Infants, as emended by Synod. ADOPTED

The following motion, duly seconded, is discussed:

"To delete the division 'First,' 'Second' and 'Third' in the questions to the parents, and to replace 'promises' with 'seals' ('God the Son seals unto us . . .')." DEFEATED

EVENING SESSION — TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1980

ARTICLE 130

Book of Praise (Liturgical Forms)

III. Form for the Baptism of Adults

A. **Material** — Agenda VIII, B, 8, 9, 21, 22.

B. Observations

1. The Committee has served Synod with a corrected Revision Form for the Baptism of Adults, see mandate Synod Coaldale.
2. See VI, B, Observation 1, b concerning the set-up also of this form.
3. The Committee decided to maintain the "preamble" to the Form, "be it in the translation of the new Dutch preamble."

C. Considerations

1. The "new" preamble is simpler and more to the point than the old version and may therefore very well be adopted.
2. The same changes should be considered in the first part of the form and in the prayers as were suggested in the Form for the Baptism of Infants.
3. In the questions a split infinitive "to always lead" should be changed to "always to lead."
4. Consistency should be maintained in the opening line of the prayers after baptism.
5. The conclusion of the prayer should read, ". . . Thee, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit . . ." etc.
6. The heading "Prayer before Baptism" should be re-located three lines down.

D. Recommendation

Synod decide to adopt the corrected revised version of the Form for the Baptism of Adults, as emended by Synod. ADOPTED

ARTICLE 131

Book of Praise (Liturgical Forms)

Committee II presents the Form for Public Profession of Faith. This is discussed. The following motion, duly seconded, is moved, "To request the Advisory Committee to revise the proposed Form for the Public Profession of Faith in keeping with the remarks made on the floor of Synod." DEFEATED

Another duly seconded motion is made, "To send the present Form for the Public Profession of Faith to the Linguistic Committee." DEFEATED

The Advisory Committee decides to withdraw this part of its report for further study and revision (see Article 144).

Committee II then brings into discussion the Forms for the Celebration of the Lord's Supper (original and abbreviated).

ARTICLE 132

Adjournment

Elder E.C. Baartman proposes that Psalm 117 be sung. He leads in closing prayer. Synod adjourns.

MORNING SESSION — WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3, 1980

ARTICLE 133

Re-opening — Acts

The Chairman, Rev. D. VanderBoom, requests that Psalm 125:1 be sung. He reads Romans 6:12-19 and leads in prayer.

The roll call reveals that Rev. M. van Beveren is present again.

The Acts, Articles 127-132, are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 134

Appeal — Church at Neerlandia

Committee III presents its report on the appeal of the Church at Neerlandia against certain decisions of the Regional Synod West (Oct./Nov. 1979). This matter is dealt with in completely closed session.

The discussion begins.

AFTERNOON SESSION — WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3, 1980

ARTICLE 135

Appeal — Church at Neerlandia

The discussion continues.

EVENING SESSION — WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3, 1980

ARTICLE 136

Book of Praise (Liturgical Forms)

Forms for the Celebration of the Lord's Supper (original and abbreviated)

A. **Material** — Agenda VIII, B, 8, 9, 17, 24, 25, 26.

B. Observations

1. a) Synod Coaldale 1977 (Acts, Article 60) gave as mandate that "especially the Form for the Celebration of the Lord's Supper be updated in language."
b) In its considerations, Synod Coaldale also expressed "the desirability of having an abbreviated Form for the celebration of the Lord's Supper" and that "this should be taken into account" so that "the Synod 1980 can make the final decision on a complete *Book of Praise* (Article 60, Considerations 1 and 10, Recommendation 4).
2. In accordance with its mandate the Committee has served Synod with a (corrected) "Revised Form for the Celebration of the Lord's Supper" and added an "Abbreviated Form for the Celebration of the Lord's Supper."

3. a) The Church at Burlington-East requests that Synod “not delete from the revised Form for the Celebration of the Lord’s Supper the list of sinners who have no part in the Kingdom of Christ when they persevere in their sins” and gives as reason that “especially in our age of licentiousness and declining morals it is a testimony before the world and a preaching to the members of the Church.”
- b) The Church at Carman requests Synod “to retain in the section of invitation and admonition the new omitted list of offensive sins, be it updated to modern time and usage of language,” the reason being, “this list was and is in the spirit of Galatians 5 among other places in Scripture, many sins which were not prevalent then but which are now or go under a different name, examples are misuse of drugs, the idolatry of astrology.”
4. The Church at Surrey passes on to Synod “some remarks that a sub-committee of our consistory came up with.” The Consistory does “not necessarily endorse all the conclusions or suggestions of the enclosed material.”

C. Considerations

1. a) The list of sins is also omitted in the new Dutch version, but as an application of the Ten Commandments the list of sins has a concrete function in the Form, especially in a time of “declining morals” as a means of admonition and exhortation, also with a view to the holiness of the table of the Lord. It is not expedient that the list be maintained in the Abbreviated Form.
- b) The list of sins, if maintained, should be updated as the rest of the Form.
2. The remarks sent in by the Church at Surrey, although not endorsed by the Consistory, mostly concern matters of language.
3. a) It is regrettable that the practice of adding texts in the margin for evidence and reference (as begun in the Forms for Baptism) is not continued with respect to the Form for the Celebration of the Lord’s Supper.
- b) Under “self-examination,” second part, “as if he himself had fulfilled all righteousness” should be added. As it is, too much of the original is lost.
- c) The list of sins should be included as follows:

“we admonish all those who know themselves to be guilty of the following sins to abstain from the table of the Lord and we declare to them that they have no part in the Kingdom of Christ. Such as: all idolators; those who call upon deceased saints, angels or other creatures; all sorcerers, fortune-tellers, and all who engage in astrology and the occult; all who despise God, His Word and the holy sacraments; all who blaspheme, curse and use foul language; all who promote disunity and schism in the church or revolt against the civil government; all perjurers; all who disobey their parents and superiors; all murderers, all who are contentious and those who live in envy and hatred against their neighbours; all adulterers, fornicators, those who live common-law or practice homosexuality; all who abuse alcohol or drugs; all thieves or robbers, all gamblers and covetous persons; and all who lead offensive lives. While they persist in their sins, they . . . etc.”
- d) “prevents” (page 2, bottom) should read “can prevent.”

- e) Although the R.S.V. uses the word "participation" in I Corinthians 10, the old rendition "communion" (indicated also in a footnote) is preferable.
- 4. It should be noted that the Abbreviated Form is not meant as a replacement of the original Form, rather as a help to be used in the p.m. service when also a sermon is delivered.

D. Recommendations

Synod decide:

- 1. Provisionally to adopt the Revised Form and the Abbreviated Form for the Celebration of the Lord's Supper for use in the Churches, as emended by Synod (see Considerations 3a, b, c, d, and e).
- 2. To pass on the suggestions of the Church at Surrey to the Committee to be used for linguistic correction. ADOPTED

The following motions, duly seconded, are discussed:

- 1. "To add in the title of the Abbreviated Form, between brackets (For the afternoon service);
- 2. To retain in the words spoken at the communion, the words 'broken' and 'poured out,' instead of the word 'given.' " ADOPTED

ARTICLE 137

Book of Praise (Liturgical Forms)

Forms for the Excommunication of Communicant/Non-Communicant Members

A. Material — Agenda VIII, B, 9.

B. Observations

- 1. In the "Form for the Excommunication of Non-communicant Members" the word "admonition" was changed to "announcement" and the quoted texts were given in the R.S.V. reading, in keeping with the other forms.
- 2. In both Forms the form of address is entirely in the masculine (brother) while the *Book of Praise* has both masculine and feminine (brother/sister; he/she).
- 3. a) In accordance with the mandate given by Synod Coaldale, Acts, Article 60, Recommendation 4, the Committee has served Synod with a revised Form for the Excommunication of Communicant Members.
b) The Form for the Excommunication of Non-communicant Members has not been revised but submitted as adopted in 1968 and emended in 1977 (Acts Orangeville, Article 80; Acts Coaldale, Article 60).

C. Considerations

- 1. The two Forms show a remarkable inconsistency in language and style, due to the fact that the Form for Excommunication of Non-Communicant members was not revised.
This lack of revision may be due to the fact that the Form for Excommunication of Non-communicant Members was already adopted previously and subsequently emended (see Observation 3, b).
- 2. The Revised Form for the Excommunication of Communicant Members does not convey the gravity and seriousness of the occasion as well as the old Form does and as is evident in the announcement adopted by Synod Coaldale (Article 60, Recommendation 6).

D. Recommendations

Synod decide:

1. That both Forms be returned to the Committee for Translation and Revision in order that consistency be achieved in the revision of these Forms.
2. That the announcements of the consistory and the admonitions to the congregation (in the Forms) retain the expression of great sorrow and urgency as adopted by Synod Coaldale 1977 (see Consideration 2).
3. That the masculine/feminine designation (he/she) be maintained in the printing for easier application.
4. That these Forms, as yet revised by the Committee and linguistically corrected, be included in the publication of the Forms for use in the Churches.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 138

Book of Praise (Liturgical Forms)

Form for Readmission into the Church of Christ

A. Material — Agenda VIII, B, 8, 9.

B. Observations

1. The Committee has served Synod with a Revised Form for Readmission into the Church of Christ in accordance with its mandate (Synod Coaldale, Acts, Article 60).
2. The last paragraph of the Revised Form does not do justice to the contents of the old Form. The proposed revision changes the subject (he/she) prematurely (we/us)
The text should read:
"Grant that *he/she* may steadfastly walk in Thy ways until the end.
Teach us, Father, from this example that with Thee there is forgiveness, that Thou mayest be praised.
Grant that we now with our brother/sister may serve Thee with child-like fear . . .," etc.

C. Recommendations

Synod decide to adopt the Form for Readmission into the Church of Christ, as emended by Synod.

ADOPTED

The following motion, duly seconded, is voted upon:

"To remove 'justly' in the first question (p. 2)."

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 139

Book of Praise (Liturgical Forms)

Form for the Ordination/Installation of Ministers of the Word

A. Material — Agenda VIII, B, 8, 9.

B. Observations

1. The Committee has served Synod with a Revised Form for the Ordination/Installation of Ministers of the Word in accordance with the mandate received from Synod Coaldale, 1977 (Acts, Article 60, Recommendation 4).

2. Synod has received no communications from the Churches regarding this revision.
3. The Committee on Translation and Revision has not provided Synod with any remarks/comments regarding the Revision of this Form.
4. The Committee proposal has deleted the words, "The sermon being finished, the minister shall thus speak to the congregation."
5. The proposed Form is an extensive revision of the old Form; various parts having been rearranged/deleted/added.

C. Considerations

1. Since the churches have received the proposed revision but have not addressed Synod concerning this proposal, there would seem to be no reasons for considering the revision too extensive for adoption (see Observations 2 and 5).
2. Under "Duties" (third) the revision reads, "it is his duty as *pastor* to call upon . . ." etc.
In accordance with Ephesians 4:11, 12 and the preceding explanation of I Timothy 5:17 this should read: "as *pastor and teacher*." See also further in the Form.
3. The second question to the minister, "Do you *receive* . . . as . . ." should read (as in the Old Form), "Do you *believe* . . . to be . . ."
4. The suggested answer "**I do**" does not respond to the first question (**I am**). Since this first question introduces the words "in your heart," the answer should read (as previously) "**I do with all my heart.**"

D. Recommendation

Synod decide to adopt the Revised Form for the Ordination/Installation of Ministers of the Word, as emended by Synod. ADOPTED

ARTICLE 140

Adjournment

The Rev. S. DeBruin proposes that Hymn 43:1 be sung and leads in closing prayer.

It should be noted that Rev. M. van Beveren was absent during the evening session.

Synod adjourns.

MORNING SESSION — THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1980

ARTICLE 141

Re-opening — Acts

The Chairman requests that Psalm 119:40 be sung. He reads Romans 8:1-11 and leads in prayer.

The roll call reveals that Rev. M. van Beveren is present again.

The Acts, Articles 133-140, are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 142

Appeal — Church at Neerlandia

The discussion on the appeal of the Church at Neerlandia continues.

AFTERNOON SESSION — THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1980

ARTICLE 143

Appeal — Church at Neerlandia

Committee III presents:

- A. **Material** — VIII, I, 9 — Letter of the Church at Neerlandia, Alberta, appealing a decision of the Regional Synod in Western Canada of October 30, 1979, with enclosures.

B. Observations

1. The *Church at Neerlandia* in its letter of *November 3, 1978* informed Classis Alberta-Manitoba, April 1979 that one of the reasons for its decision re: Rev. DeJong's Classis appointment for June 4, 1978 — "... we consider it not wise that you will preach for us here in Neerlandia on Sunday, June 4 . . .," was "the persistent and increased doubts concerning Rev. DeJong's views of Church and Communion of Saints . . ." (Acts, Article 13, sub 2, 4).
2. *Classis Alberta-Manitoba, April 1979* considered that "after thorough examination of the correspondence between Rev. DeJong and the Church at Neerlandia, it has found no deviation from the Three Forms of Unity in the teaching and preaching of Rev. DeJong."
3. *Classis Alberta-Manitoba, April 1979* according to Articles 5, 9, 11 of the Acts read and discussed the report of the Committee appointed by Classis January 9/10, 1979 (Acts, Article 52, 57), in which also the letter of the Church at Neerlandia of November 3, 1978 was dealt with, and the Counter-report of the Church at Neerlandia; *Classis decided*: "that the preaching of Rev. D. DeJong concerning Church and Communion of Saints is in accordance with the Three Forms of Unity and as such the doubts of the Church at Neerlandia were unfounded" (Acts, Article 13).
4. *Classis Alberta-Manitoba, April 1979* does not adduce grounds for this decision.
5. The *Church at Neerlandia* in its letter of September 20, 1979 to Regional Synod (West) of October 30, 1979 appeals the decision of Classis Alberta-Manitoba, April 1979 mentioned above under 3.
Neerlandia writes "We particularly appeal that part of this decision where Classis judges that 'the doubts of the Church at Neerlandia were unfounded.'"
The Church at Neerlandia requests Regional Synod to decide "that Classis Alberta-Manitoba of April 17/18, 1979 erred" in making this decision.
6. The *Church at Neerlandia* adduces the following grounds for this request:
 - a. "The teaching of Rev. D. DeJong, that the Communion of Saints is wider than the Church, posits an invisible Church beside the True Church as confessed in Articles 27-29 of the Belgic Confession, and in Heidelberg Catechism Lord's Day 21, Question and Answer 54 and 55. Since neither Scripture nor Confessions know of an invisible Church besides the Church, Rev. D. DeJong's teaching is on this point contrary to Scripture and Confession.
 - b. Rev. D. DeJong's using his view on the Communion of Saints as wider than the Church to admonish the Congregation to a cooperation with believers outside the Church on the basis that these believers are nevertheless within the Communion of Saints, is an overstepping of the boundaries of Scripture and Confession and a laying upon the

Congregation an *opinion* rather than the Word of God, yet with the force of the Word of God."

7. *Regional Synod (West) of October 30, 1979* having read and discussed this appeal of the Church at Neerlandia judged that (Acts, Article 5, G):
"Classis Alberta-Manitoba of April 17, 18, 1979 did not err in deciding 'that the preaching of Rev. D. DeJong concerning the Church and the Communion of Saints is in accordance with the Three Forms of Unity and as such the doubts of the Church at Neerlandia were unfounded.' "
8. This *judgment of Regional Synod* was based on the following considerations:
 - a. The Rev. D. DeJong teaches that the Communion of Saints is as broad as the Holy Catholic Church.
See his sermon on Lord's Day 21, Question and Answer 55, p. 25.
 - b. The Rev. D. DeJong is opposed to the teaching of an invisible church (sermon on Lord's Day 21, Question and Answer 54, p. 9).
 - c. The Rev. D. DeJong does stress the necessity of a visible unity of all believers in the local Church ("at the **Lord's** own table").
 - d. The Church at Neerlandia fails to supply any proof that the Rev. D. DeJong's preaching is not according to the Catechism or that the meaning he puts into the Catechism is foreign to the Scriptures, since Neerlandia's claim that Rev. DeJong teaches that the Communion of Saints is wider than the Church appears to rest on the misunderstanding on the part of Neerlandia of what Rev. DeJong really preaches namely that the Communion of Saints is as wide as the Holy Catholic Church.
 - e. The Church at Neerlandia does not substantiate the charge that the Rev. D. DeJong admonishes the congregation to cooperation with believers outside the church and the admonition to acknowledge the Communion of Saints with "outsiders" and to practice this communion, may not be construed as an admonition to cooperate with said believers.
9. *The Church at Neerlandia* in its letter of November 4, 1980 to General Synod 1980 appeals this decision of Regional Synod (West) mentioned above under 7 and requests General Synod to declare:
 - a. "Regional Synod was wrong in judging "that Classis Alberta-Manitoba of April 17, 18, 1979 did not err in deciding 'that the preaching of Rev. D. DeJong concerning the Church and the Communion of Saints is in accordance with the Three Forms of Unity and as such the doubts of the Church at Neerlandia were unfounded';
 - b. The views in the preaching of the Rev. D. DeJong concerning the Church and the Communion of Saints, and which concern the confessions directly, are contradictive and confusing and in conflict with Scripture and Confession, and that, therefore, the doubts of the Church at Neerlandia were warranted."
10. The *grounds* which the Church at Neerlandia adduces for this request are:
 - a. In his sermon on Lord's Day 21, Question and Answer 55 of the Heidelberg Catechism, Rev. DeJong teaches that "all the believers, all and everyone, have been made by the Spirit of Christ as constructive and cooperative members of the Body of Christ" (p. 25 Sermon).
 - b. From this teaching it may be derived that "Rev. DeJong identifies the Communion of Saints with the Holy Catholic Church" (p. 2 Appeal) and thus undermines the duty of all believers to join themselves to this congregation wheresoever God has established it, as confessed in Article 28 of the Belgic Confession.

- c. Rev. DeJong's teaching that "all believers already belong to the Church, posits the idea of an invisible Church" and "breaks down all Church consciousness (kerkbesef)" (p. 5 Appeal).
 - d. Rev. DeJong, identifying the Communion of the Saints with the Holy Catholic Church, teaches that on this basis we must practice the Communion of Saints "with other believers who do not go with us" (p. 30 Sermon).
11. From the enclosures added to Neerlandia's appeal it appears that according to the Church at Neerlandia their doubts whether Rev. D. DeJong's teaching is in accordance with the Three Forms of Unity originated when Rev. DeJong preached in the Church at Neerlandia while the congregation was involved in discussions about the necessity of a Canadian Reformed school in Neerlandia. Sermons of Rev. DeJong are alleged to have been confusing with regard to the validity of the efforts of parents who would have their children instructed at their Canadian Reformed school.
 12. Although it does not appear from the Acts that Classis Alberta-Manitoba of April 17, 18, 1979, while judging the Rev. DeJong's preaching concerning church and Communion of Saints, took note of Rev. DeJong's teaching as published in his sermons on Lord's Day 21, the report of the committee that served Classis with advice shows that Classis took those sermons into consideration in order to reach a decision.
Regional Synod states that Rev. DeJong's sermons on Lord's Day 21 were allowed into the discussion by Rev. DeJong and Classis.
 13. From Neerlandia's appeal to General Synod it is clear that
 - a. the objections of the Church at Neerlandia concentrate on Rev. DeJong's teachings in the published sermons on Lord's Day 21 of the Heidelberg Catechism.
 - b. they are in essence the same as the complaint worded in their appeal to Regional Synod, namely that Rev. DeJong "uses his view to admonish the congregation to a cooperation with believers outside the church on the basis of the confession of the Communion of Saints" (p. 11 Appeal to Regional Synod).

C. Considerations

- a. It is clear from the acts of Regional Synod and of Classis Alberta-Manitoba of April 17, 18, 1979, and from the enclosed documents that Rev. DeJong's teaching in the published sermons on Lord's Day 21, notably in Question and Answer 55, represents his views of the Church and the Communion of Saints.
- b. The Church at Neerlandia does not object to the statement of Regional Synod "that Rev. DeJong does stress the necessity of a visible unity of all believers."
- c. There is no proof that Rev. DeJong's teaching that the Holy Catholic Church is identical to the Communion of Saints (Apostles' Creed), is against the Scriptures.
- d. The statement of the Church at Neerlandia that the teaching of Rev. DeJong that "all believers already belong to the Church," posits the idea of an invisible church and is against Scripture and Confession, is not proven. (p. 12 Appeal Regional Synod; p. 5 Appeal General Synod.)
It is the *misapplication* of this view that may "break down all church consciousness (Kerkbesef)."
- e. The Church at Neerlandia in its letter of introduction (p. 3) asked Regional

Synod that the teaching of Rev. DeJong in his sermons on Lord's Day 21 be compared with the teachings of I Corinthians.

- f. It appears that Regional Synod and Classis Alberta-Manitoba, while dealing with the appeals of the Church at Neerlandia, did not compare Rev. DeJong's explanation of Question and Answer 55 of the Heidelberg Catechism with the teaching of I Corinthians concerning the Communion of Saints.
- g. The Scripture passages referred to under Answer 55 of the Heidelberg Catechism show that the confession of the Communion of Saints as formulated in Answer 55 is mainly founded on Paul's first letter to the Corinthians.

In this letter the apostle addresses himself to the church at Corinth with its official congregational meetings ("when you are assembled," I Corinthians 5:4; 14:26; "when you assemble as a church," I Corinthians 11:18; 14:23), in which discipline is exercised (I Corinthians 5:4, 5) and the Lord's Supper is celebrated (I Corinthians 11:20), where the Word is preached (I Corinthians 14:19) and where "outsiders" and even "unbelievers" may come in and be convinced by the preaching (I Corinthians 14:22-24) and where the believers receive their appointments, gifts and assignments in their special office and in the office of all believers (I Corinthians 12:27).

The church (ekklesia) in Paul's letter is the assembly of the saints which is officially called together.

That congregation is called the body of Christ ("You are the body of Christ and individually members of it," I Corinthians 12:27).

On the basis of this fellowship with Christ, the members of the congregation as members of the body of Christ are called to pursue unity and brotherly love and to avoid divisions, to edify each other and be edified.

The conclusion is warranted that the Heidelberg Catechism in Answer 55 explaining the Communion of Saints as confessed in the Apostles' Creed gives a summary of the teaching of Paul in I Corinthians regarding the unity and brotherly love in the local congregation.

- h. When Rev. DeJong in his explanation of Answer 55 of the Heidelberg Catechism extends the Communion of Saints to communion with "other believers who do not go with us" and do not sit "with us at one Lord's Supper table," he overlooks that
 1. the Heidelberg Catechism, on the basis of I Corinthians, speaks about the saints as believers who have joined themselves to the congregation (ekklesia) and who as members of the church (ekklesia) have their duties towards their fellow members.
 2. according to I Corinthians, the fellowship with Christ and His believers (Communion of Saints), being proclaimed to the church and visibly signified in the Holy Supper ("you are the body of Christ"), is practiced and is to be practiced in the circle of those who belong to the church (ekklesia) ("you are . . . individually members of it").
 3. Paul's admonitions that the members of the body of Christ "may (should) have the same care for one another" just like all members of a physical body work together (I Corinthians 12:25), are directed to the church as an assembly, officially and locally, called together; Paul's admonitions to practice the Communion of Saints are aimed at the proper functioning, growth and upbuilding of the local church as the body of Christ (I Corinthians 12:25).
- i. Rev. DeJong, in his sermon on Question and Answer 55 of the Heidelberg Catechism, did not properly base his explanation of Answer 55 on the Scriptures in I Corinthians.

j. Rev. DeJong's exhortation in the *last* part of his sermon (p. 30) to "practice the Communion of Saints" "with the other believers, who do not go with us" contradicts the *first* part of the sermon (p. 19), "The Communion of Saints is a property of the Church, is characteristic for the Church.

When you join the true Church, it can rightly be said that in doing so, you exercise the Communion of Saints.

To practice the communion of the Church is in itself to practice the Communion of Saints.' "

D. Recommendations

General Synod declare that

1. there was reason for the Church at Neerlandia to be confused by and to consider the views of Rev. D. DeJong concerning Church and Communion of Saints as expressed in the sermon on Lord's Day 21 Question and Answer 55 of the Heidelberg Catechism, contradictory.
2. the Regional Synod (West) of October 30, 1979 failed to compare Rev. DeJong's explanation of Question and Answer 55 of the Heidelberg Catechism with the teaching of I Corinthians concerning the Communion of Saints and thus Synod's judgment that "the doubts of Neerlandia were unfounded" is based on insufficient grounds and not doing justice to the complaints of the Church at Neerlandia.

After an extensive discussion of the presentation of Committee III the following amendment, duly seconded, is moved:

Synod decide,

- I. to adopt of the Report of Committee III re: Appeal of the Church at Neerlandia,
 - a. the Observations 1-10, 12, 13;
 - b. the Considerations a, b, c, d.

II. to add as Consideration e:

there is no evidence in the sermons on Lord's Day 21, that Rev. D. DeJong admonishes the congregation to cooperate with true believers outside the Canadian Reformed Churches in interdenominational activities on the ground of the Communion of Saints, even less evidence that he admonishes to do this with neglect of the calling to admonish to unity in the Church at the address pointed out by the marks of the Church (Article 29, B.C.).

to add as Consideration f:

there is no ground to judge the preaching of Rev. D. DeJong to be confusing and contradictory; it only appears to be so to those who do not take into consideration the distinction Rev. DeJong teaches between the Church as gathered by God as his exclusive work and the same Church as work of the believers in obedience to the revealed will of God.

III. Not to accede to the request of the Church at Neerlandia. DEFEATED

The following motion, duly seconded, is moved:

"Synod decide,

I. To delete Consideration h.

II. To add a new Consideration i:

Rev. DeJong in his sermon on Question and Answer 55 of the Heidelberg Catechism did not properly base his explanation of Answer 55 on the Scriptures of I Corinthians.

III. To change the Recommendations to read:

1. a. In the light of Considerations a, b, c, and d, the Church at Neerlandia has not submitted proof that the doubts of the Church at Neerlandia regarding Rev. DeJong's doctrinal purity are warranted;

- b. Regional Synod West 1979 was not wrong in its decision.
2. In the light of Considerations f, g, h, and i, Rev. DeJong's teaching in his sermon on Lord's Day 21, Question and Answer 55, of the Heidelberg Catechism compared with the explanation of the Catechism and the teaching of I Corinthians can be called confusing.
 3. Not to accede to the requests of the Church at Neerlandia."

DEFEATED

The following motion, duly seconded, is moved:

"Synod decide,

To change the recommendations of the Committee III report by adding,

1. In the light of Considerations a, b, c, and d, the Church at Neerlandia has not submitted proof that the doubts of the Church at Neerlandia regarding Rev. D. DeJong's doctrinal purity are warranted.
2. In the light of Considerations e, f, g, h, i, j, there was reason for the Church at Neerlandia to be confused by . . ."

ADOPTED

The following motion, duly seconded, is moved:

"To add under Recommendation 1, 'Regional Synod West 1979 was not wrong in its decision as recorded in its Acts, Article 5, G.'"

DEFEATED

Next, the report of Committee III, along with the amended recommendations, which read as follows, is voted upon:

"Recommendations

General Synod declare that

1. In the light of Considerations a, b, c, and d, the Church at Neerlandia has not submitted proof that the doubts of the Church at Neerlandia regarding Rev. D. DeJong's doctrinal purity are warranted.
2. In the light of Considerations e, f, g, h, i, j, there was reason for the Church at Neerlandia to be confused by and to consider the views of Rev. D. DeJong concerning Church and Communion of Saints as expressed in the sermon on Lord's Day 21, Question and Answer 55, of the Heidelberg Catechism, contradictory.
3. The Regional Synod (West) of October 30, 1979, failed to compare Rev. DeJong's explanation of Question and Answer 55 of the Heidelberg Catechism with the teaching of I Corinthians concerning the Communion of Saints and thus Synod's judgment that 'the doubts of Neerlandia were unfounded' is based on insufficient grounds and did not do justice to the complaints of the Church at Neerlandia."

DEFEATED

The following motion, duly seconded, is moved:

"To overrule the chair which ruled that the original proposal of Committee III could not be re-introduced."

DEFEATED

The following motion, duly seconded, is moved:

"To appoint a new Committee of Synod to study the appeal of the Church at Neerlandia."

DEFEATED

The following motion, duly seconded, is moved:

1. "The Church at Neerlandia has not submitted proof that the views of Rev. D. DeJong regarding the Church and the Communion of Saints are against Scripture and Confession;
2. There is reason for the Church at Neerlandia to consider these views, as expressed in the sermon published on Lord's Day 21, confusing and contradictory."

ADOPTED

EVENING SESSION — THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1980

ARTICLE 144

Book of Praise (Liturgical Forms)

Form for Public Profession of Faith

Committee II presents a revised Form for Public Profession of Faith (cf. Article 131) to Synod. This revised form is adopted.

ARTICLE 145

Book of Praise (Liturgical Forms)

Form for the Ordination/Installation of Missionaries

A. Material — Agenda VIII, B, 8.

B. Observations

1. Synod Coaldale 1977 has already provisionally adopted a translation of the Dutch Form (for the ordination/installation of missionaries, as published by Synod Kampen, 1975) to be sent to the Committee for Translation and Revision of the Confessional and Liturgical Forms "to establish the final text" (Acts, Article 60, Recommendation 5).
2. In accordance with this mandate the Committee has served Synod with the "final text" of the provisionally adopted translation.

C. Considerations

1. Since Synod was not presented with the provisionally adopted translation of Synod Coaldale, it is not possible to determine the accuracy of the submitted "final text" in relation to the initial translation.
2. a) Synod finds the submitted final text to be Scriptural.
b) In form and style, the proposed Form for the Ordination/Installation of Missionaries is similar to the proposed Form for the Ordination/Installation of the Ministers of the Word so that a desired consistency has been achieved.
3. It is not evident that the Netherlands Sister-churches were asked for and granted permission for this translation of their form (see Synod Coaldale, Acts, Article 60, Consideration 7, "provided permission to do so is granted by our Dutch Sister-churches").
4. In keeping with the Form for the Ordination/Installation of the Ministers of the Word, the answer to the questions should read, "I do with all my heart."

D. Recommendations

Synod decide:

1. To adopt the Form for the Ordination/Installation of Missionaries, as amended by the Synod.
2. To instruct the Deputies for Correspondence with Sister-churches Abroad forthwith to request permission from the Netherlands Sister-churches that the translation be published for use in the Canadian Reformed Churches.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 146

Book of Praise (Liturgical Forms)

Form for the Ordination of Elders and Deacons

A. Material — Agenda VIII, B, 8, 9, 27, 28.

B. Observations

1. In accordance with the mandate given by Synod Coaldale (Acts, Article 60, Recommendation 4) the Committee has served Synod with a Revised Form for the Ordination of Elders and Deacons.
2. The Church at Brampton requests that the words, "e.g. by making periodic visits to the Church members" be added to the charge given to the deacons. This is to be added to the sentence, "Exhort the members of Christ's body to show mercy, e.g. . . . etc."
The reason adduced for this is that our deacons tend to be "somewhat passive" in not actively seeking to find needs and are not actively exhorting the members to show mercy."
3. The Church at Burlington-East proposes that Synod "insert in the Revised Form for the Ordination of Elders and Deacons the quotation of Galatians 6:10 as it is in the Form that is presently in use." The reason for this request is that 1 Thessalonians 3:12 is quoted in full, but this "does not expressly mention the task of the deacons. The present Form "shows that the task of the Church by means of the deacons is said to be showing liberality to all men, but especially to the household of faith." Burlington-East wishes this charge not to be hidden in the marginal references but mentioned *expressis verbis* in the Form.
4. The Revised Form presented to Synod is clearly a major revision, notably in the following manner:
 - a) the "redemptive-historical" set-up of the Form,
 - b) the greater attention given to the office of the deacons.
5. In the charge to the deacons the "widows and orphans" are no longer expressly mentioned.

C. Considerations

1. Although Synod Coaldale did not specify a major revision of this Form, as now presented to Synod, this revision is based on solid Scriptural grounds and does greater justice to the special offices throughout the Old and New dispensation. Especially the office of the deacons finds better expression in relation to the office of the elders (Observations 1 and 4).
2. It is not necessary to specify that deacons "for example" may engage in (regular) visitation, for the Revised Form already speaks of "they (the deacons) shall *acquaint themselves* with existing needs and difficulties . . ." and it should be left up to the discretion of the deacons which method is the most advantageous in this respect.
3. It is important to add Galatians 6:10 which has always been an important reference with respect to the work of the deacons, and it is important also to specify "widows and orphans" since it was because of the care of the widows that this office was first established in the Church, Acts 6.
This is rendered as follows, ". . . and distribute them cheerfully to those who need assistance, especially the widows and orphans (James 1:27, margin). Show liberality to all men, especially to those who are of the household of faith" (Galatians 6:10, margin).

4. Delete two paragraphs on page 1 as being irrelevant.

D. Recommendation

Synod decide to adopt the Form for the Ordination of Elders and Deacons, as emended by Synod. ADOPTED

The following motion, duly seconded, is moved:
"To change 'I do' to 'I do with all my heart.'" DEFEATED

ARTICLE 147

Book of Praise (Liturgical Forms)

Form for the Solemnization of Marriage

A. **Material** — Agenda VIII, B, 8, 9, 21, 25.

B. Observations

1. In accordance with the mandate received from Synod Coaldale 1977 (Acts, Article 60, Recommendation 4), the Committee has served Synod with a Revised Form for the Solemnization of Marriage.

2. The Church at Barrhead requests that the opening sentence of the Marriage Form be changed to, "N . . . and N . . ., since your desire to be married has been duly made known and no lawful objection has been presented, we may now . . ."

The ground for this request is: "Since the Draft is meant to be used in a worship service and in a ceremony which is not a church service as well, we consider it desirable that the Form is *usable without changes* for both manners of solemnization."

3. The Church at Carman requests that the "Optional Exchange of Rings, etc." be removed from the Revised Form. The ground is that the word optional indicates that "it does not belong to the ceremony proper."

Carman further states, "Although there is no objection to the inclusion of the exchange of rings, if so desired by the couple, this should not be included in the Form."

C. Considerations

1. The Form for the Solemnization of Marriage was singled out by Synod Coaldale as an object for revision (i.e. "shortening," see Article 60, Inf. 12).

Synod is now presented with a major revision along the lines of the new form presently in use in our Netherlands sister-churches. Contrary to the present Dutch Form, there is more emphasis in this revision on the seriousness of divorce and the subjection of the wife to the husband.

2. The request of the Church at Barrhead excludes the consistory and the congregation (from the announcement), contrary to the old Form and the decision of Synod Toronto, 1974 Acts, Article 49, that "the members of the Church marry in the Lord and that the *office-bearers* are to see to it that they do so." The approbation of the congregation is required also when a marriage is solemnized in a public ceremony, since the Banns/Announcements must be proclaimed audibly in a worship service. (see also Synod Coaldale, Article 57, Considerations 5 and 8.)

3. The request of the Church at Carman does not sufficiently take into account the meaning of the word "optional," meaning that *if* something is to be included it should be done in the following manner. Since Carman admits that there is no objection to the inclusion of the ring ceremony itself, the phrasing may as well be left in the Form.

4. Under "The Profound Mystery," the words "*to the end*" as not coming from Ephesians 5, should be substantiated in the margin, John 13:1.
5. Under "Duties in Marriage" the word, "what the Lord asks of you in marriage" is somewhat weak and should be changed into "what the Lord requires"
6. It is not evident why the Committee in its corrected Draft has decided to remove the words "authorized by the government of this province." These words are necessary for the minister who solemnizes the marriage does so specifically by authorization of the civil authorities who grant this right to the churches. It is this authorization which gives legal status to the marriage.

D. Recommendation

Synod decide to adopt the Revised Form for the Solemnization of Marriage, as emended by Synod. ADOPTED

ARTICLE 148

Adjournment

Elder C. Hoogerdijk asks the brothers to sing Psalm 84:4 and leads in closing prayer.

It is noted that once again Rev. M. van Beveren is absent due to the illness of his wife.

Synod adjourns.

MORNING SESSION — FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5, 1980

ARTICLE 149

Re-opening

The Chairman proposes that Hymn 30:4 be sung. He reads Romans 8:28-39 and leads in prayer.

The roll call is held. All of the members of Synod are present.

The Chairman extends a special welcome to the senior classes of the Guido de Bres High School.

ARTICLE 150

Contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church

Committee IV presents a majority and minority report. These reports are discussed.

AFTERNOON SESSION — FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5, 1980

ARTICLE 151

Acts

The Acts, Articles 141-148, are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 152

Contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church

I. Majority Report

- A. Material** — Agenda VIII, E, 1 — Report from the Committee (plus appendices I, II and III).
E, 2 — Additional Report from the Committee, October 22, 1980.
I, 4 — Request of the Church at Lincoln in its appeal.

B. Observations

1. Synod Coaldale 1977, Acts, Article 91, III, Recommendations, decided:
"To offer the Orthodox Presbyterian Church a temporary relationship called 'ecclesiastical contact' with the following rules:
 - 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."
Synod Coaldale also decided, sub IV:
"To continue the Committee for Contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church with the mandate:
 - a. to inform the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations of the decisions of Synod regarding the Orthodox Presbyterian Church;
 - b. to continue the contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church while taking into account the rules for 'Ecclesiastical Contact';
 - c. to respond to the letter of the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church dated April 14, 1976;
 - d. to discuss and evaluate the relationships of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church with other Churches, as the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod, and the Christian Reformed Church;
 - e. to inform the Churches from time to time about the progress made (e.g., by press releases of combined Committee meetings);
 - f. to report on its activities to the next General Synod."
2. The Committee reports that it met six times. The LORD took to Himself br. W. Wildeboer who, from the start, was a member and served the Committee as secretary-treasurer. "His diligence . . . was highly appreciated." The Rev. W. Huizinga succeeded him as secretary, and br. J. Boot became treasurer.
3. Besides corresponding with the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relationships, the Committee advised our Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad that the Orthodox Presbyterian Church has the same fraternal relationship with the Presbyterian Church in Korea, Koryu-Pa, as with the Hapdong. The Committee also recommended, upon request of the Dutch sister-churches, via the Committee for Correspondence, to the Dutch sister-churches to contact the Orthodox Presbyterian Churches directly; and to "engage in a similar relation as our 'Ecclesiastical Contact,' urging them not to proceed faster than we do." A communication regarding the *Book of Praise* was received from

the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America. It was passed on to the Committee on the Church Book for their consideration.

4. The Committee informed the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations of the decisions of Synod Coaldale regarding the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, and received as reply that the 46th General Assembly 1979 has accepted the Synod's offer of "Ecclesiastical Contact" as defined in the three rules.

5. In its contact with the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations two combined meetings were held. In these meetings our preference for "Ecclesiastical Contact" was explained as well as its temporary character. Also the meaning of our rules for correspondence was discussed, and the matter of the delegates. From the rules of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church for their delegates it became clear to our Committee that they will not dominate the floor at our Synods.

Our Committee wrote a reply to the letter of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church of April 14, 1976. This reply, dated October 13, 1978, was initially discussed at the second combined meeting. A response was not received yet. The Committee added this reply to its report to Synod as Appendix I.

6. Our Committee invited a delegate of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church to our General Synod Smithville, while Dr. J. Faber attended the 47th General Assembly 1980 of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church which was held in Beaver Falls, PA. for three days. Matters regarding the contact of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church with other Churches were dealt with during these days. In his concluding remarks, Dr. Faber states that although the difference in Church government was evident, and the decision re the membership of the Synodical Reformed Churches in the R.E.S. could have been stronger, "the sincere appeal to Holy Scripture, the clear desire to be obedient to Christ . . . , and the direction and contents of its decisions, convinced him again of the fact that the Orthodox Presbyterian Church is a true Church of our Lord Jesus Christ as confessed in Article 29 of the Belgic Confession."

7. Regarding the execution of the mandate "to discuss and evaluate the relationships" of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church with other Churches, our Committee reports that the Orthodox Presbyterian Church is a member of the NAPARC (North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council), with three other Presbyterian Churches and the Christian Reformed Church. In this organization rules for Ecclesiastical Fellowship are adopted, including occasional pulpit exchange. Our Committee asked the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations about the Orthodox Presbyterian Church's relationship with the Christian Reformed Church. It was pointed out that this relationship has grown historically, due to the fact that the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in the beginning of its existence received much help from the Christian Reformed Church. Although merger talks are going on with the other members in the NAPARC, they are not being held with the Christian Reformed Church. The Orthodox Presbyterian Church has fraternal relations with a number of other Presbyterian and Reformed Churches. Regarding the membership in the Reformed Ecumenical Synod, our Committee stated the position of our Churches. The response was that the Orthodox Presbyterian Church has considered leaving this organization, but so far it has decided to remain a member in order to let its warning voice be heard.

8. The Committee published press releases of its meetings and a report of Dr. J. Faber's visit to the General Assembly meeting. Also the reply of the Committee to the April 14, 1976, letter was published in *Clarion*. In this reply, the doctrinal and church-political divergencies were discussed. The reply is added as Appendix I. A substantial part of the draft reply is taken up in this finalized reply.
9. In its conclusion, the Committee points at the progress in the contact toward a correspondence relation: "ecclesiastical contact was established, and misgivings at the side of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church regarding the rules for correspondence were removed."

The Committee recommends to Synod to keep in the mandate a continuation of the discussion and evaluation of the divergencies and of the contact in general.
10. In the additional report, the Committee makes a clarification as pointed at by Prof. N. Shepherd: the Orthodox Presbyterian Church does not have a fraternal relationship with the Free Presbyterian Church in Scotland, but with the Free Church of Scotland.
11. Our Committee further reports that as a result of the combined meetings certain members of the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations think that there is the obligation "to move toward full correspondence between our Churches if at all possible." But one of the questions which arose in the CEIR was: what is involved in the rule of "giving account to each other regarding correspondence with third parties." "If the Orthodox Presbyterian Church announced that it was ready to enter into full correspondence on the basis of the five rules as you have them, would the Canadian Reformed Churches be ready to accept us on that basis as we now are?" This includes membership in the Reformed Ecumenical Synod. Our Committee replied that prior approval from other corresponding parties is not necessary, "although it is of course ideal that all corresponding churches would maintain the same international, ecclesiastical relationships." The Committee, further, wrote that it could not answer the question and would put it before the Synod of Smithville.
12. The Church at Lincoln requests that the "draft reply," submitted to Synod Coaldale 1977, be taken up in the Acts as an Appendix.

C. Considerations

1. The Committee executed its mandate in corresponding and meeting with the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations, as well as in publishing its reply to the letter of April 14, 1976, and press releases of its meetings.
2. Synod takes note of the passing away of br. W. Wildeboer and of the appreciation of the Committee for the work done by this brother.
3. It is a reason for thankfulness that the Committee could report that there is progress in our contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, as this appeared in the acceptance of the "Ecclesiastical Contact" relation with its three rules, and in the willingness of certain members of the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations to move toward full correspondence.
4. It is also a reason for thankfulness that Dr. J. Faber could come with a positive report about his findings of the 47th General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

5. Our Committee has not received an official response to their letter of October 13, 1978. Only some preliminary discussions were held. These discussions on the doctrinal and church-political divergencies should not continue endlessly, but come to a conclusion.
6. Information was received regarding the "Ecclesiastical Fellowship" of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church with three other Presbyterian Churches in North America and with the Christian Reformed Church in the NAPARC, and regarding "fraternal relations" with other Presbyterian and Reformed Churches in the world. The membership of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in the Reformed Ecumenical Synod and the relation with the Christian Reformed Church were initially discussed. These discussions are not finalized and an evaluation has not been given to Synod.
7. Synod New Westminster 1971 decided "to forward a letter directly to the General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church . . . requesting it brotherly and urgently . . . to also terminate their relationship with Churches, that maintain correspondence with the (Synodical) Gereformeerde Kerken in The Netherlands, as well as membership in the Reformed Ecumenical Synod." (Acts, Article 92, Decision I, b, 2)
8. Synod Toronto 1974 decided "to discontinue the contact with the Christian Reformed Church," and "to appoint a Committee with the mandate to draft a Christian appeal and to send it to the Christian Reformed Community, taking into account the recent developments in the Christian Reformed Church. (Acts, Article 146, Recommendation 2 and 3, a) This decision was upheld by Synod Coaldale 1977. (Acts, Article 77, A)
9. The Canadian Reformed Churches, in obedience to the Word of God (Romans 16:17; II Timothy 3:5; Titus 3:10; Revelation 18:4; I Kings 13), reject all official relationship with Churches that are not Reformed or are deviating from God's Word as confessed in the Reformed Standards.
Therefore, the membership of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in the Reformed Ecumenical Synod and also a continuation of maintaining an official relationship with the Christian Reformed Church form an impediment for the Canadian Reformed Churches to enter into full correspondence with the Orthodox Presbyterian Churches.
10. The reply of our Committee, dated October 13, 1978, to the letter of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church Committee of April 14, 1976, contains a substantial part of the "draft reply" submitted to Synod Coaldale 1977. This reply is to be included in the Acts of this Synod as an Appendix. Synod Coaldale judged that this "draft reply" showed too much the marks of a draft. Therefore, there is no need to include the "draft reply" in the Acts of this Synod.

D. Recommendations

Synod decide:

1. To express its gratitude to the Committee for all the work done, in particular for the faithful labours of the late br. W. Wildeboer;
2. 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 serve the next Synod, for the benefit of our Churches, with a detailed evaluation of the divergencies as not forming an impediment for recognizing the Orthodox Presbyterian Church as a true Church (see Acts 1980, Article 97, II, C, 3);
 - c. to evaluate the reaction of the Committee on Ecumenicity and Inter-

church Relations of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church regarding the divergencies, and to come to the next Synod with recommendations (cf. Consideration 5);

- d. to use as guideline in the continued discussion with the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church that membership in the Reformed Ecumenical Synod and an official relationship with the Christian Reformed Church form an impediment for the Canadian Reformed Churches to come to full correspondence with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church;
 - e. to continue and, if possible, to complete the discussion and evaluation of the relationships which the Orthodox Presbyterian Church has with other Churches, as the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) and the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod;
 - f. to inform the Churches from time to time about the progress made (e.g., by press releases of combined Committee meetings);
 - g. to report on its activities to the next General Synod.
3. To include in the Acts as Appendices:
 - a. the reply of our Committee, dated October 13, 1978;
 - b. the report and the additional report of the Committee;
 - c. the report of our delegate to the 47th General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.
 4. Not to grant the request of the Church at Lincoln. DEFEATED

II. Minority Report

A. **Material** (same as the Majority Report)

B. **Observations** (same as the Majority Report)

C. Considerations

1-6 (same as the Majority Report)

7. The questions posed by our Committee for Contact to Synod with regard to correspondence and the R.E.S. should not be answered at this time seeing that the mandate given to the Committee by Synod 1974 and Synod 1977, namely, to evaluate the relationship of the O.P.C. with third parties, has not been completed.

This evaluation must be completed because it may also have a bearing on the sister-church relationship that the Canadian Reformed Churches have with the Free Reformed Churches of Australia and the Gereformeerde Kerken in The Netherlands (seeing as they both have correspondence with the Presbyterian Church in Korea [Koryu-pa] which in turn has fraternal relations with the Christian Reformed Church).

8. The reply of our Committee, dated October 13, 1978, to the letter of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church Committee of April 14, 1976, contains a substantial part of the "draft reply" submitted to Synod Coaldale 1977. This reply is to be included in the Acts of this Synod as an Appendix. Synod Coaldale judged that this "draft reply" showed too much the marks of a draft. Therefore, there is no need to include the "draft reply" in the Acts of this Synod.

D. Recommendations

Synod decides:

1. To express its gratitude to the Committee for all the work done. In particular, it remembers the faithful labours of our late brother W. Wildeboer.
2. 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, II, C, 3);
 - c. to evaluate the reaction of the Committee on Ecumenicity and Inter-church 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.
3. To include in the Acts as Appendices:
 - a. the reply of our Committee dated October 13, 1978;
 - b. the report and the additional report of the Committee;
 - c. the report of the delegate to the 47th General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church;
4. Not to grant the request of the Church at Lincoln. ADOPTED

EVENING SESSION — FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5, 1980

ARTICLE 153

Correspondence with Churches Abroad

Committee II presents

- A. **Material** — Agenda VIII, H, 1 — Report of the Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad, August 27, 1980, with an enclosure (Historical Review: Presbyterian Church at Korea).
 - H, 2 — Additional Report from the Committee, October 28, 1980.
 - H, 3 — Letter from the Deputies for Correspondence of the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands.

B. Information

1. The mandate given by Synod Coaldale 1977 reads as follows: "to maintain correspondence in accordance with the Rules for Correspondence and to do so with:
De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland;
Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika;
The Free Reformed Churches in Australia;" (Acts 1977, Article 107).

2. The mandate further included:
 - "to continue and to try to intensify the contact with the Presbyterian Church in Korea (Koryu-Pa) and to submit a report on this contact to the next General Synod;
 - to send an invitation to sister-Churches Abroad at least one year prior to the date the next General Synod is to convene;
 - to have our Churches represented by a delegate to General Synods of sister-Churches Abroad, if invited, and when desirable and feasible;
 - to inform the Churches from time to time about that which is of interest in their correspondence with Churches Abroad" (Acts 1977, Article 108).
3. The Committee has served Synod with an Enclosure re: Historical Review, Presbyterian Church Korea (see: section on Korean Presbyterian Churches).

4. a) The Netherlands sister-churches have sent a communication to Synod re: the Historical Review, Presbyterian Church Korea, with the following criticism:

"1. Naar onze mening is het door uw 'Committee' aan u uitgebrachte rapport onvolledig, omdat het voor het grootste deel steunt op de meningen van zendelingen van de Orthodox Presbyterian Church, maar nalaat de mening van de betrokkenen zelf weer te geven over die OPC-beoordeling.

Het komt ons voor dat uw synode, alvorens te besluiten relaties aan te gaan met de Hap Dong kerken op zijn minst de Korea Presbyterian Church (Kosin) in de gelegenheid zou moeten stellen zich te verdedigen tegen deze OPC-kritiek.

2. Uit onze onderzoekingen van eertijds en onze contacten sindsdien hebben wij een ander beeld gekregen van onze zusterkerk in Korea en de Hap Dong kerk.

In de 'restoration' van 1963 ging het ten diepste om het houden van de overeenkomst ten aanzien van het seminary te Busan. (Vergelijk de belangrijke zaak van het al of niet houden van het 'beding' in de jaren na de vereniging in 1892 in de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland.)

De betekenis van het seminary te Busan ging ver uit boven het handhaven van een zelf gestichte opleidingsschool. Dit seminary was een symbool geworden en een belichaming van de compromis-loze tegenstand tegen de Shintoïsme-dwang van de Japanse bezetters, en na de bevrijding van de blijvende afwijzing van enig compromis. Bij de bedoelde opheffing van dit Busan-seminary stonden dan ook deze zaken op het spel.

Tekenend is, dat de Hap Dong kerk nu verdeeld is in 5 of 6 groepen. Er is dan ook wel een heel wat breder onderzoek nodig dan alleen een historisch onderzoek, wil men kunnen besluiten met de Hap Dong kerken relaties aan te gaan.

Wij meenden u deze kritiek te moeten schrijven, omdat een eventueel besluit van uw vergadering tot het aangaan van kerkelijke correspondentie met de Hap Dong kerken verregaande consequenties zou hebben."

- b) This letter also contains the following invitation:

Synod *decides*

to *invite*

through her deputies for correspondence with churches abroad
the sister-churches abroad
and the churches with whom preliminary ecclesiastical contact
was established

to *send delegates*

to a constituent assembly
for the convening of a Reformed International Conference.

The *agenda* of this Constituent Assembly will contain at least the following:

1. The unity of faith as gift and mandate and its significance for
 - a. the diversity among the creeds of the churches;
 - b. the diversity among the forms of government of the churches;
 - c. the confession concerning the church;
 - d. the reflection on contacts and relations with other churches.
2. Mutual help in the execution of the missionary mandate in the missionary situation of our time.
3. Basis and name of the Reformed International Conference.
4. Meaning and authority of the judgments and conclusions of the Reformed International Conference.
5. By-laws concerning:
 - method of delegation;
 - frequency of meetings;
 - drafting the agenda;
 - method of dealing with the agenda.

The General Assemblies of the sister-churches in Australia, Canada, Korea, Sumba, South-Africa are being asked to authorize its Committees for Fraternal Relations, a. to appoint delegates; b. to help draft the agenda of the Constituent Assembly.

C. Observations

1. The Committee was able to fulfill its mandate properly according to the rules for correspondence, e.g., issue declarations to ministers travelling aboard, sending appropriate congratulations, passing on the Acts of Synod Coaldale, etc. (see Appendix).

2. The Free Reformed Churches of Australia:

The Committee reports:

- a) "The *correspondence* with the Free Reformed Churches of Australia has been conducted according to the instructions the Committee received from General Synod Coaldale 1977
- b) We received the *report from the Australian Deputies for Correspondence with Overseas Sister-Churches to Synod 1978* of the Free Reformed Churches in Australia, held at Launceston in 1978
The Synod 1978 of the Free Reformed Churches in Australia met from June 3rd to June 12th, 1978."
- c) From the correspondence and the Acts we may gratefully conclude that the Free Reformed Churches in Australia desire to be faithful to God's Word and the Church Order.

3. De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland:

The Committee reports:

- a) The Committee was able to conduct correspondence in accordance with the adopted rules, and informed the Netherlands sister-churches about decisions of Synod Coaldale 1977.
- b) The Committee received the provisional agenda of the General Synod Groningen-Zuid 1978. Best wishes were extended through our delegate.

- c) General Synod Groningen-Zuid 1978 adopted a revised Church Order and revised Forms for the Baptism of Infants, the Baptism of Adults, Public Profession of Faith and a new Form of Discipline for those adults who have not professed their faith.

"Your Committee, in accordance with the Rules for Correspondence, has scrutinized the above Church Order and Forms, and declares that it considers them to be in accordance with the Holy Scriptures and in harmony with Reformed church polity."

- d) They send us a copy of the proposal that they will tender to the upcoming Synod Arnhem 1981 on the matter of the *Reformed International Conference* and they request us as Deputies to recommend to Synod Smithville 1980 that:

(i) delegates be appointed to attend this gathering;

(ii) that they be given the mandate to help set up an agenda for this Conference.

They explain that they come with this request prior to Synod Arnhem 1981 in order to save time. If they wait until after Synod Arnhem has agreed and then approach the sister-churches, this Conference could be delayed until 1983. They would like to convene it earlier.

- e) From the correspondence and the Acts of General Synod Groningen-Zuid 1978 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.

4. Die Vrije Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika:

The Committee reports:

- a) Shortly after the closing of General Synod 1977 a letter was sent to deputies for correspondence with churches abroad of Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke in South Africa. In this letter the South African sister-churches were informed about some of the decisions of General Synod Coaldale 1977.
- b) Upon our request we received copies of the Acts of Synod Kaapstad 1978 with apologies for not sending them sooner. Deputies were of the understanding that they were to be mailed directly by the printer.
- c) The official Acts of Synod Pretoria 1980 are not available to us yet at the time of preparation of this report.
- d) From the correspondence and the Acts received, we may conclude with gratitude that the stabilization of church life in South Africa has continued and that Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika have shown that they desire to be faithful to God's Word and to abide by the Reformed Creeds and Church Order."

5. The Presbyterian Church in Korea (Koryu-Pa)

- a) Synod Coaldale 1977 charged the Committee to "continue and try to intensify the contact with the Presbyterian Church in Korea and submit a report to the next General Synod" (Acts, Article 108, Recommendation 4).
- b) The Committee received a copy of the Revised Form of Government of the Koryu Pa, adopted in 1979, but this document being in Korean was inaccessible to the Committee. The Committee informs Synod: "In the meantime, we are waiting for a reliable and complete translation of the Form of Government. Once that has been received we hope to inform you of our conclusions and perhaps include certain final recommendations as well."

c) The Committee gives the following further relevant information:
"All of this should, however, not give the impression that the only thing your Committee has done regarding Korea is write an occasional letter. On the contrary, we have been busy trying to obtain a better understanding of the ecclesiastical situation in Korea. We have also researched the whole matter of the Union of 1960 between the Koryu-pa and the Hap Dong, the subsequent disintegration of that Union in 1963, the differences between the Hap Dong and the Koryu-pa, and the relationship of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church to both. The enclosure attached to this report reveals our findings. They are as follows:

Conclusions

- a) The Union of the Hap Dong and the Koryu-pa was hasty and ill-conceived;
- b) The Division of 1963 can not be blamed exclusively on either the one party or the other. The blame must be equally shared;
- c) The reasons for the Division are exceedingly difficult to unearth in their entirety, although it is possible to center out the Seminary issue as a major cause and to list personal power struggles, regionalism and a host of others as lesser causes;
- d) There are no basic differences between the Hap Dong and the Koryu-pa in either doctrine or church polity;
- e) The O.P.C. maintains the same official relationship with both the Hap Dong and the Koryu-pa, namely fraternal relations. As individuals, the O.P.C. missionaries are officially members of the Hap Dong.

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.

D. Considerations

1. The Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad has vigorously and dutifully conducted its work in accordance with the mandate received from Synod Coaldale, Acts, Articles 107, 108.
2. It is evident from the Report that the Committee has not been able to evaluate the criticism from the Deputies for Correspondence of the Netherlands sister-churches (October 16, 1980) on the "Historical Review, Presbyterian Church Korea" (see Appendix).
3. Seeing the preliminary character of the Reformed International Conference, the Canadian Reformed Churches should proceed with caution. It would be premature to send "delegates with a clear mandate" to such a Conference, yet delegates may be sent who shall report to Synod concerning this Conference in order that a warranted position be taken.
4. Since the Report of the Committee is inconclusive with respect to the required information from the Korean Presbyterian Church and the mandate in this respect has not yet been completed, Synod cannot proceed to make decisions regarding this Church.

E. Recommendations

Synod decide:

1. To thank the Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad for the conscientious manner in which the correspondence was conducted.
2. 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.
3. To refrain from entering at this time into correspondence with the Korean Presbyterian Church (Koryu-Pa).
4. To charge the Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad to continue the contacts with the Korean Presbyterian Church with the following mandate:
 - a) to evaluate the Form of Government and to pass this evaluation on to the next General Synod;
 - b) 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;
 - c) to make recommendations to the Synod regarding a future relationship with these Churches.
5. 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.
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 desirable and feasible.
7. With regard to the proposed Reformed International Conference:
 - a. That the Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad be authorized to send two delegates to this Conference;
 - b. 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;
 - c. That Synod Smithville 1980 refrain from any official endorsement of this Conference due to its preliminary character.
8. To publish the Reports of the Committee and the Enclosure in the Acts of Synod as Appendices.
9. To charge the Committee to inform the Churches from time to time about that which is of interest in the Correspondence with Churches abroad.

ADOPTED

The following motion, duly seconded, is discussed:

“To change Consideration 3 to read, ‘In order to be able to have our own input in the Reformed International Conference set-up, it is good to send delegates to it to help or guide this Conference and to establish its agenda.’”

DEFEATED

ARTICLE 154

Overture — Church at Surrey

A. Material — Agenda VIII, H, 4 — Letter from the Church at Surrey re: relationships with other Churches.

B. Observations

1. The Church at Surrey, B.C. requests "that Synod, by means of a new or existing committee (such as the Committee on Contact with the O.P.C. or the Committee for Correspondence with the Sister-Churches Abroad)
 - a) examine the question whether seeking a relationship of correspondence (with all that this implies) with the O.P.C. and possibly other churches standing in a different tradition is really necessary, realistic and to the advantage of all parties concerned, and
 - b) study the feasibility of having another, less comprehensive relationship (i.e. a relationship different from correspondence) with the O.P.C. and possibly other churches of our Lord such as the Koryu-pa which stand in a different tradition."
2. The Church at Surrey gives as grounds for its request the following considerations:
 - d) "that correspondence, in so much as it entails exercising the rules specified above, is a very close relationship and a very demanding one which almost certainly requires a similar historical development, similar reformational confessions and similar church polity practices and structures;
 - e) that the exercise of correspondence between our sister-churches in Australia and The Netherlands (two church federations in the same tradition) with the Presbyterian Church in Korea (a church federation of a different tradition) furnishes ample proof that it is exceedingly difficult to do justice to the rules for correspondence with foreign churches who do not belong to the same historical, ecclesiastical, confessional tradition;
 - f) that part of these difficulties relate to linguistic, social, cultural and geographical factors;
 - g) that notwithstanding these difficulties it is still desirable to have contact with faithful churches of our Lord Jesus Christ in other parts of the world in order to lend mutual support to one another, to expand the missionary activity of Christ's church and to testify to the catholic character of Christ's church."

C. Considerations

1. The oneness and unicity of the Catholic Church implies the calling of the Churches, which recognize one another as true Churches, to support one another mutually, to the best of their ability, not in the least in the matter of taking heed of one another's faithfulness to the Word of God.
2. The oneness and unicity of the Catholic Church must find Scriptural expression in the common proclamation of the death of the Lord at the Lord's Supper (one bread, one body).
3. It is not proven that the differences mentioned in the considerations of the Church at Surrey sub d, e, f, and g are Scriptural impediments to a relationship as regulated in our rules for correspondence and as practised, for instance, between the sister-churches in Holland and the Korean Presbyterian Church.

4. Rules for permanent interchurch relations must be dictated by Scripture and not by reality, like the differences existing between the Churches; however, these Scriptural rules should be applied realistically, to the best of the Churches' ability.
5. Adoption of different rules expressing different degrees of closeness to various Churches would lead to an undesirable distinction between Churches which are all equally true Churches of the Lord Jesus Christ.

D. 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.

E. Recommendation

Synod decides not to accede to the request of the Church at Surrey.

ADOPTED

ARTICLE 155

Appointments

1. Board of Governors — Theological College

From Eastern Canada: Rev. J. Geertsema, Rev. J. Mulder, Rev. M. van Beveren.
 Alternates: Rev. Cl. Stam, Rev. P. Kingma, Rev. W. Pouwelse, in that order.

From Western Canada: Rev. D. DeJong, Rev. D. VanderBoom, Rev. J. Visscher.
 Alternates: Rev. M. VanderWel, Rev. J. Van Rietschoten, Rev. J.D. Wielenga, in that order.

2. Board of Trustees — Theological College

H. Dantuma, A.J. Hordijk, C.M. Loopstra, J. Medemblik, M. Van Grootheest.

3. Committee on Correspondence with Churches Abroad

E.C. Baartman, A.C. Lengkeek, Rev. M. van Beveren, *Rev. J. Visscher*, (convener).

4. Committee for the Publication of the Book of Praise

Mrs. C. VanHalen, *Dr. W. Helder* (convener), J. van Huisstede, M. Kampen, Rev. J. DeJong, M.M. DeGroot (musical advisor).

5. Committee on Translation and Revision of the Confessions

a) Committee on the Heidelberg Catechism

Dr. J. Faber (convener), Dr. W. Helder, Rev. W. Huizinga, Dr. F.G. Oosterhoff.

b) Committee on the Belgic Confession and Canons of Dordt

Rev. C. Van Dam, Dr. J. Faber, *Prof. L. Selles* (convener), Rev. G. VanDooren, Prof. H.M. Ohmann.

6. Committee on Translation and Revision of the Prayers and Forms

Prof. L. Selles, *Rev. Cl. Stam* (convener), Rev. M. Werkman.

7. Committee on the Revision of the Church Order

Rev. J. Geertsema, Rev. W. Pouwelse, *Rev. W.W.J. VanOene* (convener).

- 8. Committee on Contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church**
J. Boot, Dr. J. Faber, Rev. W. Huizinga, *Rev. J. Mulder* (convener).
- 9. Committee on Women's Voting Rights**
Rev. S. DeBruin, Rev. D. DeJong, C. Hoogerdijk, *Rev. J.D. Wielenga* (convener).
- 10. Committee on Bible Translations**
Rev. C. Van Dam, Rev. P. Kingma, *Rev. J. Geertsema* (convener), Prof. H.M. Ohmann.
- 11. Churches for Days of Fasting and Prayer**
The Church at Burlington-West (Rehoboth) and the Church at Edmonton.
- 12. Church for Administration of the General Fund**
The Church at Carman.
- 13. Church for the General Archives**
The Church at Burlington-East (Ebenezer).
- 14. Church for the Inspection of the General Archives**
The Church at Burlington-West (Rehoboth).
- 15. Church to Audit the Finances of General Synod 1980**
The Church at Lincoln.
- 16. The Church to Audit the Finances of the Committee for Publication of the Book of Praise**
The Church at Brampton.
- 17. The Address Church**
Ebenezer Canadian Reformed Church, P.O. Box 124, Burlington, Ontario L7R 3X8.
- 18. The Committee for the Printing of the Acts**
The First and Second Clerks.
- 19. The Convening Church of the next General Synod**
The Church at Cloverdale, B.C.
- 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 156

Acts

The Acts, Articles 149-155, are read and adopted.

ARTICLE 157

Article 43 — Church Order

Article 43 of the Church Order is read by the Chairman. He thankfully states that no one has to be rebuked for having "done something worthy of punishment."

ARTICLE 158

Appendix to the Acts

It has been decided that the following material shall be published as an Appendix to the Acts:

- I. Report to Synod of the Board of Governors of the Theological College
- II. Comprehensive Financial Statement of the Board of Trustees of the Theological College for the years 1977-1979.
- III. Report to Synod of the Committee on the Church Book (Psalm and Hymn Section)
- IV. *Book of Praise* (revised liturgical forms)
- V. Report to Synod of the Committee for Contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (plus the letter of the Committee for Contact to the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, dated October 13, 1978; Report of the Delegate to the 47th General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church held on May 15-22, 1980).
- VI. Report to Synod of the Committee on Women's Voting Rights
- VII. Report to Synod of the Committee on Bible Translations
- VIII. Report to Synod of the Committee on Correspondence with Churches Abroad (and enclosure — Historical Review of the Presbyterian Church in Korea)

ARTICLE 159

Preparation Next Synod

The convening Church at Cloverdale shall decide upon the time of the next General Synod with the advice of the Regional Synod of the Canadian Reformed Churches in Western Canada.

ARTICLE 160

Acts — Press Release

The Executive is charged and authorized to adopt the remaining Acts of the evening session of Friday, December 5, 1980, and to approve the Press Release.

ARTICLE 161

Closing

The Chairman addresses himself to Synod with the following words:

"Esteemed Brothers,

We have come to the close of General Synod Smithville 1980. In the weeks before this Synod was to meet, many predictions were made as far as its duration was concerned, and now it has turned out to be the longest General Synod in the history of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

In spite of the fact that it lasted that long, the alertness of the brothers in doing their work has been exemplary, even though the physical fitness of some of the members of Synod left something to be desired.

I wish to express my sincere appreciation for bearing with me as your chairman. I sometimes had the feeling that I was steering a canoe through "white water." If at any time I have done anyone injustice, I apologize for it. Be assured

that my intentions have been to serve Synod to the best of my abilities. It is up to you to judge.

It gives me much pleasure to speak a word of thanks to my fellow officers of Synod for their cooperation. In addition, I want to thank all of the members of Synod for the good and brotherly spirit that prevailed throughout, even when serious and sometimes controversial matters were in discussion.

No one will expect me to say anything about the decisions made by this Synod. The Churches will have to evaluate them. The only thing that should be said is that we are thankful to the LORD Who, by way of His Churches, has called us to this special task and has enabled us to perform our duties. We pray that He may bless the work which has been done, sanctify it and use it for the upbuilding of His Church and the glory of His Name.

On behalf of all of you, I extend our thanks to the convening Church at Smithville, not only for the preparation of the Synod and for making available the necessary facilities and equipment, but also for the hospitality shown by receiving the delegates into their homes. Special thanks are in order to the Hospitality Committee, and last, but certainly not least, to the sisters Dekker and Steltman who prepared the meals during these weeks. They, and those who assisted them, served the members of Synod with great care.

And now we are going to say our "farewells." Christ the Head of His Church has brought us together. We have learned to know each other better. We have served together.

May the LORD be with you all, bring you safely home and strengthen you for the tasks of your respective offices. May He also strengthen those who have been appointed in the various Committees and enable them to do their work faithfully.

We pray that the LORD may bless and keep His Churches and lead and guide us by His Word and Spirit to follow Him Who has received all power and authority in heaven and on earth. With His Word we began our work and we will finish it with that same Word as it is revealed to the apostle John and as we find it in Revelation 5:1-10."

The Vice-Chairman, the Rev. M. van Beveren, speaks words of thanks to the Chairman for the manner in which he has chaired the meetings. After the singing of Psalm 134:1, 2, 3, the Rev. M. van Beveren leads in thanksgiving prayer.

At 10:40 p.m., Friday, December 5, 1980, the Chairman closes the Ninth General Synod of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

On behalf of Synod,
D. VanderBoom, Chairman
M. van Beveren, Vice-Chairman
J. Visscher, First Clerk
J. Mulder, Second Clerk

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APPENDIX I

To the General Synod
Smithville, 1980.

Esteemed Brethren,

The Board of Governors of the Theological College is pleased to present to your assembly its tri-annual report, covering the academic years 1977/1978, 1978/1979, and 1979/1980.

The most important thing which we can mention is that the Lord our God allowed us to see the work continued without interruption. Even though the Faculty was one member short for some time, the lessons could be given and the students could proceed towards their goal.

That goal was reached by four brethren since the Synod 1977, and all four of them are serving already in the office of Minister of the Word. The graduation of one student this past year left us with four more students. We are happy that we can report the arrival of five brethren who commenced their studies, so that the total number of students at present is nine.

The Board did discuss with the Faculty the requirements for admission to our College and came to the conclusion that caution is needed when admitting young men to the studies, and that further "steps should be taken to ensure, as far as can be ascertained, that those who wish to study for the ministry possess the qualities deemed indispensable for one who aspires to that office." Attention to those requirements was paid when a student was interviewed before he commenced his studies at our College.

The Board as well as the Faculty did discuss the question whether or not a maximum age should be set as much as there is a minimum age for those who can be admitted without being in the possession of a Bachelor of Arts degree.

Concerning the conduct and diligence of the students no special remarks have to be made. Some concern was expressed about the fact that students sometimes hold a part-time job. It was feared that such might work adversely with regard to their studies and progress. Ultimately, however, holding a part-time position is the student's own responsibility.

Could the work at the College be continued uninterrupted as such, that can not be said about every member of the Faculty. The Reverend H. Scholten, already handicapped by illness during the previous years, had to submit his resignation as Lecturer in the Ecclesiological Department. As Lecturer-emeritus he continues to follow all the activities at our College with great interest and his advice is never sought in vain. The Board is grateful that, especially during the first years of our College's existence, the Rev. Scholten gave his full cooperation and dedicated himself wholeheartedly to the task laid upon his shoulders by the Churches. It behooves us to express our gratitude also in this report.

In order that the remaining members of the Faculty should not be burdened with too much extra work, the Rev. W.W.J. VanOene was appointed as temporary instructor, such until the time when the General Synod has appointed a successor to the Rev. H. Scholten. Having obtained the advice of the Faculty, the Board will come to Synod with a recommendation concerning such an appointment.

The Board received advice from the Faculty re: the appointment of a successor to the Rev. G. VanDooren, who will have to resign at the end of the academic year 1981/1982. For various reasons the Board, upon the recommendation of the Faculty, took grateful note of the willingness of the Rev. VanDooren to serve until the day of his obligatory retirement. The need to come to your assembly with a recommendation or nomination to fill the expected vacancy was not considered so pressing that a decision had to be made right now. It remains

the intention of the Board and the Faculty to come with proposals to your successor, the Synod 1983, to appoint a fourth full-time professor who is to take over the Diaconiological Department. It is our hope and expectation that at that time we shall also be able to propose a man well-qualified for that position.

Another resignation was the one by the Rev. A.B. Roukema who served for some years as Associate Librarian. Health reasons compelled him to terminate that work, and we could not do anything but accept his decision. Also to him we extend our words of gratitude for the work which he did, a work which is not noticed by outsiders but is the more appreciated by all who wish to use the Library of our College.

And, to conclude our remarks about persons working in and for our College, the Board also gratefully recognizes the work that is done by the Administrative Assistant, Miss Anne Van Sydenborgh. Having been appointed originally with the care for the financial administration as an assistant to the Treasurer of our College as her main task, she saw the list of her activities and responsibilities grow to such an extent that she has become involved in almost anything going on in our College, not in the last place the Library-cataloguing.

In compliance with a decision by Synod, the Board of Governors and the Board of Trustees have been looking actively for other properties, but thus far have not been able to come up with something considered altogether suitable for our purpose.

In academic matters the recent move by the Ontario Government to introduce legislation prohibiting conferring of degrees by non-recognized Colleges and Universities and declaring any advertising of courses leading to them illegal has caused concern with the Boards and with the Faculty. Steps have been undertaken to come to a Private Bill which would give recognition to our College and thus would keep the way towards conferring of degrees open. In this connection the question is also being considered whether we should not, at the same time, include the possibility of conferring the degree of Doctor of Theology.

The lectures given were visited by the Governors according to an adopted schedule. This schedule was somewhat upset by the appointment of the Rev. VanOene as temporary instructor. The dual position as instructor and governor was reason why he did not take part in the visiting of the lectures after he took up the former position.

The reports of visits to the lectures were favourable. The governors could hear for themselves that the instruction given is scholarly and Scriptural. Both qualifications are important and we are happy that we can report that they both were found present. This is the more a reason for gratitude seeing the general apostasy and deterioration which is to be noticed all around us. It is our sincere and heartfelt wish that the Lord may strengthen those called to teach so that our College may become a source of blessing not only for the Churches that maintain and support this institution but also for others from our own and other continents.

About the support of the Churches as far as finances are concerned the Board of Trustees reports to your assembly, and we can therefore refrain from remarks in this respect.

The support otherwise by the Churches and Church members becomes evident every year anew at the College Evenings/Convocations.

It was a fitting celebration of the tenth anniversary of our College when we conducted the ceremony of conferring of degrees at a Convocation in the West. Even though the extra income did not cover by half the extra costs, the Boards have no regrets about the decision to have this evening in British Columbia. From almost every Church in the West members were present, and we are certain that it was greatly appreciated by the brotherhood out West.

The Board met four times since the previous Synod. At each annual meeting officers were chosen, and the outcome of each election confirmed the status quo.

This report does not yet cover the meeting of October 31, 1980, although this report has been adopted at that meeting.

In conclusion, the Board wishes to thank our gracious and faithful God for His unceasing care and mercy upon us. We thank the Lord for the willingness given into the hearts of the members of the Faculty and of the Board of Trustees as well as of the Board of Governors to work in harmony in this great undertaking. We thank Him for the willingness of the membership to continue their support of our institution, and commend the same into His continuous care and favour.

Respectfully submitted,
The Board of Governors,
For the same,
W.W.J. VANOENE, Secretary

APPENDIX II

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1977 · 1978 · 1979

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STATEMENT 2 — Pension Fund Balance Sheet

STATEMENT 3 — Equity

STATEMENT 4 — Revenue and Expenditure

AUDITORS' REPORT

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, 1977, 1978, and 1979 and the statements of equity and revenue and expenditure for the years then ended. Our examination included a general review of the accounting procedures and such tests of accounting records and other supporting evidence 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, 1977, 1978 and 1979 and the results of its operations for the years then ended in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding years.

ROBINSON, LOTT & BROHMAN
Chartered Accountants,
Guelph, Ontario
April 3, 1980

STATEMENT 1

**THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
GENERAL FUND BALANCE SHEET
AS AT DECEMBER 31, 1977 - 1978 - 1979**

ASSETS

Current	1979	1978	1977
Petty Cash	\$ 100	\$ 54	\$ 111
Cash in bank — current accounts	8,000	5,124	9,377
Cash in bank — savings accounts	5,513	5,475	4,206
Cash in bank — Rotterdam	569	1,105	43
Allotments receivable — current year	5,735	1,929	1,782
Total current assets	\$ 19,917	13,687	15,519
Investments			
Term deposits	55,000	55,000	55,000
Accrued interest	880	817	741
Total investments	55,880	55,817	55,741
Fixed (at cost)			
Equipment, furniture and fixtures	14,916	14,620	13,945
Less accumulated depreciation	12,669	11,178	9,716
	2,247	3,442	4,229
Real estate and driveway	71,182	71,182	71,182
Library books	52,035	46,077	39,951
Total fixed assets	125,464	120,701	115,362
Trust funds — pension fund — statement 2	21,310	19,004	17,193
	\$222,571	\$209,209	\$203,815

LIABILITIES

Current			
Employees' payroll deductions payable	\$ 1,711	\$ 1,845	\$ 969
Allotments received in advance	7	1	864
Due to pension fund	2,794	594	2,079
Total current liabilities	4,512	2,440	3,912
Trust funds — pension fund — see statement 2	21,310	19,004	17,193
Equity — statement 3			
Designated — library	10,163	13,620	17,247
Designated — future building	43,823	38,823	33,823
General	142,763	135,322	131,640
Total equity	196,749	187,765	182,710
	\$222,571	\$209,209	\$203,815

STATEMENT 2

**THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
PENSION FUND BALANCE SHEET
AS AT DECEMBER 31, 1977 - 1978 - 1979**

ASSETS

Current	1979	1978	1977
Cash in bank	\$ 935	\$ 852	\$ 1,055
Due from general fund	2,794	594	2,079
Total current assets	<u>3,729</u>	<u>1,446</u>	<u>3,134</u>
 Investments			
Term deposits	17,300	17,300	13,873
Accrued interest	281	258	186
Total investments	<u>17,581</u>	<u>17,558</u>	<u>14,059</u>
	<u>\$ 21,310</u>	<u>\$ 19,004</u>	<u>\$17,193</u>

LIABILITIES

Equity			
Balance at beginning of year	\$ 19,004	\$ 17,193	\$ 15,457
Add — Appropriation from budget	500	500	500
— Interest on bank account	84	77	59
— Interest on term deposits	1,722	1,234	1,177
Balance at end of year	<u>\$ 21,310</u>	<u>\$ 19,004</u>	<u>\$ 17,193</u>

STATEMENT 3

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
STATEMENT OF EQUITY
FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1977 - 1978 - 1979

	1979	1978	1977
Designated — Library			
Balance at beginning of year	\$ 13,620	\$ 17,247	\$ 21,661
Add — Appropriation from budget	2,500	2,500	2,500
	<u>16,120</u>	<u>19,747</u>	<u>24,161</u>
Deduct — Transfer to general equity to cover cost of books purchased	5,957	6,127	6,914
Balance at end of year	<u>\$ 10,163</u>	<u>\$ 13,620</u>	<u>\$ 17,247</u>

Designated — Future Building			
Balance at beginning of year	\$ 38,823	\$ 33,823	\$ 28,823
Add — Appropriation from budget	5,000	5,000	5,000
Balance at end of year	<u>\$ 43,823</u>	<u>\$ 38,823</u>	<u>\$ 33,823</u>

General			
Balance at beginning of year	\$135,322	\$131,640	\$129,769
Add — Transfer from library fund to cover cost of books purchased out of general funds	5,957	6,127	6,914
— Excess of revenue over expenditure	1,484	—	—
	<u>142,763</u>	<u>137,767</u>	<u>136,683</u>
Deduct — Excess of expenditure over revenue	—	2,445	5,043
Balance at end of year	<u>\$142,763</u>	<u>\$135,322</u>	<u>\$131,640</u>

STATEMENT 4

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE
FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1977 - 1978 - 1979

	1980 Budget
Revenue	
Allotments from churches	\$127,600
Gifts and collections	5,000
Student fees	900
Student accommodations	1,200
Investment income	6,000
Superannuation benefits	5,435
Total revenue	<u>\$146,135</u>
Expenditure	
Faculty	
Salaries — professors	\$74,170
Salaries — lecturers	6,000
Pension — Mrs. Kouwenhoven	13,314
Superannuation	4,892
Social insurances	1,200
Other personnel insurances	1,030
Total faculty	<u>100,606</u>
Property	
Property improvements and maintenance	1,060
Caretaking	2,000
Hydro and water	750
Fuel	2,000
Insurance	1,262
Depreciation of equipment	—
Total property	<u>7,072</u>
Administration	
Travelling and meetings — board of governors	1,500
Travelling — lecturers	1,000
Travelling and meetings — trustees	250
Administration and office supplies	1,350
Salary — administrator	13,500
Social insurances — administrator	446
Other personnel insurances — administrator	377
Legal and audit	350
Telephone	700
General	500
Handbook	—
Convocation in Western Canada	—
Total administration	<u>19,973</u>
Library	
Assistant librarian	—
Library supplies	1,000
Total library	<u>1,000</u>
Appropriations	
Pension fund	500
Building fund	5,000
Library fund	2,500
Salary fund	8,800
Total appropriations	<u>16,800</u>
Other unforeseen expenditure	684
Total expenditure	<u>\$146,135</u>
Excess of revenue over expenditure	<u>\$ —</u>

STATEMENT 4

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE
FOR THE YEARS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1977 - 1978 - 1979

1979		1978		1977	
Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual
\$112,050	\$114,561	\$109,350	\$110,349	\$ 86,900	\$ 86,262
5,000	4,613	5,000	4,966	3,500	5,427
900	1,100	1,000	1,100	1,200	900
900	1,050	900	1,050	900	900
5,500	5,716	5,000	4,760	4,000	4,573
5,000	5,435	3,000	5,000	3,000	3,000
<u>\$129,350</u>	<u>\$132,475</u>	<u>\$124,250</u>	<u>\$127,225</u>	<u>\$ 99,500</u>	<u>\$101,062</u>
\$ 68,500	\$ 68,500	\$ 68,500	\$ 68,500	\$ 53,547	\$ 53,547
6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	3,500	3,500
12,459	12,180	12,459	12,459	9,568	13,630
4,500	4,892	4,500	4,500	3,300	3,300
1,560	1,938	1,458	1,902	1,578	1,592
1,266	1,336	1,182	1,157	1,182	1,205
<u>94,285</u>	<u>94,846</u>	<u>94,099</u>	<u>94,518</u>	<u>72,675</u>	<u>76,774</u>
1,060	855	560	2,030	560	278
2,000	2,180	1,500	1,622	1,500	1,431
650	650	600	665	500	629
1,500	1,746	900	1,468	800	1,371
1,155	1,262	1,155	1,136	889	1,155
—	1,492	—	1,462	—	1,395
<u>6,365</u>	<u>8,185</u>	<u>4,715</u>	<u>8,383</u>	<u>4,249</u>	<u>6,259</u>
1,500	575	1,000	1,427	800	887
800	891	600	741	600	528
250	60	250	61	250	123
1,000	1,105	750	1,327	750	1,407
<u>12,500</u>	<u>12,500</u>	<u>9,500</u>	<u>11,275</u>	<u>8,800</u>	<u>8,800</u>
—	—	—	—	—	—
217	211	132	252	—	210
350	310	350	263	350	360
600	841	600	604	400	541
500	—	500	443	—	503
—	—	—	885	—	—
—	3,256	—	—	—	—
<u>17,717</u>	<u>19,749</u>	<u>13,682</u>	<u>17,278</u>	<u>11,950</u>	<u>13,359</u>
2,000	—	2,000	1,440	3,000	985
1,000	211	1,000	51	500	728
<u>3,000</u>	<u>211</u>	<u>3,000</u>	<u>1,491</u>	<u>3,500</u>	<u>1,713</u>
500	500	500	500	500	500
5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500
—	—	—	—	—	—
<u>8,000</u>	<u>8,000</u>	<u>8,000</u>	<u>8,000</u>	<u>8,000</u>	<u>8,000</u>
983	—	504	—	626	—
<u>\$130,350</u>	<u>\$130,991</u>	<u>\$124,000</u>	<u>\$129,670</u>	<u>\$101,000</u>	<u>\$106,105</u>
<u>(\$ 1,000)</u>	<u>\$ 1,484</u>	<u>\$ 250</u>	<u>(\$ 2,445)</u>	<u>(\$ 1,500)</u>	<u>(\$ 5,043)</u>

APPENDIX III

COMMITTEE CHURCH BOOK, PSALMS AND HYMNS SECTION

To the General Synod of Smithville, Ontario
1980

Esteemed Brethren,

Herewith we submit our report on our activities during the past years.

After we had received the mandate from the Synod Coaldale 1977, we considered what to do first, and we came to the conclusion that it would be best to work towards the revision and completion of the Hymn Section before reviewing the rhymings of the Psalms.

1. RHYMING OF THE HYMNS

As for the rhyming of the Hymns, we have considered all the changes that were suggested by church members who studied the Provisional Hymn Section and sent us their remarks, either because their own Consistories appointed them to that work or because they wished to serve the Churches by their personal, private advice.

In many instances the proposed changes were not acceptable because the wording was incorrect, or the prosody was unacceptable, or because we preferred the wording as it was given in the Provisional Section. It would serve no purpose if we mentioned the proposed changes and our evaluation of those proposals. A comparison of the Hymn Section as it has been printed and the list of changes which we adopted will show in how far we could go along with the criticism which was brought to our attention. We add this list of changes as *Appendix I*.

There is one point in this connection to which we wish to pay some more attention. It was the point in some of the letters received that the committee preserved somewhat "archaic" language in some verses, e.g. in Hymn 14 (the Song of Zechariah) and Hymn 60 ("Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of Creation"). We were faced with a choice: either give a totally new rhyming or keep the rhyming as it is without any major change. We chose the latter course and do not think it to be so difficult that the congregations will have trouble with it. It does not hurt to have some "old-fashioned language" in the Church's songs once in a while.

2. CHOICE OF SONGS

Comparison of the new *Hymn Section* with the hymn section of the *Book of Praise* as it appeared in 1972 will show that we have deleted some of the songs which were found in the 1972 edition. Our reasons for deleting some songs were: this song is unnecessary, since we already have the very same song in the Book of Psalms (e.g. "old" Hymn 1); this song expresses thoughts which, even though not completely contrary to the Word of God, yet are a "borderline case" (e.g. "old" Hymns 20, 27).

The set-up of the *Hymn Section* according to the order of the Apostles' Creed resulted in our inserting some songs to provide a broader "coverage" of each part of that confession. We only remind your assembly of the section "Come, Lord Jesus! Maranatha!" to make clear what we mean.

3. NOTATION

The matter of the choice and notation of the hymn-tunes became a difficult chapter in our endeavours.

The many reactions, often critical, to the music-part of the provisional *Hymn Section 1979*, forces us to give some explanation, without going into technical details.

Because of the importance of the musical aspect and because only one member of our Committee was considered by us as an expert, we approached a number of brethren whom we considered knowledgeable in this field and requested them to serve us with their advice.

Although we are thankful for all the work these brethren did, and the information they gave, the end-result was not very helpful for us, not only because distances prevented them from meeting, but because they had divergent views on matters like notation of old melodies, rests and finales, and on the use of accidentals (Dutch: "toevallige verhogingen") in the Genevan tunes.

Time, however, went on, and the moment came that the Hymn Section had to be readied for printing and publication. At that time one opinion regarding these musicological matters found expression in a number of hymns in the green booklet; not all Committee members considered themselves responsible for the view which then prevailed.

The above-mentioned criticism was mainly directed at this specific music-notation. It was soon discovered that there was a clear difference between some tunes in the green booklet and the *music edition* of the *Revised Hymn Section 1979*. People asked: why this difference?

After much discussion, re-evaluation and re-consideration (the Committee for Advice had meanwhile ceased to exist) we met the received criticisms and requests for re-instating certain tunes as far as possible.

This revision was not completed without seeking professional help. De Vereniging van Gereformeerde Kerkorganisten (The Netherlands) was approached and found willing to help. We requested them to verify our work, and although complete agreement was not (yet) established, we are happy now to be able to present a copy of the final draft of the music of the Hymn Section, *Appendix II*. As you will see, a number of tunes have been replaced, in a few cases well-liked melodies from the present *Book of Praise*, which were first deleted, have been returned. Some tunes have been written in the old notation as was suggested, but only when this would not bring any confusion in congregational singing.

4. HARMONIZATION

Synod 1977 in its mandate, recommendation sub 7, also spoke about *Harmonizations*. Our Committee was urged "to seek ways and means to make available to the membership of the Churches the harmonizations of the Psalms and Hymns." It was even suggested "to insert those in the *Book of Praise*."

To be honest, we were surprised by this suggestion from Synod.

The reasons why we did not meet with this urgent request are:

First, Psalm-harmonizations for organ are readily available; we were even informed that a new set of such harmonizations is being prepared privately, specifically for the Canadian Reformed Churches. Then, for the Hymns the *Publication Committee* has made available the *Music Edition of the Revised Hymn Section 1979*, which in nearly all cases fits the revision of tunes mentioned above.

Secondly, Reformed churches have never produced Psalm books with four-part setting. Apart from forbidding costs for our small community, and apart from whether this is an "ecclesiastical matter" according to Article 30, Church Order, the following quotation from one of our advisors may be of interest:

Our Churches have since the Reformation of the 16th century always insisted on congregational, unison singing. Printing the melody only, clearly indicates such a preference. We do not have choirs in our worship services, but in showing a four-part setting in our church-book we could be opening a door for such choirs, which will make the congregation less active.

Thus we present to Synod and to the Churches the Psalms and Hymns with only the melody.

5. PSALMS

Summarizing, we may state that we have been helped by the remarks which came from Churches and church members, although the remarks on the rhyming of the Psalms were very few. We have scrutinized all the rhymings of the Psalms as they appear in the *Book of Praise*, and there is practically no Psalm which has remained "untouched," so to speak. We attach as *Appendix IIIa* a list of those Psalms which have been changed substantially or even have been replaced completely as far as rhyming is concerned. With each and every Psalm it has been and remained our endeavour to stay as close to the unrhymed text as we could. We are encouraged in this respect by the fact that none of the remarks about the rhymings which we presented was of such a nature that deviation from the literal text of God's Word was charged. Final corrections made in response to suggestions and criticism submitted are added in *Appendix IIIb*.

6. DEFINITIVE ADOPTION MOST DESIRABLE

It is our sincere wish that the work which has now been presented to your assembly in the revision of the Psalm rhymings and in the revised *Hymn Section* may appear acceptable so that, at least as far as the songs are concerned, the work may be considered concluded. It is imperative, in our opinion, that the "definitive text" be approved, for our children are learning the rhymings by heart at the various schools, and it is utterly frustrating if every so often they have to re-learn certain songs because a change has been made. Besides, if we keep changing the rhymings, the rhymed Psalms and the hymns will never become "part and parcel" of the lives of believers and they will never become such an integral part of the knowledge-of-faith as we have seen it with our older brothers and sisters who knew almost the whole Dutch Psalm book by heart.

Although we are the first ones to recognize that all our work is imperfect and that there is always room for improvement, yet we wish to say that we have done the best we could as far as rhymings are concerned. The result we now present to your assembly for final approval.

7. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

It is with great joy and thankfulness to the Lord that we stated the above.

In the course of the years many brethren were involved in the work of our Committee. Some of them were appointed to its membership, others became involved upon the request of the Committee. Some of them are already with the Lord, others are still with us. It is a great privilege to us that we are permitted to recognize all those who in one way or another have contributed to the progress of our work and were instrumental in paving the way for the presentation of the final proposals as we submit them to your assembly.

We do wish to honour all those who contributed and we wish to do so especially in two of our brethren who have been a member of our Committee from its very beginning. We refer to the brethren M.M. deGroot and G. VanDooren. They were appointed by the National Synod of Homewood 1954, and have been re-appointed by each subsequent General Synod. It is difficult even to estimate the number of hours that they have spent in their capacity as members of our Committee. For them in particular it is an occasion for rejoicing that the Lord has enabled them to work during all these years and now has given them the privilege that they arrived at this point, this goal. Much work will still have to be done, but the goal has been reached: A complete Psalm book and Hymn book in the English language, with preservation of the Genevan tunes.

It behooves us to give humble thanks to the Lord our God Who has enabled these two brethren to do all the work they have been doing, and it is also fitting

that, as a Committee, we express our gratitude and appreciation to the brethren for the work which has been blessed so abundantly for the benefit of the Churches. We deem it proper that also your assembly recognizes the brethren in its evaluation of the Committee's achievements.

Of the members appointed by Synod 1977, the Rev. C. VanDam had to terminate his cooperation due to his moving to British Columbia. The Canadian Mails are not the most suitable means of entertaining a fruitful cooperation. Besides, work of this nature can be done more properly and speedily as well as thoroughly when proposals and criticism can be discussed orally. We wish to thank the Rev. C. VanDam for the work which he did while he was still in Ontario and faithfully attended the Committee's meetings.

As for the rest, the Committee could meet regularly, although not at regular times. Many hours were spent in meetings; countless more hours were spent in the preparation of the meetings. Be assured that all this work was done with joy and gratitude for the privilege that in this way we were permitted to contribute towards the edification of the Church of Christ.

8. CONTACT WITH OTHERS

Our work and contacts have not been confined to the members of the Churches in Canada. We may even say that there is some international recognition.

A letter was passed on to us in which Dr. Bruce C. Stewart of the Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Pittsburgh, Penn., draws our attention to a possible conference on Psalmody. The following sentence may be quoted, "We would anticipate also that representatives from your Synod would be welcome to attend the study conference." We as your Committee would appreciate Synod's judgment on the desirability of representation at such a conference. We enclose a photocopy of the above letter for your information. *Appendix IV.*

There was some contact with the Australian Deputies and we also have sent them in the course of the years our revisions and adopted rhymings. They sent their remarks on those revisions and rhymings, which we took into account when considering whether any changes should be made. We also followed some of their suggestions regarding rhymings of Old and New Testament passages. Further we sent them our evaluation of some "Bible Songs" which they composed.

We already mentioned the contact with the Vereniging van Gereformeerde Kerkorganisten. More such contacts could be mentioned.

For your information we mention that an independent church in California purchased fifty copies of our *Book of Praise* and are using it in their services. Upon their request we were also instrumental in providing them with a book with harmonizations of the Psalm-tunes.

Further some copies have been ordered from Curacao and Surinam, while also in Presbyterian circles in the United States interest is growing, as may also become evident from the above-mentioned letter.

Our Committee also had contact with a committee of the Reformed Churches in Australia: they wish to use some of our rhymings in the hope that this will lead to acceptance of the whole Genevan Psalter. We have given them permission to do so on certain conditions.

9. COPYRIGHTS AND INCORPORATION

This brings us to our next point.

Our Committee holds the copyright to the rhymings insofar as they have not been taken over from other sources. Most of the rhymings have been produced "by order" of our Committee. As far as we know, that is a unique phenomenon, since practically all other books with Psalms and Hymns have been put together by collecting rhymings from all sorts of existing collections.

In some instances remuneration was given for that work, so that those rhymings are the property of our Committee and, in this committee, of the Churches. In other instances no remuneration was given, but the rights were transferred to our Committee nevertheless. In other cases the versifier retained the right and only gave permission to the Committee, and therein to the Churches, to use his rhymings without any further charge.

Now that the work as such has come to an end, the Churches are to ensure that they keep the rights which are now held, in their behalf, by the Committee. If in any way some financial benefits should be derived from others using our rhymings, the Churches should be the beneficiaries. Our Committee does not wish to say that we should try to "make money" out of our rhymings; we only wish to stress that it would be no more than proper if the Churches received back some of the considerable sum of money they have given for this purpose in the course of these past twenty-six years.

In order to safeguard the rights of the Churches and in order to keep control over the contents of the *Book of Praise* also in the future, it will be necessary that a Standing Committee is appointed by Synod and that such a Committee be incorporated, so that it can take all measures necessary to safeguard the rights of the Churches and can make necessary arrangements for the distribution of the *Book of Praise* and possible changes in the contents of that book, such under instruction from General Synod and under the obligation to report to each General Synod on its activities.

We have already obtained legal advice regarding this matter and have been advised in the above direction. It is proper to mention to your assembly that the substantial legal fee (which was paid by your Committee) has been returned to us as a donation.

For the benefit of your Advisory Committee which will deal with the matters concerning the *Book of Praise* we enclose four photocopies of the advice in its entirety. *Appendix V*.

For the benefit of your assembly we also enclose a draft instruction for the to-be-appointed Standing Committee. *Appendix VI*.

10. CONTENTS BOOK OF PRAISE

The Synod of Coaldale 1977 appointed our Committee to coordinate the work of all committees working on the contents of the *Book of Praise*. It decided "to add to its mandate the charge that it coordinate the work of the committees to be appointed and instructed hereafter." (*Acts*, Article 60).

We have been keeping in constant contact with the various committees (Confessional Forms, Liturgical Forms, Church Order), which contact was greatly facilitated by the fact that most members of our Committee also held membership in one or more of the other committees. Sometimes a brief meeting was held with members of one of the other committees.

From these contacts and from the tangible results of the labours of the other committees it has become evident that our Church book cannot be issued as yet in such a form as we should like to see it: with the Psalms, the Hymns, the Confessional and Liturgical Forms, and the Church Order. Even if — which we hope and expect — your assembly approves the rhymings as we have now presented them to you so that this part of the work may be considered to have been concluded, there remains much work to be done on the other sections. It may even take six or more years before we can finally be presented with a complete and acceptable revision of all the parts which should be included in our *Book of Praise*.

For that reason it does not appear advisable to us to include in the next printing of our *Book of Praise* those revised forms or parts of forms as may be approved by your assembly. We consider it necessary that we wait with publication in that form until all the revisions have been concluded and have been approved by a future General Synod. If we should include every three years those parts which

have been approved and adopted, the previous edition of the *Book of Praise* would have to be discarded and confusion would reign.

The proper course of action as we envisage it would be: to have the revised rhymings of Psalms and Hymns as adopted by Synod in one book with the Confessional and Liturgical Forms as we have them at this moment.

As the various Synods adopt or approve revisions of all or part of the Forms, that part which has been approved could be issued in a separate booklet. It would then be in the liberty of the Churches to use either the "old" forms or the new ones *insofar as they have been approved by Synod*.

Once a General Synod has definitely adopted all the revisions, subsequent editions of the *Book of Praise* should then contain only the adopted and approved revisions.

In that manner confusion is prevented and the cost reduced to a minimum.

In our opinion, your assembly should express the advisability of that course of action, or perhaps even order it to be done that way.

11. ORDER OF WORSHIP

We consider it advisable that a "Suggested Order of Worship" be inserted. The Orders as they are in use among us roughly speaking come in two different forms. In our opinion they should be inserted, but then as "Suggested Orders of Worship," for we do not wish to claim that a General Synod should adopt a specific order and make it mandatory for the Churches.

We enclose two such suggested orders as *Appendix VII*.

12. FINANCES

Various General Synods have empowered our Committee to appeal to the Churches for financial means whenever this appeared necessary. Happily, we did not find ourselves oftentimes in such a position. In the beginning money was needed for the purchase of copyrights, purchase of rhymings, and so on. The actual printing of the *Book of Praise* has never been part of the finances of our Committee but was, instead, being taken care of by a separate Publication Committee. It has been our contention from the very beginning that the Churches should not become involved in the business aspect of this matter, not even via their Committee. Thus the money which was received from the Churches was used solely for the contents of the *Book of Praise*, not for its printing or distribution.

During the past three years we were convinced that we should approach the Churches again. Our revision of the hymn section was completed, and the only way in which the Churches could test the result of our labours was by having sufficient copies so that the songs could be used in the services. With a view to the very temporary character of such a booklet we decided to ask the Churches for a collection or an equivalent amount, and we are happy to report that only one Church refused to cooperate. From all the other Churches we did receive what we had requested.

The amount received from the Churches did not cover by far the cost of the new *Hymn Sections*, as may be evident from *Appendix VIII*. The rest of the money needed was donated by the Publication Committee from the reserves it had been building up through the sale of the present *Book of Praise*. Thus the Churches could be provided with the requested number of copies without further charge.

For the costs of our regular meetings, of postage, stencilling, etc., we were reimbursed by the General Fund as administered by the Church at Carman, Manitoba.

13. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

In order that the matter of our *Book of Praise* and related questions may be

dealt with to the best advantage of the Churches, we request that two of our Committee be given the privilege of the floor when Synod discusses this point.

14. CONCLUSION

After all the above our conclusion of this report can be brief.

It has been a great privilege and pleasure for us to serve the Lord in His Churches in this capacity. We may assure your assembly that the work entrusted to us by the Churches has brought us closer to the songs with which the Church has praised her God and Saviour for all the centuries of her existence.

It is our sincere wish that these songs may be as dear to all the members as they are to us and that in the singing of Christ's Church on this earth may be heard the "beginning of eternal joy."

Respectfully submitted,
Yours in the Lord,
M.M. DE GROOT
W. HELDER
G. VANDOOREN
W.W.J. VANOENE, Secretary

APPENDIX IV
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: 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. The immersion or sprinkling with water signifies this impurity of our souls so that we may detest ourselves, humble ourselves before God and seek our cleansing and salvation outside ourselves. Second: Baptism signifies and seals to us the promise of the cleansing from our sins through Jesus Christ.
Eph. 2:3 John 3:3, 5	We are, therefore, baptized into the Name of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. 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, avert all evil or turn it to our benefit.
Matt. 28:19	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. 8:28	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, make us living members of Christ and partakers of 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.
Rom. 6:5	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.
Rom. 8:5	And if we sometimes through weakness fall into sins, we must not despair of God's mercy nor continue in sin because baptism is a seal and trustworthy testimony that we have an eternal covenant with God.
Eph. 5:27	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 they are, without their knowledge, received unto grace in Christ.
Matt. 22:37 I John 2:15 Eph. 4:22 Col. 3:5	For the Lord spoke to Abraham, the Father of all believers, and thus also speaks to us and our children, <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>
Gen. 17:7	

Acts 2:39 Peter also testifies to this when he says, *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.*

In the old dispensation God, therefore, commanded to circumcise infants; this circumcision was a seal of the covenant and of the righteousness of faith.

Rom. 4:13
Mark 10:16

Christ Himself *took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands upon them.*

Col. 2:11

In the new dispensation baptism has come in the place of circumcision. Infants must, therefore, be baptized as heirs of the kingdom of God and of His covenant. As the children 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 believing Noah and his family. Thou hast drowned all the host of the obstinate Pharaoh in the Red Sea, but led Thy people Israel through the midst of the sea on dry ground, thus signifying baptism.

We beseech Thee by Thy infinite mercy that Thou wilt graciously look upon this Thy child (these Thy children) and incorporate him (her, them) by Thy Holy Spirit into Thy Son Jesus Christ, so that he (she, they) may be buried with Him by *baptism* into death and be raised with Him to walk in newness of life. We pray that he (she, they), following Him day by day, may joyfully bear his (her, their) cross and cleave to Him in true faith, firm hope and ardent love.

Rom. 6:4-5

Grant that he (she, they), comforted in Thee, may leave this life which is no more than a constant death, and at the last day may appear without fear 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 the New Testament, summarized in the Creeds 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 and to have him (her) instructed therein to the utmost of your power?

What is your answer?

Answer

I do (to be given by each parent).

Baptism

N _____, 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. 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 (these children) by Thy Holy Spirit, that he (she, they) may be nurtured in the Christian faith and in godliness, and may grow and increase in the Lord Jesus Christ. Grant that he (she, they) thus may acknowledge Thy fatherly goodness and mercy which Thou hast shown to him (her, them) and to us all. May he (she, they) 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, so that he (she, they) may forever praise and magnify Thee, the Father, the Son and 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 to desire the 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
John 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.

The immersion or sprinkling with water signifies this impurity of our souls so that we may detest ourselves, humble ourselves before God and seek our cleansing and salvation outside ourselves.

Second:

Baptism signifies and seals to us the promise of the cleansing from our sins through Jesus Christ.

Matt. 28:19

We are, therefore, baptized into the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

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, avert all evil or turn it to our benefit.

Rom. 8:28

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.

Rom 6:5

Thus we are freed from our sins and accounted righteous before God. 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, make us living members of Christ and partakers of 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

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, because baptism is a seal and trustworthy testimony that we have an eternal covenant with God.

Matt. 22:37

I John 2:15

Eph. 4:22

Col 3:5

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.

Mark 1:4, 5

For this reason John the Baptist, following the command of God, preached a *baptism of repentance for the forgiveness*

Luke 3:3 *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;*

Matt. 28:19 He added the promise, *He who believes and is baptized will be saved.*

Mark 16:16 According to this rule the apostles baptized only those adults who had repented and professed their faith. Therefore today also no other adults should be baptized except 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.

Acts 2:38;
8:36, 37;
10:47, 48;
16:14, 15, 31-33.

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 believing Noah and his family. Thou hast drowned all the host of the obstinate Pharaoh in the Red Sea, but led Thy people Israel through the midst of the sea on dry ground, thus signifying baptism.

We pray Thee by Thy infinite mercy that Thou 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) N _____, 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. Now it must become clear to all that you not only accept the Christian doctrine, but also intend, by the grace of God, to live accordingly. You are therefore to answer sincerely before God and His Church the following questions.

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 therefore by nature are 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 real 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 as summarized in the Creeds and taught 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 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 lusts? Do you promise to submit willingly to the Christian admonition and discipline of the Church? What is your answer?

Answer

I do.

The good and great God mercifully grant you His grace and blessing to fulfill this your holy intention through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Baptism

N _____, 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. 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, so that he (she) may forever praise and magnify Thee, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, the one only true God. Amen.

FORM FOR THE PUBLIC PROFESSION OF FAITH

Beloved in our Lord Jesus Christ:

We thank the Lord our God for the grace given us by adopting us to be His own children and incorporating 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.

Now that you have requested admission to the table of the Lord, we ask you sincerely to answer the following questions:

First, do you wholeheartedly believe the doctrine contained in the Word of God, summarized in the Creeds and taught 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 abhor 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 and that it is your heartfelt desire to serve the Lord 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 yourself willingly to the admonition and discipline of the Church, if you should become delinquent in doctrine or life (which God graciously may prevent)?

Answer

I do.

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	<p>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, <i>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.</i> 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 in such a way as Christ has intended it, namely, to His remembrance.</p>
I Cor. 11:23-29	
Self-examination	<p>True self-examination consists of the following three parts: First, let everyone consider his sins which deserve God's curse 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 this 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 to be 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.</p>
Invitation and Admonition	<p>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. On the contrary, 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 sins to abstain from the table of the Lord and we declare to them that they have no part in the Kingdom of Christ. Such as: all idolators; those who call upon deceased saints, angels or other creatures; all sorcerers, fortune-tellers, and all who engage in astrology and the occult; all who despise God, His Word and the holy sacraments; all who blaspheme, curse and use foul language; all who promote disunity and schism in the Church or revolt against the civil government; all perjurers; all who disobey their parents and superiors; all murderers, all who are contentious and those who live in envy and hatred against their neighbours; all</p>

adulterers, fornicators, those who live common-law or practice homosexuality; all who abuse alcohol or drugs; all thieves or robbers, all gamblers and covetous persons; all who lead offensive lives. While they persist in their sins, they should not take of this food which Christ has ordained only for His believers, lest they meet with heavier judgment and condemnation.

All this, however, 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 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 lusts 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**

Let us now consider for what purpose the Lord has instituted His supper: 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 partook of our flesh and blood.

From the beginning of His incarnation to the end of His life on earth, He has borne 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 our curse upon Himself that He might fill us with His blessing. On the cross He humbled Himself, in body and soul, unto the very deepest shame and anguish of hell, when He called out with a loud voice, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* 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, *It is finished.*

Matt. 27:46

Jn. 19:30

Assurance

In order that we might firmly believe that we belong to this covenant of grace, during His last Passover the Lord Jesus Christ instituted the holy supper. He gave the bread and the cup to His disciples in remembrance of Him, and He declared:

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. By this sacrifice 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.

Fellowship
I Cor. 10:17

By the same Spirit we are also united in true brotherly love as members of one body. For the apostle Paul says, *Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.* 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 towards one another, not just in words but also in deeds.

**Expectation of
Christ's
Coming**

Mark 14:25
Rev. 19:7

Finally, Christ has commanded us to celebrate the Lord's 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.

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 that we 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 the only heavenly bread, for only then we do not live in our sins, but Christ lives 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 who nevermore imputes to us our sins but provides us with all things for body and soul as Thy dear children and heirs.

Grant us Thy grace to take up our cross cheerfully, to deny ourselves and to confess our Saviour. Let us in all tribulation await our Lord Jesus Christ from heaven, who will change our

lowly body to be like His glorious body and take us to Himself forever.

Hear us 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, which may be recited by the minister,
said in unison or sung by the congregation.)

Hearts upward!

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 out-
ward symbols of bread and wine, but lift our hearts on high in
heaven where Christ is, our advocate, at the right hand of His
heavenly Father, as we professed together.
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.

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 commun-
ion of the blood of Christ. Take, drink from it, all of you, remem-
ber 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:
*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.*

Ps. 103:1-4
8-13

*The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abound-
ing 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 Thine only Son as our Mediator. We praise Thee that He is the sacrifice for our sins and our food and drink unto life eternal.

We thank Thee that Thou givest us a true faith through which we may share in such great benefits.

Thou hast through Thy Son 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 afternoon service)

Institution	Brothers and sisters, The apostle Paul describes the institution of the holy supper in I Corinthians 11:23-29.
I Cor. 11:23-29	<i>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.</i>
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 determine 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, desire to fight against their unbelief and to live according to God's commandments will certainly be graciously 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, lest they meet with heavier judgment.
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, partook of our flesh and blood, and from the beginning to the end of His life has borne 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 has confirmed the new and everlasting covenant of grace when He said, <i>It is finished.</i>
John 19:30	

Assurance	Therefore, as often as we eat this bread and drink of this cup, we are as by a certain sign and seal reminded and assured of Christ's hearty love toward 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, who are incorporated into Christ by true faith, shall be one body and show this to one another not just in words but also in deeds.
I 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.
Rev. 19:7	Let us rejoice and give Him the glory, for the marriage feast of the Lamb is coming!
Prayer	Let us pray. Gracious God and Father, We thank Thee that Thou hast given us thine 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 that we entrust ourselves more and more to Thy Son Jesus Christ, so that we do 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 cheerfully take up our cross, deny ourselves and confess our Saviour. Teach us to expect our Lord Jesus Christ from heaven, who will make our lowly bodies like His glorious body and take us to Himself in eternity. Amen.
Hearts Upward!	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 surely 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 given 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; 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 towards 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 will proclaim the praise of the Lord from now on and for evermore. Amen.

Thanksgiving

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 NON-COMMUNICANT MEMBERS

First Announcement	<p>The consistory has the sad duty of informing the congregation that a brother (sister), by baptism ingrafted into the Christian Church, is guilty of the sin of, 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 in all seriousness exhorts you to pray for him (her) continually, that it might please the Lord to bring him (her) to repentance.</p>
Second Announcement	<p>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 the sin of 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 averse member with affection and to pray the Lord for his (her) conversion.</p>
The Excommunication	<p>The consistory 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 the sin of, and that the consistory would be obliged to exclude this brother (sister) from the communion of the Church, unless he (she) would show repentance and amendment of life.</p> <p>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 unto him (her) in holy baptism.</p> <p>Therefore, being obliged to proceed, we ministers and rulers of the Church of God at this place, being assembled in the Name and authority of Jesus Christ, our Lord, declare before you all that for the aforesaid reasons we hereby excommunicate from the Church of our 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 His 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 gentile and a publican, according to the command of Christ, who says that whatsoever His ministers shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven.</p> <p>Further we exhort you, beloved Christians, to keep no company with him (her) to the end that he (she) may be ashamed; yet count him (her) not for an enemy, but at times admonish him (her) as you would a brother (sister).</p> <p>In the meantime, take heed lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in 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</i></p>

Heb. 3:12
Eph. 6:1-4

I Pet. 5:5
I John 2:15-17

anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. You that are younger be subject to the elders. Do not love the world or the things in the world. If any one loves the 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.

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

O righteous God, merciful Father, before Thy high majesty we blame ourselves for our sins, and acknowledge that we have justly deserved the sorrow and pain caused us by this excommunication of this our late fellow-member; yea, if Thou shouldst enter into judgment with us, we all deserve to be excluded and banished from Thy presence on account of our great transgression. But, O Lord, be gracious unto us for Christ's sake; forgive us our trespasses, for we heartily repent of them; and work in our hearts an ever increasing measure of sorrow for them, that we, fearing Thy judgment which Thou bringest upon the stiff-necked, may endeavour to please Thee. Grant that we may avoid all pollution of the world and of those who are excluded from the communion of the Church, in order that we may not make ourselves partakers of their sins, and that he (she) who is excommunicated may become ashamed of his (her) sins.

And since Thou desirest not the death of the sinner, but that he may repent and live, and since the bosom of Thy Church is always open for those who return, kindle Thou, therefore, in our hearts a godly zeal, that we, with good Christian admonitions and example, may seek to bring back this excommunicated person, together with all those who through unbelief and recklessness of life go astray. Add Thy blessing to our admonitions, that we thereby may have reason to rejoice again in them for whom we must now mourn, and that thus Thy holy Name may be praised, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who has taught us to pray, . . . (Lord's Prayer). 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
- In spite of several admonitions there is no evidence of repentance. The consistory had, therefore, 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.
- Now the consistory is 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, the consistory has informed you previously that a brother (sister) has become guilty of
- 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 that we will proceed with the excommunication.
- We seriously exhort you to admonish this sinner continually in love. His (her) name is ; the address
- 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 two times that brother (sister) . . . has become guilty of You also heard that he (she) refused to repent, but rather 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, 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 with 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 Excommunication** Beloved in our 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) would 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 token of true repentance, although he (she) was warned by many. His (her) guilt, which was already serious, has only become heavier by his (her) stubbornness in sinning.

- 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 bring this brother (sister) to shame over 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.*
- Therefore we, elders and overseers of the Church of God at this place, excommunicate in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ from the Church of the Lord, because he (she) obstinately persists in his (her) sin.
- He (she) is now excluded from the communion with Christ and from His kingdom. He (she) may no longer use the sacraments. He (she) has no part anymore in the spiritual blessings and benefits which Christ bestows upon His Church.
- Matt. 18:18** As long as he (she) persists in sin, *let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax-collector.*
- Warning to the Congregation** We exhort you, beloved Christians, not to count him (her) as your enemy. On the contrary, try to exhort him (her) as one does a brother (sister). But keep no close company with him (her), so that he (she) may be ashamed and come to repentance.
- This excommunication, beloved, is a warning example for us all. Let us fear the Lord and take diligent heed to ourselves, for he who thinks he stands must beware 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.
- 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 (her) to despise God's Word and His sacraments.
- Heb. 12:1, 2** Therefore, resist evil from the very beginning. *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 Pet. 5:8** *Be sober, be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking some one to devour.*
- Luke 22:46** *Pray that you may not enter into temptation.*
- Heb. 4:7** *Today, when you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts.*
- Phil. 2:13** *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.*
- Phil. 2:12** Only the Lord Who is at work in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure, is able to keep us in the way of His commandments .
- Let us, therefore, 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 of 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 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.

Ezek. 33:11

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, we may bring back to Thee this excommunicated brother (sister) and others who live in unbelief.

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. He taught us to pray . . . (Lord's Prayer). Amen.

FORM FOR THE READMISSION INTO THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

Announcement	<p>Beloved in the Lord, in the year N _____, 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 N _____ 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.</p>
I Cor. 14:40	<p>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 brother (sister) 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 a week. Meanwhile let us thank the Lord who showed 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>
Readmission according to the Scriptures	<p>Beloved Christians, we have recently informed you of the conversion of our fellow-brother (sister) N _____ to the end that, with your approbation, he (she) might be again received into the Church of God.</p> <p>No one has put forward any objection against this readmission, and therefore we will now receive him (her) into the communion of saints.</p>
Matt 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. But He immediately added, 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. God has sworn by Himself, <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> <p>Therefore the Church always keeps hoping and praying for the repentance and return of the lost sinner, always eager to receive the penitent.</p>
II Cor. 2:5-7	<p>The apostle Paul commanded the congregation at Corinth to forgive and comfort the brother who had been reproved and came 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 a repentant sinner according to the Word of God, is counted binding by the Lord. <i>Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.</i></p>
Matt. 16:19	<p>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, <i>If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven.</i></p>
John 20:23	
Questions	<p>Before we proceed to the act of loosing the bond of excommunication and readmit you, brother (sister) N _____, to the Church of Christ we request you to answer the following questions.</p> <p>N _____, do you declare with all your heart, here before God</p>

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 elders and overseers absolve you, N _____, 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.

I 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 brought you back, love Him much for He forgave 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.

Luke.15:32

Beloved Christians, receive this brother (sister) in love. Make merry and be glad, for this brother (sister) was dead and is alive; he (she) was lost and is found .

Luke 15:7

Rejoice with the angels as 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.* Count 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

Whereas 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 to 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 all of us that we may steadfastly walk in Thy ways till the end.

Teach us, Father, from this example that with Thee there is forgiveness, that Thou mayest be praised. Grant that we now with our brother (sister) may jointly 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 in the one only true God. Amen.

(*or: Jesus Christ our Lord, in whose name we conclude our prayer: Our Father who art in heaven)

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

Beloved in our Lord Jesus Christ,
The consistory has now twice published the name of our brother N _____, to learn if anyone had objections against his ordination to the ministry of the Word (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 (installation).

Let us first hear what Holy Scripture teaches about the office of ministers of the Word.

Institution by Christ Eph. 4:11, 12

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, by prayers and pastoral supervision. In this way the flock is tended and led in the right paths.

I Pet. 5:4

Acts 6:4

In the early Christian Church this task was fulfilled by the apostles. In turn they, 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 the ministers of the Word. They have received the ministry of reconciliation of which Paul speaks, *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.*

II Cor. 5:18-20

Duties of the minister

The task of the minister of the Word can be described as follows:

II Tim. 4:1, 2

First, he must proclaim the Word to his congregation, pure and unabridged, 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 the example of the apostle he performs 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 youth of the Church and others whom God calls thereto in the holy Scriptures which 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.

Acts 20:20

II Tim. 3:15

Thus, comforting and admonishing, he calls the whole congregation to the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

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 administers the holy supper, instituted by Christ when He said, *Do this in remembrance of me*.

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*.

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 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 open and shut 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, faithful servants will obtain the unfading crown of glory.

Matt. 28:19

I Cor. 11:24
Eph. 4:11, 12
I Tim. 2:1, 2

I Cor. 14:33

I Peter 5:2, 3

**Ordination
(Installation)**

Beloved brother N _____, you are now about to enter upon your office. We ask you to answer the following questions before God and His holy Church.

First, are you convinced 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 yourself to the discipline of the Church in case you should become delinquent in doctrine or life?

What is your answer?
I do with all my heart.

Answer

**Laying on
of hands***

God, our heavenly Father, who has called you to his holy office, enlighten you with His Spirit and so govern you in your ministry, that you may fulfil it obediently, so 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**

Eph. 4:11, 12
John 21:6
I Pet. 5:2
I Tim. 4:12-16

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*

I Tim. 5:17 *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
 Phil. 2:29
 Isa. 52:7
 I Thess. 2:13

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 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.*

Heb. 13:17 *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.*

Matt. 10:12, 13 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 out of the whole human race a Church to Thyself unto 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 temptation during his ministry, and finally with all Thy faithful servants may enter into the joy of his Lord.

Grant to those entrusted to his pastoral care, that they acknowledge this servant as sent by Thee. Give that they receive the instruction and admonition of Christ, which this shepherd brings to them, and that they submit themselves joyfully 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 (INSTALLATION) OF MISSIONARIES

	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 (installation) as a missionary. His task will be the ministry of the gospel, which <i>must be preached throughout the whole world, as a testimony to all nations.</i>
Matt. 24:14	Whereas 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 (installation).
The 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 out of the corrupt race of man unto life eternal.
John 3:16, 17 John 10:10, 11	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, <i>that there shall be one flock, one shepherd.</i>
John 10:10, 11, 16; Acts 2:30 John 15:26, 27 John 20:21, 22 I John 4:14	In order to gather His Church, Christ has sent the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father and who bears witness to Him. The apostles were also witnesses sent by Christ as the Father had sent Him. They have seen and testified that the Father has sent His Son as the Saviour of the world.
Rom. 10:14, 15, 17	It is the calling of the Church, through this testimony of the apostles to move people to believe in Christ crucified.
Acts 13:2	From the time of the apostles, the Holy Spirit has commanded the congregation to set apart men for this work, to which He has called them.
Duties of the Missionary	In order that this command may be fulfilled, the Lord Christ has now given to this congregation a minister of the Word.
Eph. 2:12, 13	According to the mandate of the Lord Jesus Christ and His apostles, he shall first of all preach the Word of God revealed in the Holy Scriptures, to those who are without Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world, so that they who are far off, can come near through the blood of Christ.
II Cor. 5:19, 20	As an ambassador of Christ, he has been entrusted with the ministry of reconciliation; for God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. Therefore He shall ask in the name of Christ, "be reconciled to God."
Tit. 1:9	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 confute those who contradict it.
Matt. 28:19	Second, he ought to baptize 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.
I Cor. 11:23, 26	And whereas the Lord Jesus has commanded His Church to proclaim His death until He comes, he also shall 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

I Cor. 10:21 not heed his admonitions, since the apostle Paul warned, *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.*

Acts 14:23 Third, as soon as this 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.

Tit. 1:5, 6 In order that they may be able to fulfil this charge, the Lord Christ, to whom has been given all authority in heaven and on earth, comforted and encouraged His apostles, and in them His whole Church with this promise, *And lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.* This promise stands until the holy city, the new Jerusalem, has come down out of heaven from God. The glory of God is its light and its lamp is the Lamb.

I Tim. 2:2 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.

Acts 20:28

I Tim. 5:22

Matt. 28:20

Rev. 21:10

Rev. 21:23b, 24

Rev. 22:14

Ordination (Installation) And now, beloved brother N _____, you are about to enter upon your office, as it has been described. Therefore, you are to answer the following question before God and His holy Church.

First, are you convinced in your heart that God Himself through His congregation has called you to this holy ministry?

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?

Third, do you promise faithfully to discharge the duties of your office, in close cooperation with the consistory of this Church, and to adorn the doctrine of God with a godly life? Do you also promise to submit yourself 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, so 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 Missionary 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.

II Tim. 1:8, 9

I Pet. 5:4 *And when the chief Shepherd is manifested you will obtain the unfading crown of glory.*

**Charge to the
Congregation**

II Thess. 3:1

Prayer

Beloved brothers and sisters,
The Lord has granted you this servant, so receive him with all joy. Beseech the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that He may guard him (and his family) in all his ways. Pray for him, that the Word of the Lord may speed on and triumph, *as it did among you.*

Since we of ourselves are not capable of all this, we will call upon the Almighty God.

Merciful Father, Thou art pleased to gather out of the whole human race a Church to Thyself unto 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, 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 on 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 brethren who were elected and appointed to the office of elder and deacon in this Church, to learn if anyone objects 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

Acts 15:23; 16:4

Acts 20:28

I Pet. 5:1

Phil. 1:1

I Tim. 3:1-13

Tit. 1:5-9

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 them 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.

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.

Peter admonished the elders to tend the flock of God that is their charge.

In his epistle to the Philippians, the apostle addressed the saints together with the overseers and deacons.

In order that these offices might remain he also gave his fellow-workers detailed instructions for selecting brethren to these offices of overseers and deacons. Paul 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 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

I Thess. 2:11-12

Tit. 1:9

As to 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.

	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.
Matt. 18:17, 18	<i>Second</i> , 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 presbytery or consistory of the Church.
I Tim. 4:4	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.
I Pet. 5:1-4	<i>Third</i> , 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 may permit no strange teaching, so that in every respect the congregation is edified by the pure doctrine of the gospel. Therefore they must watch diligently that no wolves enter the sheepfold of the Good Shepherd.
Acts 20:29-31	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.
John 10:7-13	
II Tim. 3:14-17	
The Ministry of Mercy	Concerning the ministry of mercy, assigned to the deacons, the Lord impressed upon His people Israel 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.
Deut. 14:28, 29; 16:11, 14; 24:19-21; 26:12-13; 27:19	
John 14:9	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.
Mark 10:45	
Mark 22:27	
John 13:15	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.
Acts 2:46; 4:32-37	
Matt. 25:31-46	Also now the Lord calls us to show hospitality, generosity and mercy, so that the weak and needy may share abundantly in the joy of God's people. No one in the congregation of Christ may live uncomforted under the pressure of sickness, loneliness and poverty.
Rom. 12:13	
Heb. 13:2, 16	
I Pet. 4:9	For the sake of this service of love Christ has given deacons to His Church.
Phil. 1:1	
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 brethren chosen by the congregation. It is the responsibility of the deacons to see to the good progress of this service of charity in the congregation. 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

Gal. 6:10 I Thess. 3:12 II Pet. 1:7	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.
Ordination	Beloved brethren, you are about to enter upon your respective offices. We request you to answer the following questions before God and His holy Church. First, are you convinced in your hearts that God Himself, through His congregation, has called you to these offices? Second, do you receive the Old and New Testament as 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 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 yourselves to the discipline of the Church in case you should become delinquent in doctrine or life? What is your answer?
Answer	I do (to be given by each personally). The almighty God and Father grant you His grace, that you may faithfully and fruitfully discharge your offices, Amen.
Charge	Brethren 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. <i>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.</i> Brethren deacons, be faithful and diligent in the gathering of gifts and distribute them cheerfully to those who need assistance, especially to the <i>widows and orphans. Let us do good to all men, especially to those of the household of faith.</i> 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.
I Pet. 5:2-4	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 good confidence in the faith which is in Christ Jesus and finally enter into the joy of your Master.
Jas. 1:27 Gal. 6:10	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. <i>Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as men who will have to give account.</i>
I Tim. 3:9	Take care that the deacons have sufficient means to fulfill their ministry. Be good stewards of all that the Lord has en-
I Tim. 3:13	
I Thess. 5:12, 13	
Heb. 13:17	

trusted to you. Remember Christ, your example in serving the Church of God.

Since we are unable of ourselves, 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 everyone 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 this people over whom Thou hast set them, to submit themselves willingly to the good exhortation of the overseers and to 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 N _____ and N _____ have indicated their intention to be married according to the ordinance of God. They desire to begin this holy state in the Name of God and to complete it to His glory. If no lawful objection is brought forward, this marriage will be publicly solemnized, a) in a ceremony which will take place, the Lord willing b) in a worship service, which will take place, the Lord willing (whichever applicable).
- Introduction** N _____ and N _____, since the consistory has duly made known to the congregation your desire to be married, and no lawful objection has been presented, we may now proceed to the solemnization 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. After God, our Father, had 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 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.*
- Heb. 13:4
Gen. 1:27
Gen. 2:18-24
- I Cor. 7:2 Since 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 body.
- I Cor. 6:19, 20 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 not man put asunder.*
- Matt. 19:6 God has made marriage such a strong bond that He hates divorce, as also our Lord Jesus Christ has said, *Whoever divorces his wife, except for unchastity, and marries another, commits adultery.*
- Mal. 2:16 So we know that the Lord also today gives husband and wife to one another, and, united as by His hand, nothing shall separate them in this life.
- Matt. 19:9
- The Profound Mystery** The apostle Paul teaches us that the unity of husband and wife in marriage is a profound mystery, referring to the relationship between Christ and His Church. As Christ is Head of the Church, so the husband is head of his wife. Christ has loved His Church *to the end*, and gave Himself up for her, that she might be holy and without blemish. So the husband shall love his wife as his own body, care for 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
- Eph. 5:22-33
John 13:1

	him and entrust herself to his loving care. Husband and wife shall assist each other in all good things, heartily forgiving one another their sins and shortcomings.
I Cor. 7:28	United in love, they will more and more reflect in their marriage the unity of Christ and His Church. It is also true, as the apostle says, that those who marry will face troubles 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	The Word of God also teaches us about the purpose of marriage. In the first place, husband and wife shall live together happily in sincere love and holiness, helping each other faithfully in all things that belong to this life and to the life to come.
Gen. 1:28	Secondly, 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.
Eph. 6:4	If it pleases God to give them children, they shall nurture these children in the true knowledge and fear of the Lord.
The Duties in Marriage	(The minister asks: Will you please rise?) Bride and Bridegroom, hear from the Word of God what the Lord requires of you in marriage. <i>Bridegroom:</i> Know that God has set you to be the head of your wife. 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.
I Pet. 3:7	<i>Bride:</i> 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. Care for your family and household properly, and live modestly, in faith, and love, and holiness.
Eph. 4:28	Help 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. <i>Blessed is everyone who fears the LORD, who walks in His ways. You shall be happy and it shall be well with you.</i>
Ps. 128:1, 2	
The Marriage Vows	(Minister: Will you now join right hands?) To the Groom: N _____, do you declare here before the Lord and these witnesses that you do take as your lawful wife N _____, 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, until death parts you? What is your answer? (Answer is: I do). To the Bride: N _____, do you declare here before the Lord and these witnesses that you do take as your lawful husband N _____, here present? Do you promise to love and obey him, to assist him,

and live with him in all 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, until death parts you? What is your answer? (Answer is: I do).

Minister: In the Name of the Lord and authorized by the government of the province, 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.

**Optional:
Exchange
of Rings**

(With the words:)

Do you give this ring as a symbol of your constant faithfulness and abiding love?

**Intercession
and
Benediction**

Bride and Groom, 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.

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 over 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. Confirm Thy covenant to them and to their children, if it pleases Thee to make them parents. Grant that these children be nurtured 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 forever.

Our Father who art in heaven

Amen.

Brother and Sister N.

Our Lord God bless you richly and grant you a long and holy life together in all godliness, love and unity. Amen.

APPENDIX V

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE FOR CONTACT WITH THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH TO GENERAL SYNOD, 1980.

I. MANDATE

Synod decide

To offer to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church a temporary relationship called "ecclesiastical contact" with the following rules:

- 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. ADOPTED

Synod decide

To continue the Committee for Contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church with the mandate:

- a) to inform the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations of the decisions of Synod regarding the Orthodox Presbyterian Church;
- b) to continue the contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church while taking into account the rules for "Ecclesiastical Contact";
- c) to respond to the letter of the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church dated April 14, 1976;
- d) to discuss and evaluate the relationships of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church with other Churches, as the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod, and the Christian Reformed Church;
- e) to inform the Churches from time to time about the progress made (e.g., by press releases of combined Committee meetings);
- f) to report on its activities to the next General Synod. ADOPTED

Article 91, III and IV, Recommendations, ACTS, General Synod, 1977.

II. AD "f. to report on its activities to the next General Synod"

A. MEETINGS

Meetings of the committee were held on February 15, 1978; May 24, 1978; June 5, 1978; October 7, 1978; April 18, 1980; and June 3, 1980.

All the appointed brothers accepted their appointments. Rev. J. Mulder acted as chairman, br. W. Wildeboer as secretary/treasurer and Rev. W. Huizinga as press reporter.

On February 15, 1980 the LORD took to Himself br. W. Wildeboer. This was a great loss for our committee. Br. W. Wildeboer had served continuously from the start on the committees for contact with the OPC. His diligence as secretary/treasurer was highly appreciated.

After br. W. Wildeboer's death, br. J. Boot became treasurer and Rev. W. Huizinga the secretary.

B. CORRESPONDENCE

1. Much correspondence took place between the Committee for Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations (CEIR) of the OPC and our committee. We received good cooperation from the side of CEIR of the OPC.

2. The Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad of the Canadian Reformed Churches wrote on July 7, 1978 to us asking us to discuss the relations of the OPC with Presbyterian Church in Korea, namely, the Koryu-Pa

(also called Kosin-group) and the Hap Dong. Our sister-churches in Holland have church correspondence exclusively with the Koryu-Pa. The OPC has fraternal relations with both the Koryu-Pa and the Hap Dong. We were asked if the relations of the OPC with these two churches is the same or different.

In our discussions with the CEIR of the OPC we learned that the relations with the Korean churches are exercised solely through the OPC missionaries who serve both groups of churches (Koryu-Pa and Hap Dong). There are no gifts of money donated to these churches, since their missionary policy is strictly one of no monetary gifts. So the relation of the OPC towards these two churches is the same.

3. The same Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad wrote on September 11, 1979 concerning a question of the "Deputaatschap voor Correspondentie met Buitenlandse Kerken, The Netherlands." The latter asked "whether or not your committee is in favour of our getting in touch with the OPC right now." This letter and question were passed on to us. However, we felt that all correspondence with churches abroad should go through the committee for that purpose. Therefore we gave the Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad our draft answer, including what has transpired in our contacts with the OPC. We recommended that they, our Dutch sister-churches, could contact the OPC directly, and if they wished that they engage in a seminar contact as our "Ecclesiastical Contact." However, we urged them not to proceed faster than we do.

4. The Committee on Interchurch Correspondence and Study of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America (RPCNA) wrote to us about our *Book of Praise*. The RPCNA and the OPC are holding talks to promote organic unity. However, one major difference is that the RPCNA still sings the Psalms exclusively without instrumental accompaniment. They invited us to a study conference on Psalmody and asked us for some copies of our *Book of Praise*. The latter were sent along with an explanatory letter, and the invitation and the letter were passed on to our Committee on the Church Book (Psalm and Hymn Section).

III. AD "a. to inform the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations of the decisions of Synod regarding the Orthodox Presbyterian Church."

On February 23, 1978 our committee officially informed the CEIR of the OPC by letter of all the decisions of General Synod, 1977 regarding the OPC.

Concerning Article 91. III. Recommendation of ACTS of General Synod 1977 re: the offer to the OPC for "Ecclesiastical Contact," we may inform you that the 1979 General Assembly of the OPC has accepted the synod's offer of the relation called "Ecclesiastical Contact," as defined in three rules (cf. Minutes of the 46th General Assembly of the OPC, pp. 137, 144).

IV. AD "b. to continue the contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church while taking into account the rules for 'Ecclesiastical Contact.'"

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

The contact with the OPC has been both lively and personal. Much correspondence has been exchanged. Besides, we have also had combined meetings with them.

B. COMBINED MEETINGS

1. On June 14, 1978 a combined meeting of subcommittees was held since it was impossible to arrange a meeting of both complete committees. Dr. J. Faber and Rev. W. Huizinga met with Prof. N. Shepherd and Rev. J. Petersen in the church building of the American Reformed Church at Grand Rapids. At that meeting we explained our preference for "Ecclesiastical Contact" above "Fraternal Relations." It was stressed that this is a temporary step and should lead to

church correspondence. Some misgivings on the part of the OPC about our rules for church correspondence were answered and hopefully removed. Our offer of Ecclesiastical Contact could not be dealt with at the 1978 General Assembly and we would have to wait until 1979 for an answer. Meanwhile the matter of delegates at each other's synod/assembly was discussed. They explained that from their side they accept a delegate as a "corresponding member" of their General Assembly on recommendation by the CEIR and by a majority vote of the assembly. Such a delegate or member could attend advisory meetings and offer advice (if asked) but he had no vote. Also, for their own delegates who are sent to major assemblies of other churches, they have adopted a set of rules of propriety which such delegates should follow. From these rules we gather that we do not need to fear that an OPC delegate would dominate the floor at one of our General Synods. A copy of this set of rules is attached as an appendix.

2. On October 25-26, 1978 our complete committee travelled to Philadelphia, PA, for a combined meeting with the CEIR of the OPC. Before this meeting took place we had drawn up a formal response to the letter dated April 14, 1976 of the CEIR of the OPC. Items discussed were:

- a) The synod's proposal of "Ecclesiastical Contact" was tabled. They agreed to recommend this offer to the General Assembly, 1979 of the OPC.
- b) By means of a thorough discussion of our concept of church correspondence a greater understanding and appreciation developed on the part of the CEIR members for its usage.
- c) Since our response, dated October 13, 1978, to their letter of April 14, 1976 came at a late date for this meeting (October 25, 1978), they did not have time to study our submission and to reply officially. However, preliminary discussions on confessional points such as the pluriformity of the church and the assurance of faith as an essential part of faith took place. Rev. Galbraith introduced their new Form of Government (adopted by the 1978 General Assembly) and explained the differences between the new and the old form. (cf. Minutes of the 46th General Assembly of the OPC, p. 137.)
- d) The other issues will be covered in other parts of this report.

The CEIR expressed thankfulness for the meeting, for our interest and friendship. It was a fruitful meeting for all.

3. A combined meeting of both committees will be held, D.V., in the Fall of 1980 to discuss the divergencies in confession and church polity.

C. DELEGATES TO EACH OTHER'S SYNODS/ASSEMBLIES

Since the OPC accepted our offer of "Ecclesiastical Contact," delegates could now also be invited and sent to one another's major assemblies. They invited a delegate from our churches to attend their 1980, the 47th General Assembly of the OPC in Beaver Falls, PA, held in May, 1980. Dr. J. Faber went as our delegate. He introduced our churches to the General Assembly and attended three days of the said assembly.

We have invited the OPC to send a delegate to the General Synod 1980 of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

V. AD "c. to respond to the letter of the Committee on Ecumenicity and Inter-church Relations of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church dated April 14, 1976."

As was reported, this was done officially by letter. This reply, dated October 13, 1978, which was published in *Clarion*, November 18, 1978, December 2, 1978, is attached to this report as an appendix. This letter has been translated and published in *Woord en Wetenschap*, February, 1979, 11e jaargang, no. 1.

VI. AD "d. to discuss and evaluate the relationships of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church with other Churches, as the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod, and the Christian Reformed Church."

A. As was known, the OPC is a member of the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (NAPARC) which consists of these founding churches — Christian Reformed Church; Orthodox Presbyterian Church; Presbyterian Church in America; Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod; Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America. Its basis is the infallible Word of God as confessed in the Reformed standards. As a fellowship it "enables the constituent churches to advise, counsel, and cooperate in various matters with one another and hold out before each other the desirability and need for organic union of churches that are of like faith and practice" (from the Constitution of NAPARC). The relations of the OPC with these churches are (partly) exercised through this council and by means of the rules for ecclesiastical fellowship which they have adopted.

At this point we asked the CEIR (in our combined meeting) a question which many of our people also raise. It concerns the OPC and its relation to the Christian Reformed Church. As churches we have sent our "Appeal" to the Christian Reformed community. Contacts with the deforming Christian Reformed Churches came to a halt. Yet are we not renewing them by our relation with the OPC? The fear for a chain reaction was thus voiced. Added to this fear is the fact that their rules for ecclesiastical fellowship with the NAPARC churches include

- "b. occasional pulpit fellowship (by local option)
- c. intercommunion (regulated by each session)."

To these concerns the members of CEIR answered that their relationship with the Christian Reformed Church differed from ours. When they were a very small and young group of churches struggling to remain orthodox, having just left the big presbyterian church, then the Christian Reformed Church offered them help and support. Some Christian Reformed Church ministers became professors at the Westminster Seminary. The OPC received much help from such men as Prof. Kuiper and Stonehouse, not to forget Prof. VanTil who was originally a Christian Reformed minister too. Seeing the closeness of the past relationship, it is difficult to undo that relationship quickly. However, it is indicative that the OPC entertains merger talks with the other churches of NAPARC but not with the Christian Reformed Church.

B. In addition to these relationships they have fraternal relations with the Reformed Church of America (Eureka Classis), the Korean Presbyterian Churches, both Hap Dong and Koryu-Pa or Kosin; the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland; the Reformed Churches of New Zealand; the Reformed Churches of Japan; and the Associated Reformed Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. The contact with the churches in New Zealand is made through the Reformed Ecumenical Synod (RES).

C. RES. Our committee made clear our historical reasons for not joining the RES — the objection to the term "synod" and to the fact that the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (GKN synodaal) were members. In 1946 the synodical GKN laid before the RES their decisions about the covenant of grace and baptism. The RES approved them and thereby prevented the liberated GKN from joining. Meanwhile the decision is revoked but the synodical GKN still remain as member. The OPC committee responded that they had not been aware of the implications of the 1946 decision at the time when the OPC joined the RES in 1949. Also, they have seriously considered on numerous occasions to leave the RES, but have decided to remain as member in order to have their voice heard in a positive, Reformed manner.

D. Merger talks. The new merger talks with the RPCES were also discussed in our combined meeting of October 25, 1978. The issues dividing these churches, e.g., eschatology or the ideas of premillennialism as well as abstinence, were clari-

fied. The OPC also had union talks with the PCA and the RPCNA. None of these merger talks had come to a conclusion. Our reaction to such merger talks was solicited. The report of our delegate to the 47th General Assembly of the OPC of May, 1980 will bring the churches up to date on these merger talks. These discussions have kept the CEIR occupied.

VII. AD "e. to inform the Churches from time to time about the progress made (e.g., by press releases of combined Committee meetings)."

We have attempted to keep the churches informed by means of press releases.

1. Press Release in *Clarion* of October 7, 1978 about the meeting of subcommittees held June 14, 1978.

2. Publication of our reply to the letter of CEIR, OPC dated April 14, 1976 in *Clarion* of November 18 and December 2, 1978.

3. Press Release of the combined meeting of our committee with the CEIR on October 25-26, 1978 in *Clarion* of January 13, 1979.

4. Press Release of the report of our delegate, Dr. J. Faber, to the 47th General Assembly of the OPC, held May, 1980. This report is attached as an appendix.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

The contact with the OPC has been brisk from both sides. Progress has been made in that the offer for "Ecclesiastical Contact" has been accepted by the OPC. In addition, misgivings about our rules for church correspondence have been removed, hopefully, so that progress towards church correspondence is evident.

Since the discussion of the divergencies in confession and church polity has not been completed, mainly because of the preoccupation of the CEIR of the OPC with merger talks with the RPCES, RPCNA, and PCA, and since we have not come to full church correspondence, the committee recommends that the General Synod renew this part of our mandate as well as the general continuation of the contacts with the OPC.

This concludes our report. Hopefully we have covered all aspects of the synodical mandate.

We would like to make one request to General Synod 1980, namely, that one of the committee receive the privilege of the floor to speak and to answer questions regarding the OPC.

Humbly submitted,
J. Boot, J. Faber,
J. Mulder, and W. Huizinga

**THE COMMITTEE FOR CONTACT WITH THE
ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

The General Synod of the
Canadian Reformed Churches,
Smithville, Ontario.

October 22, 1980

Esteemed brothers:

In addition to our report the Committee for Contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church would like to direct a question and to make a clarification.

1. In our correspondence with the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations (CEIR) of the OPC we received the following correspondence:

"I think we are obligated to move toward full correspondence between our churches if at all possible. As we discussed the matter some time ago in our committee there seemed to be sympathy for doing this in the not too distant future but several questions arose in our minds. Perhaps you could comment on them informally. Or if you prefer, they could be raised at some meeting of our committees in the future. We were wondering whether you could give us a fuller definition of what would be involved in giving account to each other regarding correspondence with third parties. In particular we were concerned to know what would happen if we established full correspondence with the Canadian Reformed Churches and continued to maintain our membership in the Reformed Ecumenical Synod. Perhaps I can put the question in another way. If the Orthodox Presbyterian Church announced that it was ready to enter into full correspondence on the basis of the five rules as you have them would the Canadian Reformed Churches be ready to accept us on that basis as we now are?" (An excerpt from a letter received, dated August 12, 1980.)

We answered this inquiry as follows:

"Generally speaking, churches who maintain such correspondence with one another keep each other informed about third parties by means of appointed committees. It is not necessary to receive prior approval from other corresponding churches for opening correspondence with a third party, although it is of course ideal that all corresponding churches would maintain the same international, ecclesiastical relationships.

Concerning your specific question regarding the membership of the OPC in the RES, it is difficult to answer on behalf of all the churches. Since our General Synod will be held soon, we would prefer to address your question to this meeting of all the churches in common" (from a letter dated August 28, 1980).

In reply, Prof. N. Shepherd, a member of the CEIR of the OPC, wrote:

"I appreciate the fact that you cannot speak on behalf of the denomination concerning the membership of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in the Reformed Ecumenical Synod. By now you will have had some reports concerning the actions of the (Reformed Ecumenical) Synod and will realize that at least two denominations have withdrawn. These denominations were closely associated with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in the stance that it has taken. You will also notice that the RES will most likely reach a final conclusion concerning the place of the synodical churches in the Synod at its next meeting in 1984. It will be interesting to see what our General Assembly does with these actions at its meeting next spring" (from a letter dated October 13, 1980).

We give you the full benefit of this correspondence so that you can have as much information as possible. Our mandate includes that ecclesiastical contact must be viewed as a temporary step and must be used to come to church correspondence as defined in the present five rules. So our committee can of course answer that it is our sincere desire to reach the said full correspondence. However, the crucial matter concerns giving account to each other about correspondence with third parties. Specifically, what do our churches say about the (continued) membership of the OPC in the RES?

We would ask the General Synod to instruct us how to answer this specific inquiry from the letter dated August 12, 1980.

2. Prof. N. Shepherd, in the same letter dated October 13, 1980 offered the following correction of our report to the General Synod:

"There is a slight correction that you might want to make in your committee's report to the Synod concerning relationships with other churches which the OPC sustains. I have reference to paragraph B, toward the top of page 5, in your report. There you state that the OPC maintains fraternal relations with

the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. Actually there are two denominations in Scotland that are closely related historically but nevertheless have to be distinguished from one another. The one is the Free Church of Scotland and the other is the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. These denominations are often confused by people who are not familiar with the ecclesiastical situation in Scotland, but to confuse them would be comparable to confusing the Liberated Reformed Churches with the Synodical Reformed Churches in The Netherlands. As you are well aware, that is often done by people not familiar with the ecclesiastical situation in Holland. The Free Presbyterian Church had its origin toward the end of the nineteenth century as a result of the developing liberalism in the Free Church. At a later point the Free Church was able to purge this liberalism from its body but the Free Church and the Free Presbyterian Church were never able to find one another. The Free Presbyterian Church is very small and does not have a theological seminary of its own. Its ministry is trained by pastors who serve as tutors. The Free Church on the other hand maintains a theological college in Edinburgh. The OPC has fraternal relations with the Free Church of Scotland but not with the Free Presbyterian Church.”

We thank Prof. N. Shepherd very much for this correction and information and ask General Synod to take note of it.

May the Head of the Churches grant you His Spirit of wisdom to deal with all these important matters.

From the Committee for Contact with
The Orthodox Presbyterian Church,
Rev. J. Mulder, Convener
Rev. W. Huizinga, Secretary

**COMMITTEE FOR CONTACT WITH THE
ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**
c/o W. Wildeboer, 296 Gardenview Drive, Burlington, Ontario L7T 1K6

Committee on Ecumenicity and
Interchurch Relations
7401 Old York Road,
Philadelphia, Pa. 19126

October 13th, 1978

Esteemed brothers:

General Synod 1977 of the Canadian Reformed Churches commissioned its appointed committee for contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church to respond to your letter dated April 14, 1976.

First of all, we thank you for your willingness to clarify your viewpoint on the differences in doctrine and church government. We also appreciate the positive, Christian tone of your letter.

As you may have noticed from the decision of General Synod 1977, our committee does not need to discuss and evaluate the points of difference in order to ascertain whether such divergencies constitute an impediment towards recognizing the Orthodox Presbyterian Churches as true churches of our Lord. Indeed, an important consideration leading to the decision "with thankfulness to recognize the Orthodox Presbyterian Church as a true church of our Lord Jesus Christ as confessed in Article 29 of the Belgic Confession" was:

"The letter of the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations of April 14, 1976, confirms that the Orthodox Presbyterian Church wholeheartedly adheres to the Westminster Confession of Faith and maintains the rules for church polity as laid down in the Form of Government, and also that the divergencies having been discussed in this letter do not form an impediment to recognize the Orthodox Presbyterian Church as Churches of the Lord Jesus Christ." (ACTS 1977, Article 91, II, h)

However, the same synod still considered "further discussion on divergencies in confession and church polity . . . desirable" and therefore also asked us to respond to your letter.

Our response is divided according to the points of difference regarding doctrine (A) and church government (B) as dealt with in your letter.

For convenience we list them as follows:

- A-1: Visible and Invisible Church
 - A-2: Assurance of Faith
 - A-3: Covenant of Grace
 - A-4: Descended into Hell
 - A-5: Explanation of the Law
 - B-1: Presbyterian and Reformed Systems of Church Government
 - B-2: Office-Bearers
 - B-3: Authority of Church Assemblies
- Interchurch Relations

A-1: Visible and Invisible Church

In answer to our letter of March 1972 you answered d.d. April 14, 1976:

"A-1 does not question the legitimacy of a distinction between the church visible and the church invisible as such . . ."

Our letter did not want to sound too aggressive. Our deputies stated, ". . . we live in a time in which the invisible Church, as manifested in its institutional form is set in sharp contrast to the invisible Church . . . which is gathered together out of all institutes." They did not simply call attention to the dangers inherent in the distinction, but meant to reject the distinction itself.

This rejection is in agreement with the teaching of one of your "own prophets," Dr. John Murray, in his essay "The Church: Its Definition in Terms of 'Visible' and 'Invisible' Invalid," in *Collected Writings I*, 1976, pp. 231-236. "The distinction between the church visible and the church invisible is not well-grounded in terms of Scripture, and the abuses to which the distinction has been subjected require correction" (p. 232). Also: ". . . there are those aspects pertaining to the Church that may be characterized as invisible. But it is to 'the church' those aspects pertain, and 'the church' in the New Testament never appears as an invisible entity and therefore may never be *defined* in terms of invisibility" (p. 234).

Dr. Murray shows the deep practical significance of this thesis for the fulfillment of the obligation incumbent upon us to foster unity and fellowship in the Church of God.

You refer to our Three Forms of Unity, e.g., to the fact that the Heidelberg Catechism speaks of a church chosen to everlasting life. This expression, however, is to be distinguished from the description in the Westminster Confession "the catholic or universal Church, which is invisible, consists of the whole number of the elect." Question and Answer 54 speaks about the chosen *Church*, but this expression is different from "the church of the *elect*." Instead of your reference to Question and Answer 52, and your statement, "this chosen church appears to be composed of chosen individuals," we like to remark that in Question and Answer 74 of the Heidelberg Catechism we confess that infants, as well as adults, are included in the Church of God. There is no indication whatsoever, that our Heidelberg Catechism in this context refers to *elect* infants only.

Apart from the question whether we can discern in the Heidelberg Catechism "the beginning of a definition of the church in terms of the doctrine of election," it is clear that the Heidelberg Catechism does not speak of the invisible Church and the visible Church.

You also refer to the Canons of Dordt, First Head, Article 7 where is spoken of "a certain number of persons" as the object of God's sovereign and merciful election. You write that the Canons "present, in effect, a more elaborate description of this Church," the church in terms of the doctrine of election, or the invisible Church.

We would answer that the Rejection of Errors, Paragraph 1, makes it clear that the Canons object against the Arminian thesis that the will of God to save those who believe is the whole and entire decree of election unto salvation. We confess that God has from eternity chosen "certain particular persons." We cannot read in Article 7 a more elaborate description of the *church* in terms of the doctrine of election, or the invisible Church. On the contrary, the way in which, e.g., Article 14 states that the doctrine of divine election "is still to be published in due time and place in the Church of God," makes it clear that the Canons of Dordt do not know of the Church as an invisible entity.

We are thankful that you have shown sensitivity to our concern that viewing the Church from the perspective of election does tend to depreciate the authentic churchly character of the congregation of Christ, and may even lead to complacency with the existence of a diversity of geographically overlapping denominations within the one church of Jesus Christ.

Nevertheless, we cannot accept your suggestion that the covenantal understanding of church in the Canadian Reformed Churches today, reflects more precisely the perspective of the Heidelberg Catechism than the Canons of Dordt, while the Westminster formulation would reflect both Dordt (church as invisible) and the earlier Reformation (church as visible).

As we indicated above, the Canons of Dordt do not speak of the invisible Church and there is no difference in perspective between the Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons while the Westminster formulation cannot be characterized as the balanced combination of the fruits of Dordt and the earlier Reformation. The question rather arises whether the Westminster formulation

does not betray a retrogression into a scholastic distinction, which is "liable to be loaded with the misconceptions inherent in the concept 'invisible church' and tends to support the abuses incident thereto." (J. Murray, *Collected Writings* I, p. 235) Do the Westminster Confession Article 25 and the Larger Catechism Question and Answer 64-66 not need correction?

We gratefully acknowledge that the Westminster Confession mentions the possibility of degeneration: these degenerated churches are no churches of Christ anymore, but synagogues of Satan. We thank you for the reference to the special attention for church discipline in Chapter 30 of your confession. However, your letter did not answer our question what, according to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, the "particular Churches" are of which Chapter 25, IV of the Westminster Confession states that they are members of the catholic Church. This question was brought up because the Westminster Confession does not clearly mention the marks of the true and the false Church. It might be debatable whether neither the Belgic Confession nor the Scottish Confession of 1560 faced the ecclesiastical complexity to which, according to your letter, the Westminster Confession addresses itself in terms of degrees of purity. Our Belgic Confession states in Article 29 that we ought diligently and circumspectly to discern from the Word of God which is the true Church, "since all sects which are in the world assume to themselves the name of the Church."

In the meantime, we noted with gratitude that you are of the opinion that the Westminster Confession does not propound a doctrine of the pluriformity of the church. The question remains whether or not the manner in which the Westminster Standards (we think also of Larger Catechism, Question and Answer 62-65, 82-83) speak of the invisible church and the visible church is Scriptural and whether or not it easily leads to the acceptance of the theory of the pluriformity of the church.

A-2: Assurance of Faith

The question raised by us was: do the Westminster Confession (Chapter 18, III) and the Larger Catechism (Answer 81) not teach two kinds of faith: one including the assurance of faith and the other not including this assurance? The Larger Catechism states very clearly that assurance does not belong to the essence of faith. "Assurance of grace and salvation not being of the essence of faith, true believers may wait long before they obtain it" We note that, to our knowledge, only the Westminster Confession and Larger Catechism state that assurance is not an essential element in faith. Calvin's Geneva Catechism, 1541, the Heidelberg Catechism, 1563, Craig's Catechism, 1581, the New Catechism of Scotland, 1644, all speak of faith in terms of assurance. This is in agreement with the Scriptures, Hebrews 11:1, Romans 4:18-21, Ephesians 3:12.

It seems that you have not really answered our objection in this respect and that your reference to the Canons of Dordt (Chapter V, Article 11) is not to the point here. Chapter V, Article 5 states that those who are converted can fall into serious sins, by which they "interrupt the exercise of faith." This is not the same as having faith but not having the assurance of faith. In Chapter V, Article 9 we confess that "true believers may and do obtain assurance according to the measure of their faith." This implies that assurance is essential in faith. Note in Chapter V, Article 4 also the expression "full assurance of faith." This indicates again that assurance is essential in faith.

Subjectivism and Mysticism have no confessional basis in the Canons of Dordt, but are in Reformed circles the outcome of misinterpretation of the doctrine of God's predestination or the result of Pietism. To separate faith and assurance in essence and chronological order — "true believers may wait long before they attain it" — is dangerous.

Nevertheless, we are thankful that you agree with our testimony that the hope and joy of the believer is rooted and grounded in Jesus Christ and His promises, and not in his own experience.

A-3: Covenant of Grace

Our letter of March 1972 expressed the opinion of our Committee that the Larger Catechism implies "the confessing of . . . two covenants, one with the elect and one with the believers and their children." The response was: There is dual emphasis, which dual emphasis runs parallel to the distinction between the church as visible and the church as invisible. However, this does not meet our objections, brothers. The first half of that "dual emphasis," the "conception of the covenant as made with believers and their children" is not very clear in the Westminster standards (Larger Catechism, Answer 166). As far as the second half is concerned, Scripture does not say, as the Larger Catechism does (Answer 31), that "the covenant of grace was made with Christ as the second Adam, and in Him with all the elect as His seed." Scripture calls Christ the Mediator of the covenant (Hebrews 8:6; 9:15; 12:24), and says that He has confirmed the New Covenant in His blood (Matthew 26:28; Hebrews 11:25), which is different. Unfortunately, there is not only a parallel between the dual conception of the visible and the invisible church on the one hand and on the other the "dual emphasis" regarding the covenant, but there is even a close relation between the conceptions of the church and of the covenant in the Westminster writings. This becomes clear from Westminster Confession, Chapter 28, 1, where baptism is first of all called "a sacrament of the new testament, ordained by Jesus Christ . . . for the solemn admission of the party baptized into the *visible* Church." Fundamentally the same is said in the Larger Catechism when the question: "What is the visible Church?" in 62 is answered: "The visible Church is a society made up of all those in all ages and places of the world who profess the true religion, and their children." Answer 64 reads thus: "What is the invisible Church? The invisible Church is the whole number of the elect, who have been, are, or shall be gathered into one under Christ the Head."

Are we not to draw the conclusion that the conception of the covenant as including the children of believers can be identified with the visible church, and the conception of the covenant as limited to the elect with the invisible Church?

Are the Westminster standards not close to the well-known theological distinction between an external and an internal covenant? The same distinction played a prominent role in the defense of the doctrinal statements issued by the Synod Sneek-Utrecht 1942 of "De Gereformeerde Kerken" in The Netherlands which our churches have rejected and do reject. As far as your comparison with the (lack of) doctrine of the covenant in the Three Forms of Unity is concerned, we like to remind you of the fact that the matter was not whether the Westminster Standards or the Three Forms of Unity gave a complete doctrine of the covenant, but the question was: Who belong to the covenant? With whom is the Covenant established? It should further be considered that:

I. The doctrine of the covenant was not under attack when the Belgic Confession was written, but only the position of the children had to be defended against the Anabaptists, and the concept of the covenant with the believers and their children becomes operative in this context (Article 34).

II. The Heidelberg Catechism has a covenantal structure (e.g., in Lord's Day 5 and 6). In the Church Order of Heidelberg it was placed between the Form for Baptism and the Forms for Public Confession of Faith and the Celebration of the Lord's Supper, which clearly speak about the covenant of grace. Further, our Heidelberg Catechism's leading idea is that of the "only comfort." It is no wonder, therefore, that the Larger Catechism of the main author of the Heidelberger, Zacharias Ursinus, started with the question: "Which firm comfort do you possess?" and which was answered by: "That . . . God . . . has taken me up into His covenant of grace." The covenantal structure becomes operative in the well-known statement that infants, as well as adults, are included in the covenant and Church of God and that by baptism, as a sign of the covenant, they must be ingrafted into the Christian Church (Answer 74).

III. The Canons of Dordt were limited to the five points of the Arminians and consequently cannot be expected to include a complete doctrine of the covenant — though they clearly state that the children of believers belong to the covenant (I, 17).

You find in the Westminster Confession “a perspective on the covenant, again arising from the impetus given by the forms of the Canons of Dordt on the doctrine of election, which defines the covenant as made with Christ and in him with the elect.” We humbly respond that according to us, the Canons speak a language that differs from the Westminster Larger Catechism Answer 31. They do not say that the covenant was made with Christ, but that Christ is the Mediator of the New Covenant and that He confirmed it with His blood (Chapter II, Rejection of Errors, Paragraph 2).

The difference in approach between “Dordt” and “Westminster” may be clear from what they confess concerning children who die in their infancy. The Canons state in the First Head of Doctrine, the chapter dealing with Divine Election: Since these children are “holy, not by nature, but in virtue of the covenant of grace, in which they together with the parents are comprehended, godly parents ought not to doubt the election and salvation of their children whom it pleases God to call out of this life in their infancy (Genesis 17:7; Acts 2:39; I Corinthians 7:14).” The Westminster Confession, Chapter 10, III, speaking of effectual calling, says: “Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated, and saved by Christ, through the Spirit, who worketh when, and where, and how He pleaseth” The Canons offer consolation to the parents of such children by referring them to the covenant of grace, established with the believers and their seed, while the Westminster Confession in this context is silent about God’s Covenant.

A-4: Descended into Hell

In respect to the point raised in Section A-4, there seems to be no conflict between the positions taken by the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and the Canadian Reformed Churches. The different interpretation of the clause in the Apostles’ Creed “descended into hell” should not become a point of disunity.

A-5: Explanation of the Law

We appreciate that you can understand from the perspective of the Heidelberg Catechism, the difficulty we experience with the explanation of the Fourth Commandment in the Westminster standards. Our previous Committee wondered whether full justice is done to the progress in the history of salvation. We thank you for your enlightening remarks and your reference to our common observance of the Lord’s Day. However, when we, e.g., read in Westminster Confession Chapter 21, VII that “it is of the law of nature, that, in general, a due proportion of time be set apart for the worship of God,” we still like to be informed about the binding character of such details of the interpretation of the commandments. As for the fact that it is not readily apparent to you “how the necessity for maintaining schools or for contribution to the relief of the poor can be inferred or deduced from the Fourth Commandment,” we may point to the following:

The proof texts that are added to the text of the Heidelberg Catechism (II Timothy 2:2; 3:15) may show that those schools are meant that teach the future leaders of the church, in particular the ministers of the Word of God. There is a direct line here with the Fourth Commandment because the preaching usually takes place on the Lord’s Day.

I Corinthians 16:2 is the proof text for the line that says giving Christian alms is one of the purposes for which we diligently attend the Church of God. There is even an apostolic command that regards “the first day of the week.”

In both cases the progress in the history of salvation made since the Fourth Commandment was issued at Sinai, is clearly shown.

B-1: Presbyterian and Reformed Systems of Church Government

With respect to the differences in church government you ask us (p. 4, par. 5) to consider the Proposed Form of Government (referred to as the New Form). We will comply with this request though we do not know as yet whether it has been officially adopted. You suggest that the local church in our conception corresponds more nearly to the regional church in the new Form of Government. The consistory would then correspond to the presbytery and the local church in your Form of Government to a "wijkgemeente" in our conception. However, as you undoubtedly know, our Church Order does not know of such a "wijkgemeente." That indeed in some larger congregations (in Holland) this concept is still functioning, cannot be denied. But the trend is to divide larger city congregations into smaller ones with their own consistory. Therefore, according to us, this example of the "wijkgemeente" does not fit and it tends to minimize the difference between your Form of Government and our Church Order.

We keep having difficulty, not so much with the terminology, as with the structure of your concept of church government in this respect. That difficulty is not so much that you in the new Form of Government wish to recognize that the church comes to expression also on the regional level, since in a certain way we do the same in our Church Order with our classical assemblies. Our difficulty is that in your Form of Government this regional church with its presbytery, dominates the local congregation or session. According to us this conflicts with the biblical evidence that the local church is not just a part or a branch of a regional church, but is in its own right a complete church of the Lord (I Corinthians 1:2; Revelation 1:20). This difference in structure with respect to the relation between the presbytery and the local congregations (sessions) shows up, e.g., when the new Form of Government states:

"The presbytery has the power to order whatever pertains to the spiritual welfare of the churches under its care

The presbytery shall examine and approve or censure the records of church sessions.

Further, the presbytery has power . . . to ordain, install, remove, and judge ministers." (Chapter XIV, 5)

We realize that the presbytery always must respect "the liberties guaranteed to the individual congregations under the constitution" (Chapter XIV, 5), but this does not cancel out the rule that the local church with its session as a "lower assembly" is "subject to the review and control" of the presbytery as a "higher assembly" (Chapter XII, 2). In our judgment this is not only a matter of your "characteristically vertical dimension" in distinction from our "characteristically horizontal dimension" but tends indeed to a "hierarchical ordering" and an infringement upon the completeness of the local congregation as a church of the Lord, which is under the care and supervision of local elders, appointed thereto by Christ as Head of the church.

When you therefore state that the kind of supervision authorized, does not differ materially from the supervision exercised by the broader assemblies among our churches, this is according to us, incorrect. Looking at the difference between the relation "local church — classis" in our Church Order and the relation "presbytery — local congregation" in your Form of Government, there is not only a difference in terminology, but also a *material* difference, i.e., that in the Church Order, local churches are not under the care of, nor subject to the review and control of a broader assembly as in your Form of Government.

In this response to your letter of April 1976, we made it our main task to pay attention to some areas where divergencies still do exist. This, however, does not take away the fact that there are many more areas of whole-hearted agreement. Besides, we have also noticed some substantial differences in the New Form of Government compared to the (Old) Form of Government with respect to the matter under discussion.

Under the heading "Of the Church" the old Form of Government, e.g., stated (Chapter II, 2, 3) "The universal church . . . should be divided into many particular churches." Under the heading "Of the Presbytery" the old Form read (Chapter X, 1), "The church consisting, as it does, of many separate congregations . . ." That these statements do not appear in this form in the new Form of Government, is an improvement, according to us. We also noticed that where the old Form of Government stated (Chapter XIV, 2) that the presbytery "consists of all the ministers . . . and *one* ruling elder," the New Form reads (Chapter XIV, 2), the presbytery "consists of all the ministers and *all* the ruling elders of the congregations . . ." We are of the opinion that this does more justice to the office of the elder in the church and diminishes the special place of the minister among the office-bearers. This is also the reason, we presume, that the statement in the old Form of Government (Chapter IV) — "The office of the minister is the first in the church, both for dignity and usefulness . . ." — is eliminated in the new Form of Government, which speaks of "ministers or teaching elders" (Chapter VI).

B-2: Office-Bearers

You further write (p. 5, par. 4) that it is not clear to you that the rule exercised by the elders in your higher judicatories differs in *principle* from the rule exercised by the elders in our classes and synods.

We agree with the principle that the elders do not derive their authority from the governed but from the Head and King of the church. But the point is that, according to us, Christ authorized the elders to be overseers and rulers in a specific local church and that consequently they exercise that specific charge to be overseers and to feed the flock only there (Acts 20:28). When elders are delegated to a classis, they do not rule and supervise the church on a regional level the same way as they are authorized to do in their local congregation, but they are authorized and charged as *delegates* of their consistories to help decide all matters properly placed before a classis, where only matters which pertain to the churches in common or which could not be finished in a minor assembly (consistory) are dealt with.

With respect to the membership of the pastors in the local congregations (p. 5, par. 5), we realize that it is hard to break with a historic Presbyterian practice. We also feel that this matter is closely related to the way in which the presbytery is structured and functioning in your Form of Government. However, we still find the following rule of Chapter VI, 4 hard to reconcile with the principle of Acts 20:28-30: "a minister shall be a member of a regional church and has communicant fellowship in any local congregation of the regional church. The presbytery . . . may request a session . . . to exercise pastoral care over him in its behalf."

According to us, the local consistory (session) has been entrusted by the Lord with the pastoral care and supervision also of the minister, while the classis may serve to prevent injustices. In your Form of Government it is actually the other way around in that the presbytery, for example, has the major and ultimate authority in determining the placing of the call extended to a minister by a local congregation (Chapter XXII, 10) and the presbytery has the power to ordain, install, remove and judge ministers (Chapter XIV, 5).

B-3: Authority of Church Assemblies

We agree with you (p. 6, par. 2) that the concern expressed under B-3 in our Committee's letter of March 1972 indeed failed to take into account that decisions must be in harmony with the Word of God, if they are to be binding (Westminster Confession, Chapter XXXI, 2). From Chapter III, 5 of the new Form of Government on "The Nature and Exercise of Church Power" we learned that this principle is also clearly expressed where it states that "decisions when properly rendered and *if in accord with the Word of God* are to be received with reverence and submission' . . ." We noticed that in the Chapter on the General Assembly, a

similar provision is made, when it reads (Chapter XV, 8) that "deliverances of the General Assembly, if declarative of the Word of God, are to be received with deference and submission . . ." We are thankful to note that the principle of our Article 31, Church Order is treasured in your and our form of church government alike and that the Word of God is acknowledged as the only rule for faith and order.

Interchurch Relations

With respect to the last part of your letter in which you deal with the significance of interchurch relations in terms of a broad perspective on the church, these comments are, according to us, more suitable for an oral discussion. This is also in accordance with the mandate which our General Synod 1977 gave our committee, namely, to discuss with you and to evaluate the relationships of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church with other churches. Only permit us to make the following observations:

1. When on page 6, paragraph 4 of your letter you write that the Orthodox Presbyterian Church does acknowledge the existence of geographically overlapping true churches, we can accept this but we stress that they may not *continue* to exist separately. If they are true churches of Christ, then they must and will strive towards "organic visible unity." You also acknowledge this by stating that fraternal relations are not to be regarded as an end in themselves.

2. In reference to Article 29 of the Belgic Confession and the Westminster Confession, you write (p. 7, par. 2) that "as a simple distinction between membership in good standing and excommunication does not adequately meet the needs of judicial discipline, so also a simple distinction between the true and the false church does not meet the needs of a complex ecclesiastical situation." May we in this context remind you of John Calvin's words: "There is, however, a slight difference in the mode of judging of individuals and of churches" (*Institutes*, Book IV, chapter I, 9).

Further we agree with you that deformation is a process which generally takes place through the years and in various measures. The one "denomination" may give more evidence of deformation than the other. However, this does not take away the fact that the *marks* of the church are clear also "in a complex ecclesiastical situation." This is also acknowledged by the Orthodox Presbyterian Church when today in a complex situation it states (Chapter IV, 3): "There are organizations which falsely call themselves churches of God, and others which once were churches, but have become synagogues of Satan. Communion with such is spiritual adultery and an offense against Christ and His saints."

3. With regard to your preference for "fraternal relations" over "ecclesiastical correspondence" (p. 7, par. 2), we recognize that this preference is related to your views of the church as discussed in the first part of this letter (A-1). We also realize that your "fraternal relations" must be regarded as a first step towards organic unity. We also thankfully note that you do regard these relations very seriously, as is evidenced in your terminating these relations with "De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (Synodaal)."

When you call our rules for correspondence impractical because "nationally distinct churches cannot conveniently act as one denomination," you presume that churches adopting these rules for their correspondence are to act "as one denomination." This is in our judgment a wrong presumption which leads to wrong conclusions. There is a significant difference between a *merger* and *correspondence* between churches. Churches which maintain ecclesiastical correspondence did not merge and they did and do not act as one denomination. This would be inconsistent with the concept of church correspondence as such.

4. As you will understand from the above, it is not clear to us from your letter that Scripture or the Form of Government of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church prevent you from adopting our rules for correspondence for maintaining correspondence with The Canadian Reformed Churches. The more so, since it is clear

from the (old) Form of Government that the idea of ecclesiastical correspondence is not foreign to the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. For, your (old) Form of Government states (Chapter XI, 5): "To the general assembly also belongs the power . . . of corresponding with foreign churches, on such terms as may be agreed upon by the assembly and the corresponding body" We did notice that also the new Form of Government has a similar (although not identical) provision in Chapter XV, 6: "The general assembly . . . shall seek to promote the unity of the church of Christ through correspondence with other churches."

As stated above, our General Synod 1977 commissioned us "to discuss and evaluate the relationships of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church with other Churches, as the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod, and the Christian Reformed Church" (Article 91, IV, Recommendation d, Acts 1977). We would like to place this matter on the agenda for our combined meeting.

Besides, our Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad asked us to ask you what relationship(s) the OPC has with the Korean Presbyterian Churches (Koryu-Pa and Hap Dong).

We hope and pray that also this letter and our continued discussions under the rules for "the ecclesiastical contact" offered to you, may lead to full ecclesiastical correspondence.

With brotherly greetings,
From Committee for Contact with the OPC,
J. Mulder, Covener
J. Boot
J. Faber
W. Huizinga
W. Wildeboer

REPORT OF THE FORTY-SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH HELD ON MAY 15-22, 1980 AT BEAVER FALLS, PA.

The undersigned delegate of the Canadian Reformed Churches attended the 47th General Assembly of the OPC from Monday, May 19, until Thursday, May 22. He would like to report the following points:

1. He was well received, and introduced to the assembly. On motion he was enrolled as a corresponding member. He used this privilege only to address the assembly once in order to introduce the Canadian Reformed Churches, to sketch our present relationship, and to wish the assembly obedience to the exalted Christ as Head of the Church.
2. The first point of the report of the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations dealt with the conversations with the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod (RPCES) and the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA). The committee recommended that the assembly inform the PCA that it would be receptive to an invitation to join the PCA. The assembly, however, followed a more cautious course of action. As proposed by its advisory committee, it opted for a meeting of representatives, including the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America (RPCNA), in order to draw up a statement that exhibits the representatives' joint understanding of the compatibility of the participating churches.
3. The report also mentioned conversations with the RPCNA, dealings of the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (NAPARC), and reports from fraternal delegates, but did not make any mention of the Canadian Reformed Churches, since there had been no action in the period between May 1979 to May 1980.
4. The report of the Committee on Reformed Ecumenical Synod Matters evaluated the RES reports on the World Council of Churches in a right manner, and it counterbalances the influence of the synodical churches in The Netherlands (RCN) within the RES. It judges the RCN report to the 1976 RES to be substantially without merit as a justification for their membership in the WCC.

The assembly decided to withdraw its request to the RES Nimes, 1980, concerning consultation of the RES Interim Committee with the RCN and to call for more prompt and forthright action concerning

- a) the doctrinal views of office-holders in the RCN, and
- b) the membership of the RCN in the RES.

Both the committee and the assembly were very concerned about a recent statement of RCN policy with respect to active homosexuals.

The 47th General Assembly requests the RES Nimes of 1980 to advise the RCN to report to the Interim Committee at least once each year, beginning in March, 1981 as to the response being made, with the understanding that if the exhortations are not heeded, the Interim Committee will recommend to the 1984 RES that the membership of the RCN in the RES be terminated.

The OPC also wants the Indonesian Churches to be exhorted to withdraw from the WCC prior to one year before the next RES.

5. The last report of interest for our churches was an analysis of the principles and policies of the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC). The full-scale joint diaconal ministry proposed by the CRWRC within the framework of NAPARC was rejected as it involves principle policies with which the OPC cannot concur. A second supplementary report of the Committee on Diaconal Ministries was entitled, "*Covenantal Benevolence*" — *The Theology of World Diaconal Involvement*. The conclusion is that the covenant community (organized church) is *obligated* to help covenant members but that there is no

responsibility here to relieve all the material (social) ills of the world. Those outside the covenantal community in dire need and those within the immediate proximity of that community may be temporarily objects of mercy (cf. Galatians 6:10). Copies of these reports are sent to the Christian Reformed Church for their information and a special committee will prepare a report that will present principles grounded on the exegesis of Scripture, leading to positive attitudes and actions on which the church may base its diaconal ministry, for the following General Assembly.

6. To conclude this short report your delegate may make the remark that although he observed the divergency especially in church government between the OPC and the Canadian Reformed Churches, and although he would have preferred a stronger decision with respect to the membership of the RCN (syn.) in the RES, namely, to terminate its membership already in 1980, the sincere appeal to Holy Scripture, the clear desire to be obedient to Christ as the Head of the Church so apparent in this 47th General Assembly, and the direction and contents of its decisions, convinced him again of the fact that the Orthodox Presbyterian Church is a true church of our Lord Jesus Christ as confessed in Article 29 of the Belgic Confession.

J. FABER

APPENDIX VI
The Committee on Women's Voting Rights appointed by
General Synod, Coaldale 1977.

To the General Synod of the
Canadian/American Reformed Churches
meeting in Smithville as of November 4, 1980.

Esteemed Brethren,

We hereby submit to you our *final* Report pertaining to Women's Voting Rights.

I. Mandate

- General Synod Coaldale 1977 gave our Committee the following mandate:
- (a) to make a thorough study of all biblical and church-political aspects regarding the question of Women's Voting Rights;
 - (b) to forward the result of their studies to the Churches one year prior to the next General Synod, and to invite comments to be submitted within six months after publication of the study;
 - (c) to submit their study with recommendations to the next General Synod. (*Acts 1977, Article 27.*)

II. Activities

At the first meeting of the Committee (February 23, 1978), the Rev. J. Visscher was appointed to act as Secretary. General Synod had already specified that the Rev. D. VanderBoom was to act as Convener. During the year 1978 we met five times, during the year 1979 eight times and during the year 1980 four times. Due to the vast amount of material that had to be covered we were unable to comply with point (b) of our mandate. The preliminary draft was sent to the Churches on March 24, 1980 and they had until July 31, 1980 to send in their comments and criticisms to the Committee (c/o Rev. J. Visscher, 18080 - 57A Avenue, Surrey, B.C. V3S 1J6). This schedule assumed that Synod Smithville 1980 would meet in either late October or early November. The July 31 deadline gave us sufficient time to study the replies received and to make use of them in the preparation of this final report.

III. Approach

Your Committee was charged with the duty of making "a thorough study of all biblical and church-political aspects regarding the question of women's voting rights." In order to do justice to this mandate we have ranged far and wide. Instead of limiting ourselves to a selected number of New Testament Scripture passages and to certain articles in the Church Order and their interpretation, we have taken a more comprehensive approach. We have studied the position, function and role relationship of women in creation, after the Fall, in the Old Testament, in the New Testament, in the history of the Christian Church and in Reformed church polity. In this way we hope to do at least limited justice to our mandate.

In what now follows we first ask your indulgence as we deal in a general way with the Scriptural perspective as it relates to women. Later we will become more specific and deal with the whole issue of women's voting rights in the church, especially as this pertains to the election of elders and deacons.

IV. Women in Creation

For a proper understanding of the nature and role of the woman we deemed it advisable that we turn our attention first of all to the creation account as we have it in the opening chapters of the book of Genesis. There we learn quite clearly that *man* is male and female, and that *both* male and female are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27, 5:1, 2).¹

Naturally this raised the question: "What does the image entail and does the woman share equally in it with the man?" To answer this question we may say that the "image of God" can be interpreted as referring to man's *person* and to man's *office*.² The former is then said to include such characteristics as "true righteousness and holiness" (Heidelberg Catechism, Question and Answer 6); whereas the latter refers to man's calling to "have dominion" (Genesis 1:28) and to rule over creation as God's representative.

Now there are some who advance the idea that the woman did not share in the image in the same way as man did. Calvin, in discussing Genesis 2:18, remarks that woman is in a second degree created in the image of God.³ Episcopus, in referring to I Corinthians 11:7 in which man is called God's image and glory, remarks that this is not due to the rational superiority of the man, but "because he exercises dominion over her."⁴ It is, however, difficult to support such a view especially if one carefully examines Genesis 1. There it is made clear that dominion is exercised over "the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth" (Genesis 1:28). To this statement there is no special qualification added which would exclude the woman from exercising dominion over creation as well.

All of this, however, is not to say that it is unscriptural to make a distinction between the male and the female. Indeed one must be made, albeit then a subtle, if basic, one. We would describe it in the following way, "the male is to *rule* over creation and to *lead* the female; whereas the female is to *rule* over creation and to *follow* the male. Between leading and following there is harmony." In stating it in this manner we wish to make it clear that both are called upon to exercise dominion over creation, but that the common task that they have is coloured especially by man's headship.

On what do we base this? It rests on a variety of considerations. Consideration number one is that the male was first *chronologically*. He was created first by the Lord (I Timothy 2:11-15). Consideration number two is that the male was first *functionally* (cf. Genesis 2:15, 20). He was the first one to function with respect to having dominion over creation. Consideration number three is that Scripture speaks of the woman as being man's help-meet, or "a helper fit for him" (Genesis 2:18).⁵ The sense of this is that the woman is to assist the man and to complement him so that the office and calling which he first had alone, but which they now both have, is properly fulfilled.

In bringing these considerations to the fore we do not mean to imply in any way that the woman is inferior to the man. It is rather that her position and role is not exactly the same as his. She was made to stand beside him, helping him to fulfill his calling in life.⁶

You could say that they are "equal but different." This difference comes out in their respective characters, their physical and psychological and emotional make-up, and in their roles with respect to each other. The creation account reveals that Adam was made first and functioned first and that Eve was made to complement him and to help him to function even better. He led her in a spirit of love and consideration and she followed him in a spirit of love and obedience.

V. Women after the Fall

Nevertheless, such a state of affairs did not continue indefinitely. In the Fall — that wilful act of disobedience — the relationship between male and female as established in creation, is reversed. Satan approaches the female and leads her astray. The female in turn leads the male into disobedience (Genesis 3) and so infringes on what is really his divinely ordained role, namely, to lead the female.

As a consequence of this infringement, disharmony comes into their relationship. Within the *marriage* relationship the male no longer leads with love and consideration, rather he *rules* over the female, often without any consideration.

The female is now placed in *subjection* to the male (Genesis 3:16)⁷ Within the *church*, the Fall also has consequences for this relationship. It is one of the reasons why she is not allowed "to teach or to have authority over men" (I Timothy 2:12-14).

VI. Women in the Old Testament

The matter of the rulership of the male over the female in *marriage* is further developed in the Old Testament after the Fall. The wife calls the husband *ba'al* meaning master and *adon* meaning Lord (cf. Genesis 18:12; Judges 19:26; Amos 4:1), thereby recognizing him as the dominant figure in the household. This is also evident in the reading of such Scripture passages as Numbers 5:11-31 (the law of jealousy), Numbers 30 (the validity of a woman's vow), Deuteronomy 24:1-4 (the bill of divorcement), etc.

This, however, is not to say that the wife did not have a very important place in the Old Testament family. Through the begetting of children she built a "house" for her husband. She received just as much respect from the children as her husband (Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 5:16; Leviticus 19:3). She supervised the day-to-day operation of the household, which included such responsibilities as buying and selling, etc. (Proverbs 31).

As for the matter of females in the Old Testament church, there is no doubt that they were involved members. They participated in the Old Testament worship service. They were present at the times of prayer, at the feasts, at the offerings and at the reading of the law (Deuteronomy 31:12; Nehemiah 8:3, 4). They shared in the passover meal. They served at the door of the tent of meeting (Exodus 38:8; I Samuel 2:22). They took part in the great choirs and processions of the Temple (Psalm 68:25; Ezra 2:65; Nehemiah 7:67; I Chronicles 25:5-7). They could take the vows of a Nazarite (Numbers 6:2, 13-21). They were even granted theophanies — Hagar (Genesis 16:7; 21:17), Sarah (Genesis 18:9), Manoah's wife (Judges 13:3-5, 9, 22).

Nevertheless, from all this we may not draw the conclusion that the role of male and female (husband and wife) in the Old Testament church was similar and interchangeable. No female (wife) ever served as priest or high priest or performed Levitical duties in the Old Testament. Exodus 27:21, 28:1, Numbers 4:2, 3 indicate that priests or those performing Levitical duties had to be *sons* of Aaron.

Still, it cannot be denied that certain women figure prominently in the history of the Old Testament. Some even occupied a leading and prophetic role. We think here of Miriam, Deborah, Huldah and others.⁸ In Exodus 15:20 Miriam is called a "prophetess." In Judges 4:4 Deborah is given the name "Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, was judging Israel at that time." In II Kings 22:14-20 and II Chronicles 34:22-28 Huldah is called a "prophetess" as well.

These cases present us with the question, "Do these prophetesses not prove that women are permitted to rule and to teach in the church?" In answering that question we would warn against making any general rules from these instances for each has its own peculiarities. That Miriam is called a "prophetess" we cannot deny, but we would add to that the question "What kind of prophetess?" Numbers 12 would lead us to conclude that she was certainly not of the same rank and standing as Moses. In fact, to the questions "Has the Lord indeed spoken through Moses? Has He not spoken through us also?" (verse 2), the reaction is that the Lord's anger flares and Miriam turned leprous. Thus while Miriam has a certain official prophetic position in Israel, she must realize that it is a position subordinate to that of Moses.⁹

As for the case of Deborah, there also we meet a "prophetess" but a "judge" as well. Yet once more we seem to be faced with a special situation. Deborah was active in Israel during a period of great deformation. Real leadership was lacking. The men in Israel, Barak included, were devoid of courage, initiative and faithfulness. In part to shame them the Lord calls upon a woman to take up the

reins of leadership in Israel.¹⁰ He installs her as a prophetess, a predominantly male office, and as a judge, also a predominantly male office (cf. Deuteronomy 17:9). Hence by selecting Deborah the Lord confronts Israel with its corrupt and shameful state.

Then, too, there is the case of Huldah. Five of the leading citizens of Judah went to her during the reign of King Josiah and she passed on to them a revelation that she had received from the Lord. As to why the Lord used her, we cannot say with absolute certainty; however, it is possible that once again, in the absence of faithful male prophets, the Lord uses a woman as an instrument to reproach Judah.

Thus, the LORD at certain points in the history of the Old Testament not only permits prophetesses to function, He also calls and ordains them. In part He uses them as vivid reminders that the men are not faithful and obedient, also in terms of their office. Yet they are the exceptions to the rule.

At the same time, it seems entirely possible that the calling of women to the office of prophetess is not at all in conflict with the New Testament injunction forbidden women to teach and rule. An extended study of the Old Testament and the New Testament words for prophecy indicates that this activity is the result of the Spirit's acting in and through a person to produce a revelation and that as such this activity is quite different from teaching and ruling. In Israel it was common for the priests to teach and rule in the church (from this office women seem to have been completely excluded). The prophets proclaimed God's Word, especially in times of apostasy. They seemed to have acted as instruments who brought the word at certain crucial times and moments in Israel's history, rather than as those who taught the Word in a systematic way to the people on a regular basis. In addition there is no evidence to suggest that the prophetic office functioned as a regular ruling office in the church. The prophets were more often at odds with the church leaders of Israel, warning and chastising them, than in agreement with them.

VII. Women in the New Testament

B. *The Gospels*

Between the Old and the New Testament dispensation there is no radical difference in teaching regarding the position of the woman. We see this almost immediately in the way that our Lord viewed the opposite sex. He never considered women to be inferior to men. Whereas in His days some expressed themselves to the effect that they were grateful that they had not been created as women, the Christ had females among His closest friends and followers (John 11:5).¹¹ He upheld the sanctity of marriage and expressed His disapproval of the convenient way that men divorced their wives in the times of Moses (Mark 10:1-12). He healed a number of women from their infirmities (Matthew 8:14-17; Luke 13:10-17; Mark 5:25-34). He even went out of His way to converse freely with the Samaritan woman, something which official Judaism of those days considered a scandalous thing (John 4:7-38). He also made mention of the fact that due to the resurrection women as well as men would be like "angels in heaven" (Mark 12:25).

As for the role of women in the church, the Gospels do not contain any statements that bear directly on the issue of women ruling, teaching or voting.

B. *The Acts of the Apostles*

Acts 1:15-26

That women had a place in the New Testament church, and an important place at that, is evident also in Acts. In chapter one we are informed that when the apostles "devoted themselves to prayer" they did so "together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus" (Acts 1:14). Immediately following that we are told about the replacement of Judas Iscariot in the verses 15-26.

Now there are a number of details in these verses that require our attention.

In the first place, verse 16 informs us that Peter began his speech with “brethren” or literally “men and brethren.” This has led some to assume that at this particular meeting only men were present; however the word “brethren” can also include women.¹² That it were mainly the men who were being addressed by Peter may be the case seeing that the literal expression is “men and brethren” and seeing the customs of the time. As to whether or not women took an active part in the meeting, there is no way of determining that, although it seems doubtful.¹³

In the second place, it is noteworthy that this passage continues to maintain that the apostolic circle must be male. Our Lord chose twelve males as apostles, and here, when a replacement is sought for Judas Iscariot, the choice is quite clearly between two males — Justus and Matthias.

In the third place, there is verse 26 which states “and they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was enrolled with the eleven apostles.” It is especially the phrase “and they cast lots” that calls for our attention. Some have tended to interpret these words as if a vote was held among the members present — males only or males and females — and that the leading candidate won. We would, however, point out that the translation “and they cast lots for them” is not totally accurate. Literally, it says “and they gave lots to them.”¹⁴ This raises the question of *who* gave lots to *whom*. Did the members give lots to the apostles concerning these men? Did the apostles give lots to the nominees? Did the nominees pass them back to the apostles? We cannot be certain. Indeed we have to admit that on the basis of the scanty description which Acts gives, we are unable to reconstruct the actual procedure of selection. Was it by the casting lots or otherwise? How were the lots cast? Was it a majority vote that prevailed, a vote taken among the apostles only or the apostles and the other male (and female) participants? We cannot say. What we can say is that this passage of Scripture does not allow us to make any direct inferences regarding voting for office-bearers in general or voting by women in particular.

(ii) *Acts 2:16-18*

The same can be said of Acts 2. There the followers of Christ are all together and the Holy Spirit is poured out upon them. What is particularly noteworthy here is that the Holy Spirit filled them *all* (verse 4), women included. Peter also makes special mention of this fact by citing Joel 2:28-32 and stating,

“your sons and *daughters* shall prophesy,
and your young men shall see visions
and your old men shall dream dreams
yea, and on My menservants and My *maidservants* in those days
I will pour out My Spirit, and they shall prophesy.”

Previous to Pentecost the Holy Spirit confined His operations to the narrow limits of Israel and then only to certain people in Israel, but now the Spirit's power and influence is bestowed on believers generally, both young and old, male and female. What a gift this is! Speaking in I Corinthians 14, the apostle Paul states that prophecy is the best and highest gift of the Spirit. The execution of the prophetic task may be done by all — male and female (cf. Acts 21:9). At Pentecost Moses' wish came true, “Would that all the Lord's people were prophets, that the Lord would put his spirit upon them” (Numbers 11:29).

But now does the fact that women may prophesy entitle them as well to ruling and official teaching in the church? Does it do away with all restrictions also as these pertain to the offices in the church?¹⁵ We think not. As we have mentioned already, we maintain that prophecy is an activity to be distinguished from ruling and teaching. The Lord uses all kinds of believers to prophesy, to witness, to testify today, but He does not allow all kinds of believers to *rule* His church.

(iii) *Acts 6:1-5*

Another passage in Acts which deserves our attention is found in chapter 6:1-5, the selection of the seven “deacons.” Here we may say that it is even more likely that women were present at the gathering. Again there is no direct proof of

this; however, the phrases "body of the disciples" (verse 2), "brethren" (verse 3) and "the whole multitude" (verse 5) seem to indicate this very strongly. This is especially true because the word "multitude" is used in chapter 5:14 and there it includes women.

With regard to the matter of selecting the seven, verses 3 and 5 indicate that the "multitude" did the choosing, although it was very definitely under the leadership and supervision of the Twelve. Did the women take part? There are some who answer "yes, because in verse 5 it speaks of 'the *whole* multitude.'" There are others who say "no." Lenski, a reputable Lutheran exegete, and one of the few who elaborates on this process of selection, states in his commentary on Acts,

"Luke does not need to say that only those who had attained the proper age took part in this meeting in accord with the spirit of the Fourth Commandment, Ephesians 6:1; Colossians 3:20; likewise, he need not mention the fact that only men voted in accord with the Jewish practice which was based on Genesis 2:18-23; 3:16, and was for this very reason the apostolic practice, I Timothy 2:12-14. This point has now become controversial, but exegetically neither the apostolic practice itself nor the grounds on which it rests, God's creation and thus nature and the condition produced by the fall, can be controverted."¹⁶

Lenski's point, and that of others as well, is that the expression "the whole multitude" can not possibly mean "whole" in the sense of everyone: men, women and children. It would be absurd to assert this. So the question becomes, "where must the line be drawn?" Lenski draws it at men, thereby excluding children and women, and would seem to regard the men as being the representatives of the whole multitude. What they did would automatically meet with the approval of their wives and children, seeing the position and standing the husband and father had in those days.

Needless to say, this point can be argued at great length. 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. Absolute deductions and applications for our modern situation cannot be derived from this passage.

(iv) *Acts 15:22*

In this verse we read the following: "Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men from among them and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas." Also in this passage, as with the previous one, the controversy swirls around the meaning of a certain expression, namely, "the whole church."

Yet here again the possibility exists for two different interpretations, the one arguing that it includes women and the other that it excludes them. Again your Committee cannot make an absolute choice for the one or the other; however, it feels that the "excluding position" is much more likely (see Lenski, quoted above). Also we would draw your attention once again to the fact that they are very clearly *men* who are delegated to go to Antioch.

C. *The Epistles*

(i) *Galatians 3:28*

Surely one of the most frequently quoted texts in this matter of women and the church is Galatians 3:28. There the apostle Paul says, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus." In response to this text there are those who argue that the apostle here abolishes all distinctions in the church of Jesus Christ as they relate to race, social standing and sexuality. The Jew is equal to the Greek, the slave to the free man, and the female to the male. Furthermore, this text is said to imply that within the church no distinction may any longer be made between what responsibilities are entrusted by the Lord to male and to female. They are equal participants in every facet of the church's ministry.

Nevertheless, we believe that such an interpretation of Galatians 3:28 is going to extremes, to say the least, and is actually a misinterpretation. The basic point that the apostle is intent on making is that ethnic, racial, social and sexual factors are not determinative in regard to one's spiritual standing in Christ.¹⁷ All believers are equal participants of the benefits bestowed by Christ. As inhabitants of this world we recognize the sad fact that our ethnic origin, our social standing, our sexuality may produce discrimination and inequality, but as children of God, as believers in Christ, we are to stand firm in the conviction that we are "all one in Christ Jesus."¹⁸ In our relationship to Jesus Christ there is no difference. He does not have different classes of followers.

But whereas our standing before Christ is equal, our roles and responsibilities in Christ's church are not all identical. The Lord continues to entrust different duties to males and females, husbands and wives, employers and employees, rulers and subjects. These must be recognized, respected and obeyed.

(ii) *I Corinthians 11:2-16*

Another Scripture passage that is very pertinent to our discussion is I Corinthians 11:2-16. We begin with verse 3.

Verse 3. In this particular verse the apostle Paul describes what may be called a "hierarchy of headships."¹⁹ That this concept of headship is not demeaning or insulting is established by the fact that Paul also refers to the headship of Christ over every man and the headship of God over Christ. It is noteworthy too that here an oft contested role relationship, that of man being the head of the woman, is sandwiched between two incontestable ones.²⁰

Still, the question may be asked, "What is meant by the word 'headship'?" The scholars are not unanimous on this point; however, your Committee believes that it refers to two basic ideas, that of *rulership* and that of *origin*. Man is the head of the woman and rules over her (cf. I Timothy 2) and man is the origin, the source of the woman. She was made from him (Genesis 2:21-23). Of the two ideas, we would give the greater emphasis to the concept of rulership. As Christ is the head (ruler) of every man, so man is the head (ruler) of the woman, and the Father is the head (ruler) of Christ (I Corinthians 11:3).²¹

Verses 4-6. From these verses we may digest the fact that both men and women are allowed to pray and prophesy in church. The bone of contention is *how* should they do this? It seems that in Corinth some ladies were not too pleased with the whole idea of headship and with the Biblical teaching on these points. Purposely they went about with their heads uncovered. This was to demonstrate their new found freedom, independence and equality.²²

The apostle Paul, however, is not in agreement with their attitude and approach. He admonishes them and tells them to veil themselves. "For," he says, "if a woman will not veil herself, then she should cut off her hair, but if it is disgraceful for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her wear a veil" (verse 6).

Of course this raises the question "Why? Why must a woman go about veiled? Why may a man go about unveiled?" We would answer with the following quotation,

"The husband shows his dependence upon Christ (and thus his dignity) by worshipping unveiled (11:4), 'since he is the image and glory of God' (11:7). The expression of this dependence, which is his glory, lies in being bare-headed.

The wife's dependence upon her husband is reflected in her worshipping veiled (11:5). As it is shameful for her to be shaven or have short hair — signs of disgrace and excommunication from the community — so it is shameful for her to worship unveiled, since 'woman is the glory of man' (11:7) and symbolizes her dependence upon him through her veil (11:10). Thus she would be stepping out of the established order if she cast her veil

aside, like a prostitute or widow. This would be an abuse of her freedom in Christ."²³

Verses 7-10. Here in the verses 7-10 the basic argument of headship is continued. Only now the element of *origin* in headship begins to receive stress, specifically the *order* in this origin. Man is described as being created first and then the woman. Also Paul stresses that this order reveals a fundamental fact of life, namely, man was not created for woman but woman for the man. Closely linked to this is the fact that Paul states that man is "the image and glory of God," whereas the woman is "the glory of man." With regard to *origin* man is *directly* derived from God who breathed into him the breath of life. This makes him God's image and glory. As for the woman she is *directly* made by God from man and hence is described as man's glory. Does this mean that the woman is any less the image of God? We do not think so since the language of Genesis 1:27 is clear. Both man and woman are made in God's image.

With regard to the expression found in verse 10 "because of the angels," your Committee could not come to any firm conclusion as to its meaning. We would ask you to consider the following as a possible interpretation, namely, the angels serve as ministering spirits doing the bidding of the Lord and serving the needs of the believers. It would be insulting to them if God's created order, as this relates especially to man and woman, was negated and if thereby marriage was dishonoured. So the woman should wear a veil, not only because that is showing respect for God's creative work, but also because it pleases the angels.²⁴

Verses 11-16. In these verses the apostle argues that, although differences exist between man and woman, there is nevertheless a relationship of mutual interdependence between them. In addition he touches on the matter of hair and states that while short hair is honourable for the man, long hair is honourable for the woman. A woman's long hair is like a veil which acts as a covering.

Now there are those who state that today, for consistency's sake with I Corinthians 11, female believers ought to have long hair and covered heads, whereas men should have the opposite. This viewpoint is not shared by your Committee. We consider that the apostle's injunctions on these points cannot be isolated from the ideas, customs and mannerisms of this time. What is primary and binding for believers today is not long hair and veils (hats) but the underlying principle of headship and the fact that the wife should conduct herself properly in relation to her husband, to her married state and to the Lord. In addition she must not scandalize the world (if that is possible today) by her behaviour.

(iii) *I Corinthians 14:33b-36*

Even more pertinent than I Corinthians 11 to the point under discussion is I Corinthians 14:33b-36. It is a very controversial passage, not only because of what it says, but also because of how it relates to I Corinthians 11. In the latter it says, "Any woman who prays and prophesies" (verse 5) assuming that any woman is allowed to do these things in the worship services. Whereas I Corinthians 14 states, "Women should keep silence in the churches" (verse 34). Now it should be noted that in I Corinthians 11 the subject of women "praying and prophesying" receives only incidental mention; whereas I Corinthians 14 (and I Timothy 2) states quite clearly and emphatically that women may not teach or rule in the church. As such our interpretation of I Corinthians 14 and I Timothy 2 should govern our interpretation of I Corinthians 11 and not vice versa. In addition, various suggestions have been made as to how these two chapters can be reconciled with each other: (1) the praying and the prophesying did not occur in the official worship services.²⁵ (2) These activities did occur in the church; however, the apostle Paul does not condone them.²⁶ (3) Women may prophesy in the church because these activities are permissible according to I Corinthians 11.²⁷

Your Committee agrees that each of the above-mentioned interpretations has its merits; however, our preference lies with the third view. G.W. Knight III

sums up in an admirable way our reasons for leaning towards this interpretation, "If this is correct (the third view), then it must be recognized that the apostle regards praying and prophesying on the one hand and speaking which involves teaching (cf. again I Corinthians 14:34 and I Timothy 2:12) on the other hand as distinguishable and different activities. Praying publicly in the midst of others does not imply or involve any authority or headship over others. Likewise prophesying, an activity in which the one prophesying is essentially a passive instrument through which God communicates, does not necessarily imply or involve authority or headship over others."²⁸

With regard to the actual content of chapter 14, verses 33b-36, we would draw your attention first of all to the fact that this chapter deals with the use of spiritual gifts. Secondly, the last part of this chapter deals with speaking and silence. In verses 27 and 28 this is applied to the matter of tongue speaking, in the verses 29 and 30 it is applied to prophecy and in the verses 33b-36 it is applied to women. Regarding the latter, the apostle commands them to "keep silence in the churches" (verse 34) and adds that "they are not permitted to speak" (verse 35). The expression "to speak" is used here in connection with the worship services and it implies that women are not allowed to speak in the sense of teaching and that they are not allowed to ask all kinds of questions and to conduct themselves in the services as if they had no husband. To behave in such a way is a violation of "the law" (verse 34), which means the Scriptures. For a woman to reject the creation order of Genesis 2 (cf. I Timothy 2:11ff.; I Corinthians 11:1ff.) is "shameful" (verse 35).

Still, there are some commentators who regard I Corinthians 14 as referring to married women only.²⁹ They contend that in Corinth the married women were acting improperly in the worship services and generally flaunting the Scriptural teaching concerning marriage and submission. As a result, Paul here tells them to be silent and "to ask their husbands at home" (verse 35). As for single women, they were not bound by these verses.

Such a view, however, has its difficulties, especially if it is compared with what the apostle says in I Corinthians 11 and I Timothy 2. In addition, it is highly unlikely that, given the customs of those days, the apostle Paul would imply that single ladies could speak. In almost all cases these ladies remained part of the parental home and were even more under the subjection of their fathers than the wives were under the subjection of their husbands.

Finally, we would draw your attention to the fact that Paul is very emphatic in this matter. In verse 33b he states "as in all the churches of the saints" and in verse 37 he says that "what I am writing to you is a command of the Lord." Here obviously is a teaching that is universally binding on the churches.

(iv) I Timothy 2:11-15

Exactly how binding this teaching is and why is further explained in I Timothy 2:11-15. Here again we must realize that the apostle is referring to the church: her offices and their activities in particular (cf. I Timothy 3:14, 15). He states that a woman is to learn in "silence with all submissiveness" (verse 11) and adds, "I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over men; she is to keep silent" (verse 12). Note, he very specifically forbids a woman to teach or to have dominion.³⁰ In stating this the apostle does not mean to imply that a woman is never allowed to teach a man or a male-child, but that within the church she must not teach or have authority over men.³¹

Once more the view is often presented here that Paul is referring only to married women. *They* are not allowed to teach or to have authority in the church. Yet it has to be said that there is no evidence which proves that the terms used here are meant to be restricted. In fact the verses 8-10 give the impression that the injunction of Paul in the verses 11 and following is general and not particular. The command has to do not only with those in the married state but with maleness and femaleness.³²

The basis for such a command is explained in the verses 13 and 14, "For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became the transgressor." Paul here draws our attention first to the order of creation and then to the cause of the subsequent disorder in creation. With respect to the order of creation, we have seen already that man was first chronologically and functionally, and that, although both are called upon to rule over creation, man is to guide and lead the woman and she is to follow and assist the man. 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. It is more correct to apply such an interpretation to the conditions and changes that came about as the result of the Fall. The most we are at liberty to state is that before that drastic event the man led and the woman followed. This was a harmonious relationship.

Nevertheless, it is a sad fact of history that the woman did not remain faithful to her God and to the role that He ordained for her. In listening to the Devil and in eating of the tree, she led and the man followed. Their roles were reversed and disaster resulted. If Eve had remained obedient, she would not have become the leading participant in that great disaster. But she was. And the lesson? Let the woman fulfill her original role and calling in life which is not to rule over the man but to be a help-meet to man in a spirit of "faith and love and holiness, with modesty" (verse 15).

D. Deaconesses

(i) *Romans 16:1, 2*

In the New Testament there are also a number of direct and indirect references which seem to indicate that women may be active in the church as deaconesses. Romans 16:1, 2 is one of these references. There it makes mention of "our sister Phoebe, a deaconess of the church at Cenchreae" (verse 1). Upon reading this some immediately conclude that since Phoebe was a deaconess this office is open to women. However, your Committee would express the opinion that it is necessary to be somewhat cautious on this point. Phoebe is here called a *diakonos* (literally — servant) of the church at Cenchreae. This word is spelled in the Greek as a masculine form meaning "deacon" in the official sense, or "servant" in the general sense. Yet *diakonos* is not always a masculine noun. It is also a feminine noun even though it is spelled exactly like the other more common masculine noun. In other words, *diakonos* could mean simply that Phoebe was a servant of the church at Cenchreae and not necessarily a church deacon.³³

(ii) *Philippians 4:2, 3*

Another alleged reference to deaconesses is said to be in Philippians 4:2, 3, albeit an indirect one. There we read that Euodia and Syntyche worked side by side with Paul "in the gospel." It would seem that the labour of these ladies had some official character to it, but as to precisely what they did and what their position was in the church, we cannot say.

(iii) *1 Timothy 3:11*

We proceed next to 1 Timothy 3:11 where we find women mentioned in the middle of a passage that sets forth the qualifications of deacons. Some maintain that this verse addresses itself to female deacons.³⁴ But the word used for "women" can also be translated "wives." If that interpretation is followed, namely, that the wives of deacons are referred to here, then the passage makes sense according to the understanding of it that has prevailed for generations. Undoubtedly the last word has not been spoken on this verse.

(iv) *1 Timothy 5:9-16 (cf. Titus 2:3-5)*

Finally, we come to 1 Timothy 5:9-16 which passage suggests, along with Titus 2:3-5, that certain women did have an official position in the church. These widows were "enrolled" (verse 9) and may have received financial support. Yet it

is by no means clear that they held a church office or that they were involved in a ruling or teaching capacity.

In summary, even if a case could be made for the fact that women served as deaconesses in the New Testament church, it would not directly infringe on the Scriptural injunctions that women may not teach or rule in the church. The office of deacon, as Scripture describes it, is quite obviously a *servicing office* and not a ruling office.

In bringing this part of our treatment to a close, your Committee states that it is in full agreement with the following positive statement regarding the role of women in the church.

"The exclusion of women from the ruling and teaching offices and functions in the church does not mean that woman has no place of service in the church. The teaching and ruling offices and functions are not the only gifts, functions, or services in the church. Just as in marriage and the family, so also in the church the activities and functions of women are necessary and important. No part of the body of Christ (especially men, in this case) may say of another part 'I have no need of you' (I Corinthians 12:21). And no part of the body of Christ (especially women, in this case) may say that because they are not occupying the office or performing the function of a leader, they are not a significant part of the body (cf. I Corinthians 12:14-20). The truth of God through the apostle Paul is exceedingly important in our context: 'But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired' (I Corinthians 12:18).

The New Testament tells of women being involved in the ministry and the life of the church in various ways, but always in ways other than the teaching-ruling offices and functions. References to women granting Jesus assistance in His ministry and to His interaction with them are well-known and need no documentation. It is certainly noteworthy that women were present at the cross and empty tomb and that women are the first to announce the resurrection. A similar type of involvement and assistance to this is in view when the apostle Paul designates certain women as those 'who have shared my struggle in the cause of the gospel' and as 'fellow-workers' (Philippians 4:3). In Titus 2:3ff., Paul urges the older women to teach, within the church, the younger women, to exhort 'the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, that the Word of God may not be dishonoured.' (Titus 2:4-5). Older widows are to be enrolled in a special order in the church, apparently both to serve (cf. verse 13) and to receive care and remuneration; they are to be enrolled on the basis of their previous service in the church (I Timothy 5:9ff., especially verse 10). But at the same time Paul opposes such an order for younger widows, preferring that they return to the condition which expresses their basic inclination and need — namely, the marital state and its privileges and responsibilities. (Men and women who do not have the inclination and need to be married — namely, those who have a gift from God to be single — he encourages to be single as an avenue of service but not as a condition for church office (cf. I Corinthians 7)."³⁵

VIII. SUMMING UP THUS FAR

On the basis of the above we come now to the following conclusions:

- 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 and the Lord proclaims that the husband shall rule and the wife shall obey.
- d) In the Old Testament this rulership of husband (man) over wife (woman) is evident in marriage and in the church.
- 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 women 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) In the Scriptures we have no indication that voting, as we know it today, was used to determine which nominee was the most able to serve. Therefore we have no reason to conclude that women did or did not participate directly in the election process by using either voice vote, secret ballot, lot or some other means. Those passages in the book of Acts which indicate that the congregation was directly involved in the process of selection do not reveal how this was done.
- i) There is no Scripture passage that speaks directly to the subject under investigation, namely, may women vote in the church or not.

IX. Church History

We now turn our attention to another aspect of our mandate, namely, the evidence of church history as it relates to women in general and to women voting in particular.

To begin with it may be stated that not many of the early Church Fathers considered women in an ecclesiastical context. The subjection of women was frequently alluded to, but both Clement of Alexandria and Chrysostom considered this to be due not to any "created weakness" but because she abused her privilege. Writing on Genesis 1-3, Augustine makes clear that woman was made so that man should rule over her. He also states that this servitude is the direct result of sin.

Yet spiritually the Church Fathers considered women to be equal to men. Gregory of Nyssa, preaching on Genesis 1:26, bases this on the fact that both are created in the divine image. Earlier, Clement of Alexandria made clear that women were equal to men "In excellence of character" and in their capacity for spiritual progress.

As for women and church office, we find very little mention made of this in the writings of the early Fathers. Tertullian said, "It is not permitted to women to speak in church, or to teach, or to baptize or to offer, or to lay claim to a man's function or to the priestly office." Furthermore, he characterizes such behaviour as that of heretics. Irenaeus also refers to the iniquities of the Magus Marcus who led astray silly women, encouraging them to make "their own thank-offering in his presence" and to prophesy, as well as behave immorally with them. Chrysostom says that when the question is the care of the church and of souls "let the whole female sex retreat from such an office . . . and similarly the majority of men." Epiphanius says "never anywhere has any woman, not even Eve, acted as priest from the beginning of the world." In the *Apostolic Constitutions* women

are barred from teaching and priestly functions, but the deaconess has special tasks.

Needless to say, the testimony of the early Fathers is solidly opposed to women in office. As for the matter of women having the right to vote for those nominated to office, no reference has been found by your Committee.

Later church history indicates that the Reformers followed in this tradition of opposition to women in office. Luther declared himself solidly against a female ministry. Calvin does likewise. In commenting on I Corinthians 14:34, he says,

"For how unsuitable it would be for a woman, who is in subjection to one of the members, to be in an authoritative position over the whole body! It is therefore an argument based on incompatibilities; because, if the woman is under subjection, she is therefore debarred from having authority to teach in public."³⁶

Other reformers can be cited as well showing that they opposed the possibility of having women in office.

As for the matter of women's voting rights, the Reformers — as far as we are aware — say nothing on this subject, although it is an established fact that Reformed churches in different countries have taken different approaches to the matter. In Scotland, Switzerland, Germany, Hungary, and The Netherlands certain churches in the Reformed tradition have later adopted women's voting rights. Yet that practice is by no means universal; exceptions exist.³⁷ The main exception that we are interested in is the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland.

At its Synod of Utrecht 1923 the churches were warned not to introduce women voting so long as the matter had not been approved by Synod. It also appointed a committee of five members to bring out a report in this matter.

This committee submitted its report to the Synod of Groningen 1927; however, it included a majority and minority report. No consensus could be reached with the result that the Synod appointed another committee which was charged to pay special attention to the question of whether voting was "een daad van regeermacht of niet."³⁸

The following Synod of Arnhem 1930 finally took a stand on the matter. It considered,

"dat de verkiezing tot het ambt door de leden der gemeente niet het karakter draagt van advies, maar een daad van algemeene regeermacht is, wel te onderscheiden van de bijzondere regeermacht, welke door Christus aan het bijzondere ambt der opzieners is opgedragen; dat weliswaar ook de approbatie, waarvan de vrouwen niet zijn uitgesloten, tot deze algemeene regeermacht der gelovigen behoort, maar dan dit onderling verschil in karakter, dat de gemeente bij de verkiezing uitspreekt, wie zij als ambtsdragers begeert, terwijl de approbatie bestaat in het al of niet goedkeuren der gekozen personen; dat daarom uit het feit, dat het ambt der gelovigen aan de vrouw in de kerk evenzeer toekomt als aan den man, niet volgt dat zij ook aan de verkiezing tot het ambt mag deelnemen; dat voorts het overtuigend bewijs, dat de Schrift het vrouwenkiesrecht eischt, niet is geleverd, maar de gegevens, welke zij ons biedt, veeleer daartegen dan daarvoor schijnen te pleiten."³⁹

It *concluded* by saying, "aan de vrouwelijke lidmaten der gemeente het kiesrecht in de kerk niet toe te kennen."⁴⁰

The next Synod of Middelburg, 1933 received a number of appeals against the above-mentioned decision, but it decided that they did not contain sufficient grounds for revising or rejecting the decision of Arnhem.

The Synod of Bunschoten-Spakenburg 1958 was requested by the Churches at Amsterdam and Beverwijk to declare that the decision of Arnhem was no longer binding on the churches in the matter of choosing office-bearers. This Synod pronounced that (a) one of the appealing Churches had not proven that active women's voting rights also belongs to the women in the church in their capa-

city of belonging to the office of all believers; (b) the Synod of Arnhem 1930 did not restrict the freedom of exegesis since she admitted that Scripture gives not clear witness in these matters.

Thereafter, the Synod of Rotterdam-Delfshaven 1964 was asked to declare "dat het doen deelnemen aan de verkiezing van ambtsdragers door vrouwelijke belijdende leden reeds in de vrijheid der kerken *staat*, aangezien de *wijze waarop* de gemeente haar ambtsdragers verkiest niet nader in de Heilige Schrift, de belijdenis, of de kerkorde wordt aangewezen en geheel afhankelijk is van de variërende plaats, tijd en omstandigheden, welke door de plaatselijke ambtsdragers, onder opzien tot de Here in de wijsheid des Geestes, dienen te worden onderkend, eventueel met advies van de meerdere vergadering."⁴¹

Synod responded by stating that "de verkiezing tot het ambt gelijk voorheen als een zaak van de kerken in het gemeen beschouwd moet worden." It also declared that "er geen genoegzame reden is, om bij zulke stand van zaken te komen tot herziening van hetgeen in dezen besloten is."⁴²

The Synod of Hattem 1972, in response to an overture of the Church at Delft, decided to appoint a committee to study the matter of women voting. In this regard it stated that "het zeer gewenst is, dat de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland alsnog komen tot een met goede argumentatie uit de Schrift gefundeerd besluit inzake het vrouwenkiesrecht in de kerk."⁴³

The Synod of Kampen 1975 decided "opnieuw deputaten te benoemen om de materie van het vrouwenkiesrecht vanuit de Schrift nader te bezien en daarbij tevens aandacht te schenken aan het karakter van de verkiezing van ambtsdragers in al zijn facetten."⁴⁴

The Synod of Groningen-Zuid 1978 decided that "de regel die onder meer door de generale synode van Arnhem 1930 (Acta article 200, besluit 1) is gehandhaafd, niet gewijzigd dient te worden."⁴⁵

In conclusion, it may be stated that our Dutch sister churches continue to maintain that women may not vote, since that would involve them in an unscriptural activity, namely, governing the church.

X. Church Polity

With regard to our report, we now come to the matter of church polity. In other words, what does the Church Order say about the matter under discussion and do the principles that operate in the government of the church allow for the possibility of extending voting rights (privileges, responsibilities, etc.) to women. The article in the Church Order that has direct bearing on this point is Article 22 which states,

"The Elders shall be chosen by the judgment of the Consistory and the Deacons, according to the regulations that are in use locally or that are for that purpose established by the Consistory. In pursuance of these regulations every Church shall be at liberty, according to its circumstances, to give the members of the Congregation an opportunity to direct attention to suitable persons; and further to present to the Congregation for election as many Elders as are needed, in order that they, after being approved and agreed upon by the Congregation (and unless any obstacle arise) be installed with public prayers and stipulations; or present a double number to the Congregation and thereupon install the one-half chosen by it, in the aforesaid manner, agreeably to the Form in use for this purpose."

According to this article the following steps should be adhered to:

- (1) In every Congregation there shall exist regulations which govern the election of office-bearers;
- (2) The members of the Congregation are requested to submit the names of suitable candidates for office;

- (3) The Consistory and the Deacons shall nominate for the offices available certain suitable persons;
- (4) The Congregation (as presently represented by the male communicant members) elects as many office-bearers as are needed;
- (5) The Consistory with the Deacons appoints the brothers elected;
- (6) The approbation of the brothers who have been elected and appointed is held;
- (7) If no lawful objection arises, the brothers shall be ordained into office.

Now it is within the context of this entire procedure that the question arises as to whether female communicant members may also participate in the electing of office-bearers? On the one side (let us call this *position I*) you have those who say "YES." Why? Basically because they contend that

- a) electing is not governing, but indicating your preference or giving advice to the Consistory;
- b) the election is completely, from start to finish, under the supervision and leading of the Consistory which also appoints the brothers decided upon;
- c) to allow women to take part in the approbation and then to deny them electing responsibilities is inconsistent with these practices.

On the other side (let us call this *position II*) you have those who say "NO." Why? For some of the following reasons:

- a) electing office-bearers is a matter of governing and governing in the church is forbidden to women by Scripture itself;
- b) although the Consistory supervises the election, to vote is a matter of government;
- c) approbation is a different activity than voting, hence they can not be placed on the same line;
- d) it will lead to other things such as women in office.

In evaluating these points made by both sides, and others that are made as well, we offer the following for your consideration: Position II(d) is an assumption that may or may not be borne out. If one looks at the way of things in the *world* one will say, "This step will undoubtedly open the door to other more extreme things that are sure to follow." Whether that is also the case or trend in the church will continue to be a matter of debate. In so far as we sense "fear" as the motivating force behind II(d), we would state that Scripture, not fear, determines what practices are to be followed in the church. As such II(d) remains an unproven assumption.

With regard to the matter of points I(c) and II(c) which relate to the relationship between approbation on the one hand and election on the other, we would state that it is indeed true that these activities are to be carefully distinguished from each other. To charge that it is inconsistent that women can be involved in approbation but not election is to ignore the precise character of these two matters. In the procedure of approbation it is not the *source* of the objection that is fundamental, rather it is the truth or falsehood of the objection. Hence the emphasis is not on *who* brings the charge but on the *validity* of the charge or charges brought. As such it is even possible for a non-communicant member or for an outsider to bring a charge to the attention of the Consistory. Needless to say, to bring certain accusations against an appointed office-bearers-to-be is an activity that differs quite fundamentally from making a choice as to which of the nominated brothers is best qualified to rule and govern the church. The first act is an act of *transmitting* material or certain information that might render a person unfit to serve in the church. The second act is an act of *evaluation* in which a person's abilities are assessed.

Closely related to the above is also the matter of nomination by members of the Congregation. Here, too, there are some who see an inconsistency. They allege that allowing a woman to nominate but not to vote is to some extent a contradiction. But is it? We would state that here also the various elements in the election process have to be more carefully distinguished. To nominate someone

for office is an act whereby a person suggests to a Consistory that the following person (or persons) has certain qualities that make him worthy of serious consideration by that body. Yet the act is of a suggestive character. And here again it is the suggestion and the grounds given for it that take precedence over the person making the suggestion. Besides, the act is of a completely advisory nature. The Consistory is free to accept or reject whatever suggestions are received. Neither does it have to justify to the Congregation or members of the Congregation when a particular suggestion (nomination) does not appear on the final list of candidates.

So it is that we come to position I(a) and II(a) in which an evaluation is given as to the *character* of voting. Here the question must be faced as to whether or not voting is governing. The one side says "yes" and the other side says "no."

Your Committee is of the opinion that in a sense both positions are extremes and that the truth of the matter lies somewhere in between. To say that electing is not governing but rather indicating a preference or giving advice to the Consistory is to devalue the true character of the vote. It is true that the election of office-bearers, of which voting is a part, is under the leadership of the Consistory from start to finish. But then to allege that the voting is merely expressing a preference or giving advice is to ignore the fact that the Consistory has agreed to *bind* itself to the results of the election. The majority preference is binding. Ordinarily they will be ordained into office.

Naturally this does not mean that the word "binding" has to be taken in an absolute sense. No vote is ever absolutely binding. Irregularities in the voting or proof of unfitness to serve can nullify the vote and call for a repetition of the election process or lead the Consistory to appoint another brother. However, these possibilities are extraordinary. In normal cases the Consistory is legally and morally bound to respect the outcome of the vote since it has set the rules of the election and has allowed the vote to become determinative. Article 22 states that the Consistory shall "present to the Congregation for election as many elders as are needed, in order that they, after being approved and agreed upon by the Congregation (and unless any obstacle arise) be installed with public prayer and stipulations." These words indicate that the Consistory agrees to respect the outcome of the voting by the Congregation "unless any obstacle arise." Surely this indicates that the vote is more than simply expressing a preference. If anything, the vote is expressing a preference of which the majority is ordinarily binding and determinative on the Consistory. It may not wilfully and without good cause overturn the results or ignore the results altogether. At the same time, to regard the vote as being in a sense advisory is also neglecting the fact that the Church Order gives to the vote a determining character. Thus far our rejoinder to position I(a).

We now turn to position II(a) which asserts that election is a matter of governing (and hence forbidden to women since Scripture states that women may not govern in the church). We assess this viewpoint to be to a certain extent an exaggeration. It should be remembered that under the rules of Reformed church polity, it is quite clearly the Consistory — the gathering of the elders — which rules the church. In addition it is also a fact that those who elect someone to office are not, by that very fact, in the office themselves. To assert position II(a) is to assert too much.

How then must one look at the character of voting for office-bearers? The Committee presents the following observations and considerations to you: When the Consistory announces the candidates for election to the Congregation then it is stating that each one of the candidates is capable and worthy of entering into the office. It is never a question of asking the Congregation to choose between a capable man and an incapable one. In addition to announcing the candidates, the Consistory also announces the date on which the election of office-bearers will take place by the Congregation (as currently represented by the male communicant members).

Now at this point many assert that, technically speaking, the Consistory has the right to keep the power of election for itself. As long as nominations are asked for and the approbation follows, the Consistory has fulfilled its calling. Whether the voting itself is done by the Consistory or whether the Consistory asks for congregational involvement in this matter is up to the Consistory.

Be that as it may, it is sufficient to state that our Church Order hardly envisages a situation in which the Consistory does the voting alone. The accepted practice is that the Consistory calls upon the Congregation to participate in the election process. In other words, it requests the *cooperation* and *involvement* of the members of the Congregation in the matter of determining who is most qualified to serve. The outcome is then said to express the will of the Lord, since His guidance has been requested at the beginning of the meeting and His overruling is recognized at the end of the meeting through the medium of the ballots cast. Also this fact gives to the vote a certain weight and should prevent any Consistory from wilfully tampering with the outcome.

At this juncture we must examine closely the nature of the cooperation and involvement of the Congregation. The vote that is cast, we have said, is not simply giving advice or expressing a preference since the outcome is determinative for the Consistory. Neither is it a simple participation in the governing process. What is it then? We would say that *voting in the church for office-bearers by members of the Congregation is an involvement in governing the church. It is not an involvement in the sense of governing or ruling, but of electing those who are to govern.* As such there is, we maintain, a very close relationship between voting and governing. Your Committee felt itself *unable* to state categorically that voting has *absolutely nothing* to do with governing. The two cannot be totally isolated from each other. To say that because the Consistory afterwards appoints the brothers elected and that this nullifies any relationship or connection between voting and governing is to ignore the determinative character that the vote has on the Consistory, a character it has agreed to respect fully on recognizing and granting the Congregation's right of participation. Besides it ignores the simple fact that the Consistory's appointment is limited to the brothers elected by the Congregation. It cannot substitute other names after the election has taken place, names that were not on the ballot. It has bound itself to certain limitations in this regard.

Now at this point the question arises, "Where does this leave us in the matter of women's voting rights? Is it in harmony with Scripture to say that we should recognize that women should be involved in this way or not? Is it more in harmony with Scripture if we continue to exclude women from exercising this privilege (right, duty, responsibility)?"

In response your Committee chooses for the latter, namely, that *it is more in harmony with Scripture if women are not called upon to be involved in the voting for office-bearers.* Voting "rights" should *not* be extended to the women in the Congregation. We take this stand after having studied and examined the role of women from creation to the New Testament, from the early Church to the Church today. Especially the former, for it is the basic authority, makes clear that the woman has been given a supportive role in marriage and not a leading one, and that the same applies in the church. She is to keep silent and may not rule in the church. She is excluded from the office of the elder who preaches and teaches and the elder who rules. In light of this it is inconsistent to say that she may *not* teach, may *not* rule, may *not* hold office, but *may vote* or "have a say" in determining who will teach, who will rule and who will hold office.

In addition, the fact that the voting in the church cannot be totally separated from governing, since there is a link and relationship between the two, would seem to point much more to her exclusion from this responsibility than to her inclusion. We use the qualification "seem" here to alert you to the fact that no Bible text deals directly with this issue and gives a clear command which denies

women this privilege; however, the teaching of Scripture and the testimony of church history clearly assert that women are not to exercise privileges that include official ruling and teaching, or for that matter, we would add, that are linked to official teaching and ruling in the church, such as voting.

XI. Conclusion

A. Considerations

1. With regard to voting for office-bearers as we have it today, there is no clear evidence in the Scriptures that such a practice existed in the Church of the Old or New Testament (see: p. 21, h, i).
2. The role relationship between man (husband) and woman (wife) under the Old Testament dispensation does not give any reason to assume that the woman in the congregation had an active part in a form of decision-making as takes place in the voting for office-bearers in the Church today.
In the New Testament we do not find evidence that the role relationship between man (husband) and woman (wife) in the Church has changed in principle (see: page 21, g).
3. When the Church Order in Article 22 speaks about the choosing out of a double number of candidates by the congregation, it does not prescribe that all members, including women, must take part in the voting.
4. The procedures prescribed in Article 22, Church Order, include a form of decision-making (or, an involvement in governing) with respect to the electing of office-bearers, and thus voting by women would be in conflict with the role relationship of male (husband) and female (wife).
5. The history of De Gereformeerde Kerken in The Netherlands indicates that the General Synods in their decisions abide by the conviction that "convincing proof that the Scriptures demand women's voting rights has not been supplied, but the data which they do present to us seems to plead more against than in favour" (Arnhem 1930, see: page 24) and accordingly, did not change the practice of excluding women from voting.

B. Recommendations

1. Neither the stipulations of the Church Order nor Reformed Church History indicate that women had a right to vote in the election of office-bearers;
2. That such a right cannot be deduced from the Holy Scriptures.

C. Decision

Synod therefore decides that the Churches should refrain from introducing the practice of women voting in their elections for office-bearers.

Submitted for your consideration
this ninth month of 1980,
The Committee:
J. DEVOS
J. HENDRICKS
D. VANDERBOOM (convener)
M. VANDERWEL
J. VISSCHER (secretary)

- ¹ Some would argue that only the male was created in the image of God (cf. I Corinthians 11:7).
- ² K. Schilder in his *Heidelbergse Catechismus I* wants to describe the image of God, not in terms of nature or qualities, but only in the sense of calling. We do not quite agree with him here so as to exclude qualities altogether, cf. G. Berkouwer, *Man: The Image of God* (1962), pp. 54ff.
- ³ J. Calvin, *The Pentateuch*, p. 24.
- ⁴ K. Schilder, *De Heidelbergse Catechismus I* (1947), pp. 233ff.
- ⁵ Literally it says "a help as opposite him," i.e. as corresponding to him.
- ⁶ See C.J. Vos, *Woman in Old Testament Worship*, p. 19. He remarks that "Genesis 2 introduces woman to us as a creature on an equality with man. She is man's help (*ezer*), a term also used of God as man's help. But she is a help, corresponding to him (*kenegdo*), a creature taken from his side, and the two, though very dissimilar, ever return to become one flesh. The conclusion of K. Dronkert, 'de man neemt dus in het scheppingsbeeld wel een andere plaats in dan de vrouw, maar in geen geval een hogere,' appears to be justified."
- ⁷ J. Calvin, p. 43. On Genesis 3:16 he writes, "She had, indeed, previously been subject to her husband, but that was a liberal and gentle subjection; now, however, she is cast into servitude." H.C. Leupold, *An Exposition of Genesis I* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House), 1942, p. 172, writes "man's position in reference to the woman is fixed: he bears the rule. When all is done in the spirit of Christ, such rule is not harsh or unnatural; nor is it cancelled. There it expresses itself in such a way that it is not to be felt as a burden."
- ⁸ Among the others are Noadiah (Nehemiah 6:14) and the anonymous Prophetess (Isaiah 8:3). One can also point to Ezekiel 13:17ff.; Joel 3:1ff.
- ⁹ Calvin, p. 553. He says "But although Moses honours his sister by the title of 'prophetess,' he does not say that she assumed to herself the office of public teaching, but only that she was the leader and directress of others in praising God." See also J. van Bruggen, *Emancipatie en Bijbel* (Amsterdam: Ton Bolland) 1975, p. 82, 83.
- ¹⁰ van Bruggen, p. 83.
- ¹¹ Jewett refers to this and quotes Rabbi Juda ben Elai (c. A.D. 150) as saying "One must utter three doxologies every day: Praise God that he did not create me a heathen! Praise God that he did not create me a woman! Praise God that he did not create me an illiterate person!" Cf. P.K. Jewett, *Man as Male and Female* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans) 1975, p. 92.
- ¹² F.F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles: The Greek Text* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans) 1951, p. 76, states "The word is otiose, and does not necessarily exclude women."
- ¹³ E. Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell), 1971, p. 159, note 5 states "Though the women are probably thought of as present, they have no part in the proceedings." Unfortunately, he does not supply any proof for this statement.
- ¹⁴ Bruce, p. 80.
- ¹⁵ There are many theologians today who argue that since Pentecost, the Holy Spirit has been given equally to men and women and that therefore there should be no hesitancy to ordain women into all the offices in the church. The special gifts of the Spirit are then said to be the basis for female ordination. Needless to say, this viewpoint leads to extreme interpretations of I Corinthians 11, I Corinthians 14 and I Timothy 2.
- ¹⁶ R.C.H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House) 1934, p. 242.
- ¹⁷ G.W. Knight III, *The New Testament Teaching on the Role Relationship of Men and Women* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House) 1977, p. 19.

- ¹⁸ D.C. Arichea Jr. and E.A. Nida, *A Translator's Handbook on Paul's Letter to the Galatians* (Stuttgart: United Bible Societies) 1976, p. 85.
- ¹⁹ Knight, p. 33.
- ²⁰ Knight, p. 33.
- ²¹ C. Brown, (ed.) *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan) 1976, p. 160 (vol. 2). This Dictionary goes in the same direction as does 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.'" Whereas Arndt and Gingrich in their *Greek-English Lexicon* state that *kephale* (head) is used "in the case of living beings, to denote superior rank . . . the divine influence on the world results in the series: God the *kephale* of Christ, Christ the *kephale* of the man, man the *kephale* of the woman" (p. 431).
- ²² F. Zerbst, *The Office of Woman in the Church* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House) p. 40. He states "The arguments of Paul will be rightly understood and appreciated only when the attempts of Corinthian women to lay aside the headcloth are recognized as an attack in general upon the relations between man and woman as established in creation."
- ²³ D. Williams, *The Apostle Paul and Women in the Church* (Los Angeles: BIM Publishing) 1977, p. 65. Another author quotes from the Tamud to the affect that "The following married women are to be divorced without the marriage portion: Such as go out with their heads uncovered It is a godless man who sees his wife go out with her head uncovered. He is duty bound to divorce her." R.C. Prohl, *Woman in the Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans) p. 28.
- ²⁴ Zerbst, p. 43.
- ²⁵ C. Hodge, *An Exposition of the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (New York: Carter) 1857, p. 305.
- ²⁶ A. Robertson and A. Plummer, *I Corinthians* (Edinburgh: T.T. Clark) 1914, pp. 324-325.
- ²⁷ Knight, p. 46. (cf. J.B. Hurley, "Did Paul Require Veils or the Silence of Women? A Consideration of I Corinthians 11:2-16 and I Corinthians 14:33b-36." *Westminster Theological Journal* 35 (1973), p. 203.
- ²⁸ Knight, p. 46. This preference is to some extent a foregone conclusion, especially if the reader has taken note of what has been said already regarding Old Testament prophetesses and Acts 2.
- ²⁹ cf. K. Deddens, *De Dienst Van De Vrouw in De Kerk* (Groningen: De Vuurbaak) 1978, pp. 45, 46.
- ³⁰ The Greek word for "authority" is *authentain* which means to "have authority . . . over someone" (cf. W. Bauer, W.F. Arndt and F.W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 4th ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press) 1957, p. 120.
- ³¹ Knight, p. 30.
- ³² Knight, pp. 30, 31.
- ³³ J.J. Mitchell, "Was Phoebe a Deacon — Yes?," *The Presbyterian Guardian*, Vol. 42, No. 8 (October 1973), pp. 120-121. Also by the same author, "Was Phoebe a Deacon — No?," *The Presbyterian Guardian*, Vol. 42, No. 9 (November 1973), pp. 134-135.
- ³⁴ Cf. R.M. Lewis, "The 'Women' of I Timothy 3:11," *Bibliothecasacra*, Vol. 136, No. 542 (April-June 1979), p. 167ff.
- ³⁵ Knight, pp. 47-48.
- ³⁶ J. Calvin, *The First Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co.) 1960, p. 306.
- ³⁷ H. Bouwman, *Gereformeerd Kerkrecht I* (Kampen: J.H. Kok) 1928, p. 388.
- ³⁸ Translation: "An act of authority (government) or not."
- ³⁹ Translation: "that the election to office by members of the congregation does not have the nature of advice, but is an act of general authority, which is surely to be distinguished from the special authority which is entrusted by Christ to the special office of overseers; to be sure, also the approbation, from which the

women are not excluded, belongs to the general authority of believers, but there is then this common difference in character: that with the election the congregation expresses who they want as office-bearers, while the approbation consists of the positive or negative approval of the chosen persons; that therefore from the fact that the women have a right to the office of believers as much as the men, it does not follow that they also may participate in the election to office; that moreover the convincing proof that the Scriptures demand women's voting rights has not been supplied, but the data which they do present to us seems to plead more against than in favour."

⁴⁰ Translation: "not to grant the right to vote in the church to the female members of the congregation."

⁴¹ Translation: "that the act of participation of female communicant members in the election of office-bearers is already in the freedom of the churches, since the method whereby the congregation elects her office-bearers is not specified in the Holy Scriptures, the confession, or the Church Order; and is completely dependent on the varying place, time, and circumstances which, through the local office-bearers, acknowledging their dependence on the Lord in the wisdom of the Spirit, needs to be distinguished, eventually with the advice of the major assembly."

⁴² Translation: "the election to office must be regarded, as it has been in the past, as a matter of the churches in common" . . . "there is no sufficient reason, in such a state of affairs, to come to a revision of that which has been decided."

⁴³ Translation: "it is very desirable that with respect to the right of women to vote in the church, the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland yet come to a decision which is supported with good argumentation based on the Scriptures."

⁴⁴ Translation: "to again appoint deputies to look more closely at the material about women's voting rights from the viewpoint of the Scriptures and at the same time to pay attention to the character of the election of office-bearers in all its facets."

⁴⁵ Translation: "that the rule which among other things has been maintained by the General Synod of Arnhem 1930 (Acta, Article 200, decision 1) does not need to be altered."

APPENDIX VII
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON BIBLE TRANSLATIONS
APPOINTED BY SYNOD COALDALE 1977

Committee

Synod Coaldale 1977 appointed a committee on Bible Translations consisting of the brethren: Dr. J. Faber, Rev. W. Huizinga, Drs. H.M. Ohmann, Prof. L. Selles and Rev. C. Van Dam. Rev. Van Dam requested in 1978 to be relieved from work for and presence at the committee meetings till he would have finished his Master's study. He withdrew from the committee when he moved to B.C. in '79. The rest of the members were able to continue and to meet 14 times between May '78 and June '79.

Mandate

Synod Coaldale gave the Committee the mandate:

- a. to continue to make recommendations to the Standard Bible Committee for changes considered 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 (Acts Coaldale, Article 104, sub Recommendations).

Synod added to the mandate:

- a. to make a comparative study of the New American Standard Bible and the New International Version with the Revised Standard Version and the King James Version in order to determine which one translation can be positively recommended for use by the churches, whereby the criteria are: Faithfulness to the original text and linguistic character of the translation.
- b. to report to the next Synod on the progress or the result of its work.

Synod decided that pending this study only the use of the KJV and the RSV is in the freedom of the churches (Acts Coaldale, Article 105, sub Recommendations).

Work

The committee concentrated its efforts on the comparative study of the NASB and NIV with the RSV and the KJV. No recommendation for changes were made for that reason to the Standard Bible Committee of the RSV. The only exception is a letter dated January 25, '80, which was answered February 5, '80. See appendix.

As no new edition of the RSV was published since '77, the churches could not be informed of new developments.

The following parts of Scripture were studied in the respective translations: Isaiah 1, 2, 7, 8; Proverbs 3; Genesis 40, 41; Micah 7; Judges 5; Jeremiah 7-9; Joel 1, 2; Luke 24; Romans 1:1-4; Romans 13; Philippians 1-4; I Thessalonians 4:13-5:28; II Thessalonians 2; Hebrews 1-4; Revelation 11.

Report Bible Translation

The choice of these parts was determined by the wish to study various books in terms of number and of kind.

Prof. Ohmann presented the submissions on the Old Testament and Rev. Huizinga and Prof. Selles likewise on the New Testament; Prof. Faber checked the faithfulness of the translations of the mentioned passages to the content of Scripture.

Observations

To introduce the character of the two translations, added to the KJV and RSV, we quote the foreword of the NASB of 1973 containing the following statement: "The New American Standard Bible has been produced with the

conviction that the words of Scripture as originally penned in the Hebrew and Greek were inspired by God."

"The Editorial Board had a twofold purpose in making this translation: To adhere as closely as possible to the original languages of the Holy Scriptures and to make the translation in a fluent and readable style according to current English usage."

Goal of the Committee for the New International Version was, according to the Preface of the edition of 1977, "that it would be an accurate translation and one that would have clarity and literary quality and so prove suitable for public and private reading, teaching, preaching, memorizing and liturgical use." "In working to these goals, the translators were united in their commitment to the authority and infallibility of the Bible as God's Word in written form."

Different from RSV, NASB, "The New International Version is not a revision but a completely new translation of the Holy Bible"

To give a general impression of the findings of the Committee, extracts of the minutes are quoted.

- a. The study of the translations of Isaiah 1 and 2 led to the following comments: "The NIV could sometimes stay closer to the Hebrews text rather than give interpretations of the same. Even the traditional rendering "LORD of Hosts" is lost in favour of "LORD Almighty," Isaiah 1:9. Other examples of unnecessary interpretations include Isaiah 1:6, 13; 2:2, 16.

On the other hand the NASB seems to give a much more literal translation, but is sometimes stilted.

An important factor working in favour of the NIV is its apparent freshness and ability to communicate effectively" (Minutes, June 21, '78, Article 3).

- b. The study of the translations of Romans 1-4 resulted in the following observations: "All agree that with recognition of the merits of the KJV many words are so outdated that the KJV should be replaced by a more modern version"

. . . "all agree that *qua* style, language and clarity the NIV is superior to the RSV and NASB.

Objections against the NIV are that in various instances it is too free and too interpretative. Because of the modernization in language, justice is not always done to the exact meaning of the text" As to the NASB the faithfulness to Scripture and to text is generally undisputed. In Romans 2:14 the translation "instinctively" is not right in the NASB; it should be "by nature." The drawback of this version is that the translation is often stilted and the language not up to date."

One of the committee members considers differences between KJV and NASB so slight that it does not warrant a shift from the one to the other. "If the translation of *ek pisteos* by 'on the ground of faith' in Romans 3:30 was dropped in favour of 'by faith,' he would prefer the RSV in these chapters to the other versions." Another member is more inclined to choose for the NASB (Minutes, October 11, '78, Article 4).

- c. After a study of the translations of Proverbs 3 and Isaiah 7 and 8 the conclusion of the member who made the submission was that "the giving language had made sacrifices to the receiving language in the NIV." Another member gave as his impression "that the NIV is a smooth English translation but not always close to the Hebrew words." Two more members "do not see that the NIV in these particular chapters deviates from the Hebrew text" (Minutes, December 6, '78, Article 4).
- d. Study of the translations of Hebrews 1 and 2 led the member concerned to the conclusion "that the translation of these chapters, as found in the RSV, is the best; that the rendering of the NIV is somewhat freer, but still good; and that the NASB on these chapters is acceptable but not so good as the other two

- qua* translation.” “The other deputies agree with this conclusion to a similar or smaller degree” (Minutes, December 6, '78, Article 5).
- e. The comparative study of the translations of the Epistle to the Philippians taught, according to the brother who made the submission, that each translation seems to have its share of weaknesses and strong points; “the NASB is very accurate and follows the Greek almost slavishly but it tends to cloud the meaning sometimes by its literalness. The RSV is scholarly and sound with minor weaknesses.” “The NIV is the clearest, fresh and direct, but, as the discussion brought out, it has a tendency to give interpretation in its translation. See, e.g., Philippians 4:17: ‘dear friends’ instead of ‘beloved’ (all over the Epistles); 3:14: ‘heavenward’ instead of ‘upward’; 2:6: ‘being in the very nature God’ instead of ‘being in the form of God.’ So, in addition to improvements made on the other translations, especially in clarity, there are also evidences of being too free with the text, e.g., Philippians 2:22, 24 which have ‘body’ in spite of the fact that, different from verse 20, not *sooma*, ‘body,’ but *sarx*, ‘flesh,’ is used” (Minutes, February 28, '79, Article 5).
- f. The conclusion of the brother who introduces the translations of Genesis 40, 41 was that we have outgrown the KJV and that the RSV on these chapters is really a revised KJV.
- The NASB offers a valuable translation.
- The NIV seems to build on the NASB. The merit of the NIV is that it gets away from the Hebraisms which were taken over into other translations. The NIV is often freer than we are used to, but in most instances in agreement with the text, though not always. Another member “agrees that the NIV on this chapter is the smoothest and the best translation of the four versions.” A third member is of the opinion that the NIV is sometimes too free in its renderings to offer a smooth translation in better English. He mentions Genesis 40:15 where is spoken of “forcibly carried off” instead of “stolen” as required by the verb used. Another example is Genesis 41:42 where instead of “hand,” as indicated by the text, the rendering “finger” is used. He considers the translation of the NASB too stilted. The fourth member is of the opinion that “the NIV is acceptable and the most appealing on these chapters” (Minutes, April 11, '79, Article 3).
- g. In connection with a discussion of the translations of Micah 7 the deputy making the submission “prefers in some passages of this chapter the translation of the KJV because it makes ‘us’ aware of what is written in Hebrew. Another member points out . . . ‘that time and again elements are inserted into the KJV which do not belong to the Hebrew text.’
- As to the NIV rendering, he regrets with the other members that the words: ‘watch the doors of your mouth’ in verse 5 are rendered in the NIV by ‘be careful of your words’ and that the RSV translates ‘righteousness’ in verse 9 by ‘deliverance.’ ”
- The NASB is praised for its rendering: “I will watch expectantly for the LORD” in verse 7. One member finds it hard to make a choice between the RSV, the NASB and the NIV on this chapter. “Each translation has its own pros and cons” (Minutes, June 20, '79, Article 3).
- h. The brother who makes a submission on Judges 5:1-14 comes to the conclusion “that, in spite of the difficulty of the chapter, the four translations generally are in accord with each other.” Another member remarks “that this general accord shows that there is no basic difference between the translations.” A third member is of the opinion that the character of Judges 5 as a Psalm, finds clear expression in RSV and NASB (Minutes, September 26, '79, Article 3).
- i. Study of Hebrews 3 and 4 in its various translations caused the reporter to observe that there are flaws in each translation: The RSV and NIV left out a

couple of particles, the KJV is not always clear, the NASB missed the point in verse 12 of the chapter 3 by translating *gar* by "for" but is on a par in other points. The literal translation of *homologia* by "confession" in RSV and NASB is appreciated by another member (Minutes, September 26, '79, Article 4).

- j. Introducing the second part of Judges 5 the reporter states that though he is inclined to give preference to the rendering of the NASB, no farfetched conclusions should be drawn from a difficult chapter like Judges 5.

Another member observes "that different from what the RSV does in the prophets, it hardly took refuge to the ancient versions in Judges 5. It shows that the use of the versions cannot be marked as a general trend in the RSV" (Minutes, November 22, '79, Article 3).

- k. The objection of the deputy who submitted a study on the translations of Luke 24 against the RSV was "in addition to a certain stiltedness which it shared with the NASB, that the RSV in a couple of instances preferred the shorter manuscript D text to the longer text of the majority of reliable manuscripts. He preferred the NIV translation which is clear and refreshing" (Minutes, November 20, '79, Article 4).

- l. In the following meeting it is decided to write Prof. B.M. Metzger, secretary of the RSV Bible Committee, on the matter of the use of versions in disputed places of the prophets by the RSV and the preference of the RSV for the D text in Luke 24 (Minutes, January 23, '80, Article 2).

In his reply Dr. Metzger wrote that he has the impression that the Old Testament Section of the Bible Committee has a tendency to return to the masoretic text from the ancient version and that New Testament Section adopted the 3rd edition of the United Bible Societies Greek text, which replaces the D. readings for the majority readings, as basic text for the New English edition. (See appendix for complete letter.)

- m. A study of the translations of Hebrews 13 convinced the reporter "that, in spite of its attractiveness, the NIV should not be recommended to the churches, because it does not stay close enough to the Greek text and therefore falls short in the exactness of translation. As to the NASB, his study of this and other chapters had confirmed his view that the NASB leans heavily on the RSV and, where it does not do so, is, in many instances, not a smooth appealing translation. He was of the opinion that the RSV, which stays close to the Greek text in the chapter discussed and uses good idiomatic English, recommended itself for recommendation."

Another member was opposed to dropping the NIV and recommending the RSV.

"It was decided to continue the study of the translations" (Minutes, November 22, '79, Article 5).

- n. A study of the translations of Jeremiah 7-9:7 was submitted. It struck the brother who made the presentation "that the NASB in various spots was very close to the RSV.

The NIV used a couple of times words which clarified the meaning of the text, e.g., chapter 7:21c 'Go ahead' and 7:22 'I did not just give them this command.' The committee agreed that, though justified in a paraphrase, such additions do not belong in a translation" (Minutes, January 23, '80, Article 3).

Reviewing the translations of Revelation 11 the reporter concluded "that the KJV in its translation of verse 1 and verse 17 used an inferior text and in verse 4 added 'before the God of the earth.' Good is the reading 'spiritually' in verse 8. A plural was wrongly used in verse 15 and a wrong connection made in verse 19. All this makes the KJV on this chapter, in addition to archaic, unsatisfactory."

"As to the RSV, the NASB and the NIV, all could be evaluated as sound translations." Because of its freshness the brother "personally preferred the NIV" (Minutes, January 23, '80, Article 4).

- o. A presentation was made on Joel 1 and 2. "Although no basic objections are brought forward against the various translations, the RSV is preferred to the NASB and the NIV" (Minutes, May 7, '80, Article 4).

"A general discussion is held on the contents of a report which should be made. All agree that a church or churches which have insurmountable objections against a particular version should have the freedom to use another one. The majority of the committee, however, does not share the view that the choice of a version for use in the worship services should be completely left in the freedom of the churches. To prevent confusion, a recommendation of a particular translation should be our aim, but no version should be declared 'authentic' by the churches" (Minutes, May 7, '80).

Some summary conclusions from the minutes

1. None of the four translations can be qualified as unscriptural.
2. The KJV cannot function any longer as a translation in contemporary English and as the best rendering of the original text.
3. It is generally felt that the NIV is the most appealing translation but not the most exact one.
4. The NASB, in spite of its closeness to the KJV in sticking to the letter of the accepted text, misses the appeal which the KJV once had because of the beauty of its language and style and the clarity of expression.
5. The RSV is acknowledged as a scholarly sound translation in dignified English. A weak point in the rendering of textually disputed places in the Prophets is that the RSV in more than one instance, without absolute necessity, gives preference to the readings of the ancient versions over the readings of the Hebrew masoretic text in its first edition of the Old Testament.

Some additional observations regarding the translations.

The King James Version

The translation is faithful to the Hebrew and Greek text as known from a restricted number of manuscripts in the 16th century.

Although the beauty of the KJV has been sung in past and present, our judgment regarding the clarity of this translation for *our time* must be rather negative. The development of the language over the centuries is one reason. To mention a few obsolete words and expressions: Genesis 41:4: cows "ill favoured and lean fleshed"; Romans 13:13: walk "not in chambering"; I Thessalonians 4:15: we who remain "shall not prevent them which are asleep"; Hebrews 2:2 "recompense of reward" for "retribution."

In other instances the translation is simply incorrect: Isaiah 1:29: "gift" should be "bribe"; Joel 1:17 "rotten" should be "shriveled"; the translation of Joel 2:17 "should rule over them" instead of "be a byword" is due to a misunderstanding of the root of the verb used in Hebrews. "Let them slip" in Hebrews 2:2 should be "lest we drift away"; the addition of "him" and "them" in Hebrews 2:3 and 4 is wrong.

That does not mean that the KJV does not have any merits for us. Micah 7:7 "In that day shall the decree be far removed" is the best rendering of the four. "Melted" in Judges 5:5 is faithful to the original text. "Let us be silent" and "the LORD has put us to silence" is the right rendering of the original. Many other instances could have been added. That does not change the fact, however, that progress in the study of languages and manuscripts call for a New Translation in present day English.

The Revised Standard Version

Going over the chapters under consideration, one of the members counted the words and took in account the word order. The concordance of the RSV with the KJV in that respect struck him over and over. As already said the RSV translators depart quite a few times from the Hebrew text to follow the ancient versions, as usually indicated in the footnotes. In some instances the emendations are preferable, e.g., Isaiah 8:6 "melt in fear." In other instances, however, these emendations are unwarranted, e.g., Micah 7:4 "their" instead of "your"; 7:12 "to Egypt" instead of "and cities of." It was, therefore, a pleasant surprise to find that in the translation of Judges 5 no use was made of the many suggested emendations.

Compared with the colloquial character of modern speech, the translators of the RSV preserved dignity of language. It makes the version suitable for pulpit reading and qualifies it as a worthy successor of the KJV.

The New American Standard Bible

Compared with the KJV, the textual basis of the NASB is widened in agreement with Kittel's *Biblia Hebraica* and Nestle's Greek New Testament. In so far the NASB is a real improvement over the KJV reaping the benefits of ongoing study of the Bible and its languages. It shows, e.g., in the use of "instruction" instead of "law" in Isaiah 1:10; of "bloodshed" instead of "blood" in Isaiah 1:15. The translation "kidnapped" in Genesis 40:15 is unequalled by any other translation. Genesis 41:38 "divine spirit" is best understandable in the mouth of an Egyptian. "Roundabout ways" in Judges 5:6, just as "warriors" in 5:13 and "reached out for" in 5:21 are correct and clear translations. So are Joel 1:18 "wander aimlessly" and 1:20 "they pant for Thee." The translation of Philippians 1:9-11 is more exact than the rendering of the other versions.

However "very much better" in Philippians 1:23 and "to remain on," in the flesh, namely, are awkward. "Have this attitude in yourselves" is literal but is stilted in English. So is the translation of Philippians 1:27-30, and therefore unclear. Hebrews 1:1 "in many portions" is unclear; "if indeed God is one" is a literalistic rendering which obscures the meaning "since God is one."

The New International Version

Among the chapters studied, Genesis 40 and 41 were most appreciated. Genesis 40:15,16 are a real improvement; 41:12 has the best rendering of the four versions; Genesis 41:21 is somewhat free but to the point. The translation of Isaiah 7:9 "if you do not stand firm in your faith, you shall not stand at all" brings out the play on words of the original. The Assyrian onslaught described in Isaiah 8:7-9 is vivid and picturesque. "Gloat over me" and "I will see her downfall" in Micah 7:8 are good modern translations. "All who live in distant places" instead of "who cut corners of the hair" come close to the KJV. So does "virgin" in Isaiah 7:14.

The NIV has a beauty of its own because of its clarity and its freshness of expression.

There is, however, another side to the coin, that, namely, the translation is rather free or too free.

Examples are "cleansed" in Isaiah 1:6; "field of melons" in Isaiah 1:13; "evil assemblies" of Isaiah 1:13; "impurities" instead of "dross" Isaiah 1:25, "ships of Tarshish" is rendered "every trading ship" in Isaiah 2:16. "Put my trust in Him" of Isaiah 8:7 is not exactly the same as "to wait for" of the original. "Spiritists" in Isaiah 8:19 is too modernistic and incorrect; "bears my name" in Jeremiah 7:10 is a loss in comparison to "which is called by my name" of the other versions.

As to the New Testament translation, the same can be said of the NIV's translation. There are good and clear renderings, e.g., Romans 3:30 "through the same faith"; Romans 5:12-18 is a very transparent rendering; Philippians 1:22 is

an excellent expression of the dialogue style; but there is also an unnecessary freedom with the words or texts: Romans 1:16 "for the gentile" instead of "for the Greek"; Romans 2:15 "the requirements of the law" instead of "the work of the law"; Romans 3:20 *ou pasa sarx* (no flesh) rendered by "no one." Romans 4:11 "he received circumcision as a sign and seal" instead of "he received the sign of circumcision as a seal of." Philippians 1:18 "But what does it matter? The important thing is" as rendering of *Ti gar; Plen* is rather periphrastic.

The NIV, as a deputy remarked, tends too much to bring out the interpretation of a word or verse in the translation of it.

Considerations

1. General Synod New Westminster 1971 stated "on the ground of the report of the committee that no valid reasons have been adduced why the RSV should be declared unacceptable for use by the churches" (Acts, Article 33, Recommendation 2).

Synod reappointed the Committee on the Revision of the RSV with the mandate, among others, "to continue with their work of checking the RSV and to pass on also their own criticism of same." This work has gone on now for more than ten years.

2. The present committee received from the last Synod Coaldale 1977, a broadened mandate "to make a comparative study of the New American Standard Bible and the New International Version with the Revised Standard Version and the King James Version in order to determine which one translation can be positively recommended for use by the churches . . ." The committee understands this mandate this way: that *one* modern translation should be recommended. The question, therefore, is now: did our study of the NASB and the NIV result in a preference of one of these modern translations above the RSV? You will understand that on the basis of our comparative study our answer is negative. This negative answer is *not* based on the fact that the NIV uses "You" as address for the persons of the Trinity instead of "Thou." The committee feels that this use should not be a factor in the choice of a translation since the original languages do not make this distinction and it may be expected that sooner or later all modern translations will change over from "Thou" to "You."

This negative answer is *not* based *either* on the notion that the NASB and the NIV must be qualified as unscriptural translations and that the RSV would be perfect. The study of the four versions has made it once more clear that something like a perfect or near-perfect translation does not exist. Synod 1977, in its quest for a positive recommendation, cannot have meant that one of the translations should be qualified as near-perfect. The churches do not authorize any specific translations, but, for the sake of a desired uniformity, express a preference for a particular translation.

3. *The King James Version* has become obsolete because of the progress in textual criticism and of changes in the English language. *The New American Standard Bible*, though close to the RSV in acknowledging modern research, is not to be preferred above the RSV. The translation of the NASB is often too literal to be lucid and clear and it does not render itself suitable for liturgical use. Although the *New International Version* uses clear and contemporary English, the so-called dynamic equivalent manner of translation makes the version too free for use in the pulpit. This is sometimes aggravated by a lack of footnotes.

As far as the *Revised Standard Version* is concerned, the committee likes to make the following remarks:

- a. Previous synods left the use of the RSV in the freedom of the churches. Many churches do use the RSV in worship services and catechism instruction. The committee feels that continuity in the use of a Bible translation is

a good thing and that for that reason there must be strong arguments to switch over to another modern version.

- b. The RSV recommends itself as a scholarly word for word translation. Its more than necessary use of the ancient versions, especially in the translation of the Old Testament prophets, is to a certain extent balanced by the meticulous footnotes.

Moreover the letter of Dr. Bruce M. Metzger gives reason to expect improvement in this respect in the next edition.

- c. The second edition of the translation of the New Testament in the RSV showed an increased use of the majority Greek text. In this respect the letter of Dr. Metzger gives reason for confidence with regard to a third edition.
- d. The English of the RSV is dignified and best suited for liturgical use.
- e. Of all the modern versions the RSV has received the broadest acceptance on the North American continent.

Recommendations

On the basis of its mandate and of a comparative study of the King James Version, the Revised Standard Version, the New American Standard Bible and the New International Version the committee recommends that Synod decides:

- i, 1a. to use the Revised Standard Version for the Scripture quotations in the linguistic modernization of the Creeds and the Liturgical Forms as much as possible.
- 1b. to recommend to the churches, for the sake of desired uniformity, to use this translation in the worship services and for catechism instruction.

Ground

The Revised Standard Version, though not the most modern translation, renders the Bible text in a dignified and contemporary English which agrees with the character of our worship services, creeds and forms and also with the teaching ministry in the catechism instruction.

- II. To leave it in the freedom of the churches to use the King James Version, the New American Standard Bible or the New International Version, if the acceptance of the Revised Standard Version meets with insurmountable objections.

Grounds

- a. The use of one and the same Bible Version, though desirable, is not an ordinance of God nor a rule of the Church Order.
- b. The question which version should be used by the churches has been a controversial point within the churches for decades. To make the use of one particular version binding does not solve the controversy and does certainly not promote peace and unity in and among the churches.

Respectfully submitted
J. Faber,
H.M. Ohmann, Convener,
L. Selles, Secretary.

The fourth member of the committee, Rev. W. Huizinga, agrees with the body of the report, but could not put his signature under the considerations and recommendations of the majority of the committee. His minority considerations and recommendations are enclosed with this report.

MINORITY CONSIDERATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Rev. W. Huizinga,

Considering,

1. The committee feels that the use of "Thou" or "You" as an address for the persons of the Trinity should not be a factor in the choice of a translation since the original languages do not make this distinction and it may be expected that sooner or later all modern translations will change over from "Thou" to "You."
2. The study of the four versions has made it clear once more that a completely acceptable translation has not come as yet. This study has also taught us that none of the four versions must be qualified as unscriptural.
3. The mandate for this committee was to come to a positive recommendation of one translation. This means that the translation should receive more than a "negative" endorsement (as was done in 1971 General Synod, Article 33, Recommendation 2). With respect to this it must be said that the committee has not found any of the four translations beyond criticism.
4. The two criteria to be applied were "Faithfulness to the original text and linguistic character of the translation." Moreover, the translation to be recommended is to be used for church purposes. In applying these criteria to the four translations we found:
 - a. KJV. Linguistically it is outdated and the original text from which it translated left much to be desired. Therefore we cannot give it a positive recommendation.
 - b. RSV. Linguistically it is scholarly and sound. However, its faithfulness to the original text is the problem. Its frequent use of the ancient versions in place of the masoretic (Hebrew) text in the Old Testament and its choice of the Greek text (often shorter than that used by the NASB and NIV translators) make it weak. To recommend it positively as faithful to the original text is questionable.
 - c. NIV. Of all the translations it is one of the most faithful in using the original text. Linguistically it is clear and fresh. However, owing to its method and principles of translation, it tends to be too interpretative, and in this sense is not always as faithful to the original text as it should be.
 - d. All translations are suitable for church use.
5. The use of the one and same Bible version, though desirable, is not an ordinance of God nor a rule of the Church Order. The question which version should be used by the churches has been a controversial point by the churches for decades. To make the use of one particular version compulsory does not solve the controversy and certainly does not promote peace and unity in the churches.

Recommends on the basis of the above considerations:

1. To cease the use of the KJV in the churches unless a local church has insurmountable objections against the other three translations.
2. To leave the churches free to use any of the three modern translations which were investigated — RSV, NASB, NIV — since the application of the criteria to the modern translations could not yield a clear and unanimous endorsement of one translation. All three translations have advantages and disadvantages. Moreover, it is impossible to give a positive recommendation of any one translation, since the committee has certain objections to all translations and therefore any recommendation must be conditional.
3. To appoint a new committee on Bible Translation with the mandate:
 - a. to continue to make recommendations to the translation boards of the RSV, NIV, NASB to improve these translations.

- b. to keep the churches posted about developments in new editions of these translations.
- c. to report to the next Synod on the progress or the results of its work.
- d. to continue the comparative study of the three modern translations with an eye to new editions, with an eye to making recommendations to the translation boards and, possibly, with being able to come to a positive recommendation of one translation.
- e. to receive, invite and evaluate any submissions by the churches or church members.

APPENDIX VIII
COMMITTEE ON CORRESPONDENCE WITH CHURCHES ABROAD
REPORT TO GENERAL SYNOD, SMITHVILLE, 1980

Esteemed Brethren,

We hereby submit to you a report of the activities of the Committee on Correspondence with Churches Abroad, appointed by General Synod Coaldale 1977.

I. MANDATE

General Synod Coaldale 1977 gave our Committee the following mandate:

- a. "to maintain correspondence in accordance with the Rules of Correspondence and to do so with:
De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland;
Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika;
The Free Reformed Churches in Australia;
- b. to continue and to try to intensify the contact with the Presbyterian Church in Korea (Koryu-Pa) and to submit a report on this contact to the next General Synod;
- c. to send an invitation to sister-Churches abroad at least one year prior to the date the next General Synod is to convene;
- d. to have our Churches represented by a delegate to General Synods of sister-Churches abroad, if invited, and when desirable and feasible;
- e. to inform the Churches from time to time about that which is of interest in their correspondence with Churches abroad" (Acts 1977, Article 108).

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, Article 139).

III. GENERAL ACTIVITIES

1. Declarations

- a) The following ministers of the Canadian (American) Reformed Churches, planning to travel abroad, requested and received a declaration that they are ministers in good standing in the Churches:
The Revs. M. vanBeveren and J. VanRietschoten.
- b) The following ministers of De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland visited Canada:
The Revs. D. van Houdt, L. Moes, C.J. Breen, H. Venema, Prof. H.J. Schilder, C. Stam, and W. Pouwelse.

From the Deputies of the sister-Churches in The Netherlands our Committee received for each of them a declaration that they were ministers in good standing in De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland.

2. Correspondence — miscellaneous

a) A letter was received in December 1978 from a theological student in The Netherlands requesting information about how one becomes a minister in the Canadian Reformed Churches. Information was given.

b) In cooperation with a special committee appointed in The Netherlands to commemorate the retirement of Prof. Dr. L. Doekes, our Committee sent the following telegram to Prof. Dr. L. Doekes (August 30, 1979):

“Wishing God’s continued blessings on your labour and thankful for your work also for the Canadian Reformed Churches, we invite you to visit the churches at your earliest convenience” (signed: the Committee).

The expenses for this trip were taken care of in the form of a monetary gift to the Professor and his wife. Since then our Committee has given Prof. Doekes advice on when it would be most convenient to come and which parts of the country to visit.

A later letter informed us that the trip had to be postponed for health reasons.

c) From the Deputies for Contact with the O.P.C. (April 18, 1980) we received an answer to the enquiry made by the Dutch Deputies. This response has been forwarded to the Dutch Deputies.

d) The Church at Orangeville, Ontario (no date, received on May 1, 1980) informed us that the Rev. C. Oly has been released of his ministerial service to the Church at Orangeville and has been declared eligible for call.

e) From the Deputies for Contact with the O.P.C. (June 4, 1980) we received a letter informing us that the O.P.C. maintains the same fraternal relations with the Koryu-Pa and the Hap Dong (for more information on this matter see that part of the Report dealing with Korea and the enclosure).

3. Acts — Yearbook

a) As soon as the Acts of General Synod, Coaldale, 1977, were received (April 1978) a sufficient number of copies were sent to the Deputies on Correspondence of our sister-Churches in Australia, The Netherlands, and South Africa.

b) Copies of the Yearbook of our Churches, although not an official publication of our Churches, have been forwarded to these Deputies. In this way they are kept informed about the general activities and statistics of the Churches.

4. 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 Smithville 1980. Copies of the Provisional Agenda were sent as soon as they were received.

5. Interim report

Your Committee did not submit such a report since there were not sufficient matters of interest in the correspondence with the Churches Abroad to warrant such a report.

IV. THE FREE REFORMED CHURCHES OF AUSTRALIA

1. Correspondence

a) The *correspondence* with the Free Reformed Churches of Australia has been conducted according to the instructions the Committee received from General Synod Coaldale 1977.

b) Pending the publication of the Acts of General Synod Coaldale, 1977, the

Free Reformed Churches were informed about the main decisions of this Synod and the appointment and mandate of the new Committee on Correspondence with Churches Abroad.

- c) The *Interim Report* was received of a meeting held between representatives of the *Presbyterian Reformed Church and the Free Reformed Churches of Australia*. The interim report concluded that "the P.R.C. wants to be a Church based on the Word of God and although there are differences between them and us, and we must not gloss over them, we have the duty to seek unity in Christ, according to John 17." More decisions were deemed necessary in order to settle the differences and come closer to each other.
- d) The *Provisional Agenda for Synod 1978* of the Free Reformed Churches in Australia was received. Our Committee extended the greetings of the Canadian Reformed Churches to that Synod and wished them the blessings and guidance of the Lord.
- e) We received the *report from the Australian Deputies for Correspondence with Overseas Sister-Churches to Synod 1978* of the Free Reformed Churches in Australia, held at Launceston in 1978.

From this report the following matters can be noted:

- i. *In general* it was reported "that there had been good and fruitful contact with those overseas churches which have official correspondence with the Free Reformed Churches."
- ii. Regarding the *correspondence with the Presbyterian Church in Korea* it was reported that a letter was received from the Fraternal Relations Committee of the Presbyterian Church in Korea, stating that the official correspondence with the Australian Churches, initiated by Synod Albany 1975 was highly valued. However, the deputies of our Australian sister-Churches encountered some difficulties in the actual correspondence with Korea because:
 - The Australian deputies informed the Korean deputies about "several matters but no response has been forthcoming regarding correspondence regulations." Australian deputies also sent best wishes for the September 1976 Korean Synod. However a copy of the Acts or Minutes was requested but not received.
- iii. Regarding the correspondence with the *Canadian Reformed Churches* the report mentions that there has been "fruitful" contact with the Canadian sister-Churches. The main content of the correspondence was "an exchange of facts relating to church life and contacts outside the church." The report mentions the main decisions from the Acts of Toronto 1974. Considerable attention is given to the decision to recognize the Orthodox Presbyterian Church as a faithful Church of our Lord Jesus Christ as confessed in Article 29 of the Belgic Confession. Deputies of our Australian sister-Churches express the opinion that the possibility to come to the above decision can be gratefully acknowledged.

2. Acts of Synod, Launceston, 1978

The Synod 1978 of the Free Reformed Churches in Australia met from June 3rd to June 12th, 1978. We would like to mention the following decisions that were taken:

- a. Synod adopted a list of 24 "*Acceptable hymns*" which can be used in the worship services of the Free Reformed Churches. The deputies Church book are instructed to provide the churches with a publication of the six "Bible Hymns" which are recommended to the churches to be tested in the worship services for a trial period until the next Synod.

The deputies are instructed to *develop contact with the Canadian*

deputies so that optional cooperation may be achieved, and to request the Canadian deputies to delete from the *Book of Praise* "those hymns which because of the objections brought forward are not suitable to be used in the worship services."

- b. Concerning the *Training for the Ministry* the Synod decided not to appoint deputies for the support of *Korean theological students* and to instruct the deputies for correspondence with foreign sister-churches to ask in Korea for more information about church life in general and about the College and Seminary in particular.

In connection with the training of their own students for the ministry, Synod decided to instruct the new deputies to collect and publish more information about the possibilities, conditions and required qualifications for study in Theology, either in The Netherlands or in Canada.

- c. The Synod adopted *rules for correspondence with the Presbyterian Church of Korea*. They are substantially the same as our own adopted rules for correspondence except the *provision for prior consultation* "previous to making any amendments or additions to confessional standards, church orders or liturgical forms."

In our opinion this rule will prove to be totally unworkable in view of the difficulty of communication with the Korean churches.

- d. *Regarding Bible Translations*, the Synod decided to appoint new deputies with the instruction to contact the translators of the *updated King James Version* to be published by Thomas Nelson Inc. of Nashville, Tennessee and to obtain further information on this version and also to evaluate this translation when published, in comparison with the Revised Standard Version. The evaluation of the N.A.S.B. will be abandoned.

- e. Regarding the contacts with the *Presbyterian Reformed Church Synod* decides not to appoint new deputies to continue talks with the P.R.C. on the ground that "the reported meeting in Adelaide has brought to light considerable differences and misunderstandings regarding the interpretation of the Confession and in such a nature that contact which aims at unity is not possible at this stage." An appeal will be sent to the Presbyterian Reformed Church to "rectify their distortion of our position and thereby to point out then where we believe they misunderstand the Reformed doctrine."

- f. Some initial contacts are established with the *Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia*.

- g. From the *Yearbook 1978*, included in these Acts it can be concluded that the membership of the Free Reformed Churches totaled 1776 members in three congregations, and this is an increase of 147 members since the 1975 Yearbook (1629).

3. Conclusion

From the correspondence and the Acts we may gratefully conclude that the Free Reformed Churches in Australia desire to be faithful to God's Word and the Church Order.

4. Recommendation

On the basis of the above, the Committee recommends to Synod to continue the correspondence with the Free Reformed Churches in accordance with the adopted rules.

V. DE GEREFORMEERDE KERKEN IN NEDERLAND

1. Correspondence

- a) After Synod Coaldale 1977 the Dutch sister-Churches were informed about

- certain matters pertaining to our relations with them. Included in this communication were the decisions on the Presbyterian Church in Korea and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.
- b) In response to another letter from "the sixteen persons in The Netherlands" (see our report to Synod Coaldale 1977, section 5.2), the Committee informed them that Synod had rejected their request, namely, to sever correspondence with the Dutch sister-Churches.
 - c) The Committee received the provisional agenda of the General Synod Groningen-Zuid 1978. Best wishes were extended through our delegate.
 - d) In light of the mandate of our Committee and the invitation of the Dutch sister-Churches, the Committee delegated the Rev. M. van Beveren to attend certain sessions of the Synod of Groningen-Zuid 1978. The Dutch deputies were informed of this decision and the Committee supplied the Rev. M. van Beveren with the proper credentials.
 - e) From a letter sent to us by the Dutch deputies we noted that some misunderstanding still exists regarding our rules for correspondence. Whereas the Dutch sister-churches have pledged themselves to prior *consultation* regarding changes and/or additions to the confessions, the Church Order and the liturgical forms, our rules do not contain such a clause. We have pledged to express ourselves only on the acceptability of such changes and/or additions once they are adopted. The Dutch deputies were reminded of this basic difference in our respective rules for correspondence.
 - f) A copy of a letter that was sent by the Dutch deputies (April 1978) to the Interchurch Relations Committee of the Christian Reformed Church was received. It expressed agreement with the Appeal sent by the Canadian Reformed Churches to the Christian Reformed Churches and disagreement with regard to the Christian Reformed position regarding De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (syn.).
 - g) The Dutch deputies asked us (May 16, 1979) "whether or not your committee is in favour of our getting in touch with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church right now . . . ?" This request was referred to the Committee for Contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and has since been answered in the affirmative.
 - h) We received a copy of a brochure published by the Dutch deputies called *For the Sake of True Ecumenicity*. It sets forth the objections of our sister-Churches to the Reformed Ecumenical Synod.
 - i) We have received notification of the upcoming General Synod of our Dutch sister-Churches to be held as of April 1981 in Arnhem. An invitation to send a delegate from the Canadian Reformed Churches was included.

2. Acts of General Synod Groningen-Zuid 1978

Among the decisions that were made by this Synod we mention the following:

- a) Synod decided to lower the age for retirement of professors at the *Theological College* at Kampen from 70 to 65 years. Rev. M.K. Drost was appointed lecturer of missiology to take the place of Rev. D.K. Wielenga who retired in 1976.
- b) After a lengthy discussion on *Women's voting rights*, it was decided to uphold the decision of General Synod Arnhem 1930 not to grant the women of the congregation the right to take part in the voting for office-bearers.
- c) Several sessions of Synod resulted in the adoption of a revised *Church Order*.
- d) Several *forms* were revised and adopted by Synod, namely, the Forms for: the Baptism of Infants, the Baptism of Adults, Public Profession of Faith,

Discipline over those adults who, having been baptized, have not professed their faith, and the Subscription Forms for office-bearers. Synod decided to extend the term for the testing of the new wording of the Apostles' Creed, the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism and several forms and prayers to January 1, 1980; the term for testing the revised Psalms and Hymns was extended to January 1, 1983.

- e) *Deputies for Correspondence with Churches Abroad* had reported to Synod that in their many international contacts it appeared that the rule made by Synod Berkel en Rodenrijs 1952 governing fellowship with sister-Churches was no longer sufficient. Synod Berkel en Rodenrijs had restricted such fellowship with other churches to correspondence (in accordance with adopted rules). Deputies now requested a more flexible approach with a view to certain churches which could be recognized as sister-Churches were it not for their membership in certain groups of churches (e.g., Reformed Ecumenical Synod). Several examples of such churches abroad were cited.

With regard to these churches Synod decided to open the possibility that the "provisional relationship of Ecclesiastical Contact" can be offered to them. It should be noted that in this decision one of the judgments of Synod was "that the decisions of Synod Coaldale 1977 of the Canadian Reformed Churches re: 'Ecclesiastical Contact' can rightly serve as a rule for temporary ecclesiastical contact so that thereby we may come to church correspondence" (Acts, Article 139, p. 61). Also Synod's advisory committee was of the opinion that the Canadian Reformed Churches had given "an essential contribution to the solution of the problems at hand" (Acts, p. 534).

The rules for *Ecclesiastical Contact* adopted by our sister-Churches show striking similarities to the rules adopted by General Synod Coaldale 1977 (Acts, Article 91, III).

- f) Another decision of Synod was to instruct Deputies
- i. to publish a *brochure* explaining the objections to the Reformed Ecumenical Synod to be distributed among the churches abroad;
 - ii. to consult with the sister-Churches about the preparation of a "*Reformed International Synod*";
 - iii. to propose to the next General Synod a good *English alternative* to express the relationship with churches according to the rules of correspondence, since the term "correspondence" is often misunderstood in English speaking countries.
- g) Rev. M. van Beveren was cordially received as the delegate of the Canadian Reformed Churches. He attended sessions from May 24th till June 6th and received the opportunity to take part in the discussions on matters of mutual interest.

Synod judged that the *Canadian Reformed Churches* had been faithful to the Reformed Confessions and that they had maintained the ecclesiastical correspondence according to the adopted rules.

Much appreciation was expressed for the Appeal of our churches forwarded to the Christian Reformed Church. After its favourable judgment regarding the Ecclesiastical Contact of our churches with the *Orthodox Presbyterian Church*. Synod requested its deputies to ask our churches to keep them informed about the progress and fruits of this Ecclesiastical Contact and instructed the deputies that they themselves, if possible, try to seek contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

Synod also requested its deputies to consult with the deputies of our churches about a possible Reformed International Synod, and, with a view

to such a Synod, to request our churches to establish correspondence with the Korean Presbyterian Church as soon as possible.

h) Synod decided to continue the correspondence with *Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke* in Suid-Afrika in accordance with the adopted rules.

i) Synod decided to continue the correspondence with the *Free Reformed Churches of Australia*. Those churches were requested to keep their Netherlands sister-Churches informed about the discussions with the Presbyterian Reformed Church of Australia.

j) Material and spiritual support to the *Korean Presbyterian Church* highlighted the correspondence with those churches. After the considerable financial assistance given in previous years for a new Seminary building and dormitory at Pusan, Synod decided to continue to support the Seminary with \$24,000 annually plus \$3,000 per year for its library, and to support the publication of *The Reformed Faith* with \$8,500 annually.

In 1977 Prof. Dr. J. Van Bruggen of Kampen gave guest-lectures at the Seminary. It was again decided to allow one of the professors of the College at Kampen to give lectures in Pusan.

Deputies for Correspondence received authorization to send one or two from their midst to visit the Korean Churches again.

Upon the request of the Korean Presbyterian Church, Synod expressed itself in favour of sending two missionary-professors to teach at the Seminary in Pusan. That decision means a considerable broadening of the international support program and is intended as a strengthening of the Reformed theological instruction that is being given by the missionary-professors sent out by the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. The Deputies for Correspondence were instructed to look for capable persons who could be recommended to the Board of Trustees of the Seminary for appointment. Upon their arrival in Korea the missionary-professors are to become members of a Korean congregation. The financial responsibilities for them, however, will rest with the Netherlands sister-Churches.

In 1977 our sister-churches received a copy of the revised Form of Government in the Korean language. It was reported to Synod that a translation was not yet available.

k) Synod decided to continue to support the *Churches of Oost-Sumba/Savu* financially. It was further decided to instruct the Deputies for Correspondence to send a missionary-lecturer for the instruction of future evangelists on a basis similar to the one adopted for missionary-professors in Korea.

l) Synod decided to establish ecclesiastical fellowship (*kerkelijkte gemeenschap*) with the *Igreja Presbiteriana Evangélica do São Paulo*. Consultations on how this fellowship could be practiced still need to be held. This church is very small (eight families) and consists of Koreans living in Brazil; for several years they had contact with the missionaries of our Netherlands sister-Church at Assen. The confessions of that Brazilian church are the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Westminster Catechisms.

It is to be noted that Synod did not speak of "correspondence" with this church but of "ecclesiastical fellowship."

m) Synod renewed the mandate of its deputies for Correspondence with Churches Abroad: to seek contact with other churches whenever they would see a possibility for correspondence and to prepare the realization of it in accordance with the adopted rules. That broad mandate explains the many international contacts of those deputies.

Synod judged that the decision of the National Synod 1976 of *De Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid-Africa* (the so-called *Dopper-kerken*) to discontinue the correspondence with the synodical Reformed Churches in The

Netherlands "deserve the Christian appreciation and approval of this Synod." It was decided to continue the contact with this church.

Close contacts were reported with *The Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ireland*, *The Free Church of Scotland* and *The Reformed Church in Japan*. Synod judged that further investigations were necessary before "ecclesiastical fellowship" or "ecclesiastical contact" could be established.

The Deputies for Correspondence had proposed to acknowledge *The Reformed Presbyterian Church, Second Presbytery, in Taiwan* as sister-Church and to provide assistance in the amount of up to fl. 30,000.00 annually. Synod, however, concluded that such a decision would require closer scrutiny of the history of that church.

Further investigation was also recommended with regard to *The Dutch Reformed Church of Sri Lanka*.

Contacts with the following churches were still in an early stage: *The Presbyterian Church of America*, *The Presbyterian Church of the United States* and *The Igreja Presbiteriana Conservadora do Brasil*.

3. Evaluation

As mentioned in the foregoing, General Synod Groningen-Zuid 1978 adopted a revised Church Order and revised Forms for the Baptism of Infants, the Baptism of Adults, Public Profession of Faith and a new Form of Discipline for those adults who have not professed their faith.

Your Committee, in accordance with the Rules for Correspondence, has scrutinized the above Church Order and Forms, and *declares* that it considers them to be in accordance with the Holy Scriptures and in harmony with Reformed church polity.

4. Observation

With regard to the establishing of a "Reformed International Synod" as mentioned by Synod Groningen, it is to be observed that until now no communication has been received and no consultation has taken place. Consequently, your Committee refrains from making recommendations on this matter at this time.

5. Conclusion

From the correspondence and the Acts of General Synod Groningen-Zuid 1978 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.

6. Recommendation

On the basis of the above, the Committee recommends to Synod to continue the correspondence with De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland in accordance with the adopted rules.

VI. DIE VRYE GEREFORMEERDE KERKE IN SUID-AFRIKA

1. Correspondence

- a) Shortly after the closing of General Synod 1977 a letter was sent to deputies for correspondence with churches abroad of Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke in South Africa. In this letter the South African sister-Churches were informed about some of the decisions of General Synod Coaldale 1977.
- b) On behalf of the Canadian Reformed Churches greetings were sent to South Africa on the occasion of Synod Kaapstad 1978.
- c) In a letter dated March 27, 1978, deputies of Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke

expressed their gratitude for the decision of Synod Coaldale 1977 to continue the correspondence. They also advised us in this letter that Synod Kaapstad 1978 would meet earlier than originally planned. They gave us some information about the agenda for Synod.

- d) Deputies in South Africa were brought up to date regarding the state of our discussions with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, in a letter dated January 16th, 1979.
- e) Upon our request we received copies of the Acts of Synod Kaapstad 1978 with apologies for not sending them sooner. Deputies were of the understanding that they were to be mailed directly by the printer.
- f) We also received the proposed agenda for Synod Pretoria, to be convened on April 11, 1980, and a copy of the report to this Synod by the deputies for correspondence with churches abroad.
- g) Deputies in South Africa were informed of the time and place of convening of General Synod 1980 of the Canadian Reformed Churches, in a letter dated May 7, 1980.
- h) Our committee received a "Brief Report" on the Synod of Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke, held at Pretoria on April 11, 12, 14, and 15, 1980.
- i) The official Acts of Synod Pretoria 1980 are not available to us yet at the time of preparation of this report.

2. Acts of Synod Pretoria 1977

- a) This Synod consisted of delegates of all three churches. Delegates were present from Capetown, Johannesburg-Witwatersrand and Pretoria.
- b) A considerable amount of time was taken up by the discussion of five appeal cases.
- c) The deputies for the mission work are instructed to continue the contact with the *Gereformeerde Kerk of Drachten*, The Netherlands and to seek input from the three Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke in South Africa, in order to come to an official agreement of cooperation with the church at Drachten concerning the mission work in South Africa.
- d) Because of time limitations, the reports of deputies for correspondence with churches abroad, deputies for contact with the government and the deputies for revision of "visitation questions" could not be discussed. The reports are referred back to the deputies and the delegates are requested to send their comments on these reports to the respective deputies within two months. Deputies themselves are instructed to continue their work and their mandates remain unchanged.
- e) With gratitude the Synod takes note of a letter from deputies for correspondence with churches abroad of the Canadian Reformed Churches, containing the best wishes for Synod.

3. Acts of Synod Kaapstad 1978

- a) Synod Kaapstad 1978 was the longest in the history of the Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke. This Synod also had to deal with a number of appeal cases.
- b) During the discussion of the report of the deputies for correspondence Synod decided to request the deputies for correspondence with foreign churches of the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, to forward as soon as possible, a copy of their report to Synod Groningen-Zuid 1978.
This request is made, in order that Synod can discuss the matters concerning contact with the churches that call themselves: *Die Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid-Afrika.*"
- c) Synod received a request from Synod Groningen-Zuid via the Dutch deputies, asking for an opinion of Synod Kaapstad 1978 on the idea of

sending a delegation of two deputies from The Netherlands in order to have verbal contact with Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke and Die Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid-Afrika. Synod "feels positive" about this and decides to extend an official invitation in order that they can have discussions with the committees appointed by Synod Kaapstad and deputies of Die Gereformeerde Kerk in Suid-Afrika.

- d) During the discussion of the report of the deputies for correspondence with foreign churches, Synod observed that deputies because of the small number of churches in the confederation and the small committee for correspondence, were unable to completely live up to the adopted *rules for correspondence* with churches abroad. Synod decided to give the deputies for correspondence the mandate to review the rules for correspondence with churches abroad. While keeping the principal starting point of the rules, the committee is instructed to take a good look at the practical application of these rules and to report on their findings to the next Synod.
- e) Deputies are appointed by Synod to continue the efforts to try and get an agreement of cooperation with the *Gereformeerde Kerk at Drachten*, The Netherlands, concerning mission work in Mamelodi, South Africa.
- f) A proposal from the church at Pretoria to have a Synod every other year is accepted by Synod, so instead of having a Synod every year it will now become a biennial event.

4. Synod Pretoria 1980

At the time of preparation of this report, your deputies for correspondence with churches abroad have not received the Acts of Synod, held at Pretoria in April 1980. However, we did receive the report of the South African deputies for correspondence with foreign churches to Synod Pretoria and the "Brief Report" on that Synod.

Because of the importance of some of the matters reported, in relation to matters on the agenda for our own Synod at Smithville, we thought it was expedient to report some of the "highlights" in these reports. Please bear in mind that they are not gleaned from the Acts, but from reports accepted by Synod.

a) Report Deputies Correspondence

From the report of Deputies for Correspondence with Foreign Churches to Synod Pretoria we report the following:

- i. Correspondence was maintained in accordance with the adopted rules with the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, the Canadian Reformed Churches and the Free Reformed Churches of Australia.
- ii. In accordance with the decision by Synod Kaapstad 1978, the Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke have informed the *Korean Presbyterian Church* about the origin and present status of Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke in South Africa.

Deputies pointed out to the fraternal relations committee of the Korean Presbyterian Church that "Die Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika" have cut the ties with the "liberal" Dutch churches. However, Die Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika still maintain their membership in the Reformed Ecumenical Synod.

Yet a correspondent relationship has developed between the Korean Presbyterian Church and Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika.

The Korean Presbyterian Church has cut the ties with the Reformed Ecumenical Synod. Deputies ask in their report: Does this mean there is a change in attitude in regard to the RES now? Have the objections the Korean Presbyterian Church has against the RES been

discussed with Die Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika? Deputies would like to receive some "clarity" regarding these questions.

- iii. The South African deputies for correspondence have studied the letter the *Canadian Reformed Committee for Contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church* has sent to the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations of the O.P.C. They conclude with the remark that deputies are of the opinion that in this contact between the deputies of the Canadian Reformed Churches and those of the O.P.C. points are discussed that are of great importance for the Scriptural realization of unity in doctrine and church government. As long as there is no agreement on these points there can hardly be "unity of the true faith" and hence there can be no union. That in spite of this the Orthodox Presbyterian Church is qualified as a "true church" according to the confession is according to the South African deputies a point that requires further explanation.
- iv. Deputies for correspondence with foreign churches in South Africa find it very difficult if not impossible to live up to the *third rule for correspondence* to "consult beforehand" regarding proposed changes in Confession, Church Order and Liturgical Forms. They propose to Synod to consider to delete the stipulation "beforehand" in this rule.
- v. Synod is also requested by deputies to thoroughly discuss and judge whether the *triangular relationship* between the Korean Presbyterian Church, Die Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika and the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland is in accordance with the fifth rule for correspondence to be "responsible to each other concerning correspondence with third parties."

b) Brief Report Pretoria 1980

- i. Synod 1980 of Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke was held at Pretoria on April 11, 12, 14, and 15, 1980. Delegates were present from all three churches.
- ii. Two delegates from the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, Rev. J. Bomhof and Rev. H.J. de Vries, are welcomed as members of Synod in an advisory capacity.
- iii. The Brief Report does state that the report of the *deputies for correspondence* with foreign churches was accepted by Synod but it gives no particulars. The report had asked Synod to judge whether the correspondence could be continued with: De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, the Canadian Reformed Churches and the Free Reformed Churches in Australia. We have not received official confirmation at this time about the continuation of the correspondence with the Canadian Reformed Churches but we do expect a letter shortly.
- iv. A report from the *deputies for melodies* for the so-called "unsingable 19 Psalms" is accepted with a few changes. Deputies are instructed to prepare and distribute a list of Psalms that have to be sung with a different melody or rhythm. They also have to inform the organists of the decisions of Synod.
- v. A proposed agreement of cooperation in mission matters with *the church at Drachten*, The Netherlands, is adopted by Synod. It will now be forwarded to the church at Drachten with the request to advise them as soon as possible regarding the acceptability of the proposals.

5. Conclusion

From the correspondence and the Acts received, we may conclude with gratitude that the stabilization of church life in South Africa has continued

and that Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika have shown that they desire to be faithful to God's Word and to abide by the Reformed Creeds and Church Order.

6. Recommendation

On the basis of the above the Committee may recommend with thankfulness to continue the correspondence with Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika in accordance with the adopted rules.

VII. THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN KOREA (Koryu-Pa)

1. A Review of Past Developments

- a) *General Synod New Westminster 1971* charged your Committee "to examine and evaluate whether there are any obstacles which would prevent the Churches from recognizing the Presbyterian Church in Korea as a true Church of the Lord Jesus Christ and from entering into correspondence with this Church" (Acts, Article 47, Recommendation 6, b).

In pursuing this mandate the Committee learned that the Presbyterian Church in Korea was in the process of dealing with changes to its Confession and Church Order. The Committee was unsuccessful in discovering what these proposed changes entailed and informed General Synod Toronto 1974 that it "could not finish its examination and evaluation as it was charged to do by Synod New Westminster 1971" (Acts, Article 47, sub. b). The Committee also added an enclosure to its report to Synod 1974 which gave a lengthy historical review of the Presbyterian Church in Korea.

- b) *General Synod Toronto 1974* charged this Committee "to continue the contact with the Presbyterian Church in Korea (Koryu-Pa), and to submit a report on this contact to the next General Synod" (Acts, Article 140, F, 2, b).

In continuing to fulfill its mandate, the Committee learned, in a letter dated September 3, 1977, what changes had been made in the Westminster Confession of Faith and stated that it had no objections to these changes. As for the changes relating to the Form of Government, the Committee was informed that "we are unable to provide you with the changes in our Form of Government at this time because they have not yet been adopted. While many proposals have been made, nothing concrete has emerged from the discussions" (Letter — Korean Fraternal Relations Committee).

Subsequent to this your Committee learned that the Rev. D. DeJong, minister of the Church at Edmonton, had been approached by the Canadian Reformed World Relief Fund and the Edmonton Korea Committee to travel to Korea and to clear up certain difficulties regarding an orphanage that was receiving financial support. He offered his services to the Committee and we authorized him to contact the Fraternal Relations Committee of the Presbyterian Church in Korea. Since his trip occurred in October of 1977 and General Synod Coaldale met in November of 1977, your Committee was unable to evaluate and incorporate his findings in its official report. The result was that once again our report was incomplete.

- c) *General Synod Coaldale 1977* received our report and benefited from the report of the Rev. D. DeJong, who in the meantime had returned from Korea. It contained the following information,

Re: Proposed Changes in Form of Government concerning Examinations.

The aim of the Seminary is that theological students be examined by the Seminary instead of by the General Assembly, and to avoid a "licentiate": after a study of 3 years at the Seminary and 2 years assisting a minister of a congregation the student should be examined by the Presbytery ("peremptory examination").

Re: Proposed Changes Form of Government concerning Pastors, Elders, and Deacons(-nesses).

Since the Presbyterian Church has two kinds of pastors (Pulpit supply pastors for one year and normal pastors regularly for life), a study committee is at work to combine the two into one category of pastors.

The term for elders is now for life. The aim is that after 3 years the congregation may or can vote for reconfirmation. The elders do not like that system.

Last year the General Assembly made a decision (still to be worded in the Form of Government) re Deaconesses. There now is a one-year term for lady deacons. The purpose is to change this for a longer term like for elders (the lady deacons are not ruling but serving in work of mercy). Women of 50 years may be, selectively, elected for life. Details are yet to be worked out. They are thinking of retirement at 70 (as with the elders now). There are two kinds of man-deacons, (i) one-year term deacons (not ordained) and (ii) deacons for life (ordained).

No official confirmation of these proposed changes was received by the Committee. Synod charged the Committee to "continue and try to intensify the contact with the Presbyterian Church in Korea and submit a report to the next General Synod" (Acts, Article 108, Recommendation 4).

Having received the above mentioned mandate, your Committee has been especially concerned to discover whether the proposed changes in the Form of Government were ever officially adopted. Three times in two years (March 30, 1978, January 16, 1979, September 11, 1979) we have asked the Fraternal Relations Committee of the Presbyterian Church in Korea for information in this matter; were the changes adopted or not. We received no reply to our inquiries. In fact we received no reply to any of our letters. On August 1, 1979 the Fraternal Relations Committee sent us a letter informing us of their 29th General Assembly to be held on September 25-28, 1979, at Seo (West) Church in Taegue, Korea, and expressed a desire to receive our fraternal delegate or greetings. We used this occasion to wish them God's blessing over the deliberations of the Assembly and once again requested to be notified of any changes in the Form of Government. To this greeting/request, a reply has finally been received.

In his letter of May 8, 1980, Prof. P.S. Oh, on behalf of the Fraternal Relations Committee of the Korea Presbyterian Church, apologized for not answering our letters. He included a copy of the revised Form of Government which was adopted in September, 1979 by the General Assembly and ratified by the presbyteries in the spring of 1980. The only problem with our copy of the revised Form of Government is that it is in Korean and none of the members of the Committee is conversant in that language. Prof. Oh made certain suggestions regarding the translation of the document. We are currently following that up. As to the communication problem that we have had up until now, Prof. Oh states "we hope to improve better line of communication in future." We hope so.

In the meantime, we are waiting for a reliable and complete translation of the Form of Government. Once that has been received we hope to inform you of our conclusions and perhaps include certain final recommendations as well.

d) Other Relevant Information

All of this should, however, not give the impression that the only thing your Committee has done regarding Korea is write an occasional letter. On the contrary, we have been busy trying to obtain a better understanding of the ecclesiastical situation in Korea. We have also researched the whole

matter of the Union of 1960 between the Koryu-Pa and the Hap Dong, the subsequent dis-integration of that Union in 1963, the differences between the Hap Dong and the Koryu-Pa, and the relationship of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church to both. The enclosure attached to this report reveals our findings. They are as follows:

Conclusions

- a) The Union of the Hap Dong and the Koryu-Pa was hasty and ill-conceived;
- b) The Division of 1963 cannot be blamed exclusively on either the one party or the other. The blame must be equally shared;
- c) The reasons for the Division are exceedingly difficult to unearth in their entirety, although it is possible to center out the Seminary issue as a major cause and to list personal power struggles, regionalism and a host of others as lesser causes;
- d) There are no basic differences between the Hap Dong and the Koryu-Pa in either doctrine or church polity;
- e) The O.P.C. maintains the same official relationship with both the Hap Dong and the Koryu-Pa, namely fraternal relations. As individuals, the O.P.C. missionaries are officially members of the Hap Dong.

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.

In coming to these conclusions we acknowledge our indebtedness to the following persons: the *Rev. D. DeJong* who spent a considerable amount of time and effort interviewing various church leaders in Korea; the *Rev. Dr. Harvie M. Conn*, associate professor at Westminster Theological Seminary and a former missionary to Korea for 13 years, who willingly gave of his time during a busy summer lecturing at the Regent College Summer School, Vancouver, B.C.; the *Rev. Bruce F. Hunt*, a missionary for 46 years in Korea, most of those for the O.P.C., who supplied us with a valuable study on the Division of 1963 and who contributed other worthwhile information that helped clear up some misunderstandings regarding Korea.

VIII. SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

In this report we recommend that Synod decide:

1. to continue the correspondence with the Free Reformed Churches of Australia in accordance with the adopted rules;
2. to continue the correspondence with De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland in accordance with the adopted rules;
3. to continue the correspondence with Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika in accordance with the adopted rules.

IX. IN CLOSING

We had earnestly hoped to have this report out earlier, however, various developments made that impossible. Even now it is incomplete due to the Korean

matter still being under study. We shall do our utmost to bring our report to a final conclusion before the General Synod meets.

Respectfully submitted by your Committee,

August 27, 1980

E.C. Baartman,

A.C. Lengkeek,

Rev. M. van Beveren, Convener,

Rev. J. Visscher, Secretary.

COMMITTEE ON CORRESPONDENCE WITH CHURCHES ABROAD AN ADDITIONAL REPORT TO SYNOD, 1980

Esteemed Brethren,

After submitting to you our Report, dated August 27, 1980, we have received some additional correspondence that should be brought to your attention.

I. THE FREE REFORMED CHURCHES OF AUSTRALIA

Correspondence

a) We received the Report of the Deputies for Correspondence with Churches Abroad addressed to the Synod of the Free Reformed Churches to be held in Armadale, West Australia, September 1980.

From this Report the following matters can be noted:

- i) Regarding the correspondence with the *Canadian Reformed Churches*, the Report mentions the letter sent by our Deputies for Contact with the O.P.C. to that Church. It describes some of the main items dealt with at Synod Coaldale 1977. It states that the Deputies did not receive any reaction from the Canadian Reformed Churches in the matter of sending "their departing members to churches which are unacceptable for the corresponding Churches." The Deputies give no evaluation on the matter of the O.P.C. or on the items dealt with at Synod Coaldale 1977 other than to suggest that Synod continue the correspondence.
 - ii) Regarding *De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland*, the Report mentions that in letters to these Churches, Deputies "raised the subject of correspondence with the Indonesian Churches, and contacts with other churches in the world (Japan, Taiwan, Ceylon, Scotland, Ireland)." It is noted that the Rev. P. Lok (Kampen, The Netherlands) is appointed to attend Synod Armadale 1980 on behalf of the Dutch Churches.
 - iii) Regarding *Other Contacts*, the Report states that the Deputies have had some contact with the Churches in East Sumba, Japan, Taiwan, and Ireland. It adds, "The Deputies decided not to continue this correspondence before having studied the reports of the Dutch deputies who visited the respective Churches."
 - iv) Regarding the *Conclusion* of their Report, the Deputies suggest that Synod continue the existing correspondence with the:
Canadian Reformed Churches;
Reformed Churches in The Netherlands;
Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika;
Korean Presbyterian Church,
and "to instruct the Deputies to extend contact and, if possible, to prepare correspondence with other Churches which prove to be recognized as true churches in accordance with the norms of Article 29 of the Belgic Confession."
- b) On September 23, 1980, we received a letter from the Australian Deputies thanking us for the good wishes extended to the just completed Synod Armadale 1980 and expressing "the sincere wish that the Synod of your Churches may be held in a quiet and Scriptural atmosphere, under the Lord's blessing and to the well-being of the Churches. Our greetings to the delegates. We remember you in our prayers."
- c) On October 8, 1980, we received another letter from them which stated the following, "We must notify you that the Synod approved the decision of the Church council of Launceston (Tasmania) to dismiss Rev. A.H. Dekker as minister in that congregation; and stated that Rev. A.H. Dekker is now eligible

for a calling from one of the sister-Churches. You are requested to bring this decision and matter before the attention of your Churches." This has been done.

Conclusion:

This additional information is of such a nature that we can, with thankfulness, maintain our previous recommendation (see p. 6, 18, VIII, 1).

II. DE GEREFORMEERDE KERKEN IN NEDERLAND

Correspondence

On September 17, 1980, we received a letter from the Deputies of De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland which included the following information and requests:

- a) A copy of a letter that they sent to the Committee on Ecumenicity and Inter-church Relations of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (August 26, 1980) in which they "express the hope that this preliminary contact (with the Canadian Reformed Churches — JV) may under the blessing of the LORD grow into full church correspondence" and also request more detailed information about the O.P.C.
- b) They inform us that they will not be sending a delegate to the upcoming Synod of Smithville 1980 due to depleted finances.
- c) They send us a copy of the proposal that they will tender to the upcoming Synod Arnhem 1981 on the matter of the *Reformed International Conference* and they request us as Deputies to recommend to Synod Smithville 1980 that:
 - i) delegates be appointed to attend this gathering;
 - ii) that they be given the mandate to help set-up an agenda for this Conference.

They explain that they come with this request prior to Synod Arnhem 1981 in order to save time. If they wait until after Synod Arnhem has agreed and then approach the sister-Churches, this Conference could be delayed until 1983. They would like to convene it earlier.

For more details on this matter, see the appended letter.

Recommendations:

Your Committee has carefully weighed this request as found in II, c, and we come to you with the following recommendations:

1. That the Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad be authorized to send two "observers" to this Conference;
2. 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;
3. That Synod Smithville 1980 refrain from any official endorsement of this Conference due to its preliminary character and leave that up to the next Synod which will hopefully have more concrete information on which to evaluate this entire matter.

Conclusion:

This additional information is of such a nature that we can, with thankfulness, maintain our previous recommendation (see p. 11, 18, VIII, 2).

III. DIE VRYE GEREFORMEERDE KERKE IN SUID-AFRIKA

Correspondence

On September 22, 1980, we received a letter with enclosures from Die Vrye

Gereformeerde Kerke te Pretoria (G. van Renssen — praeses, H.H. Schuring — skriba) in which they state that they are trying to restore the broken bonds with Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke with which we maintain correspondence. They state that they would also like to restore the broken bonds with the Canadian Reformed Churches.

Your Deputies replied that we were indeed thankful for these developments and we expressed the hope that the existing breach would be healed. As for restoring the bond with the Canadian Reformed Churches, we informed them of the decision made by Synod Toronto 1974 (Acts, Article 57) which implies that this can only happen once this Church has restored the tie with our corresponding sister-Churches — Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid-Afrika.

IV. THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN KOREA (Koryu-Pa)

Due to the fact that we have not yet received a translated copy of the Form of Government, we have been unable to complete our mandate with regard to the Presbyterian Church in Korea (Koryu-Pa).

Recommendation:

We therefore recommend that Synod give the Committee the mandate:

- a) to evaluate the Form of Government and to pass this evaluation on to the next General Synod;
- b) to inform the Synod regarding the state of communication with these Churches;
- c) to make recommendations to the Synod regarding a future relationship with these Churches.

October 28, 1980
Respectfully submitted by your
Committee,
E.C. Baartman
A.C. Lengkeek
M. van Beveren, Convener
J. Visscher, Secretary

RE: REFORMED INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE.

Synod *decides*

to *invite*

through her deputies for correspondence with churches abroad
the sister-Churches abroad
and the churches with whom preliminary ecclesiastical contact
was established

to *send delegates*

to a constituent assembly
for the convening of a Reformed International Conference.

The *agenda* of this Constituent Assembly will contain at least the following:

1. The unity of faith as gift and mandate and its significance for
 - a. the diversity among the creeds of the churches;
 - b. the diversity among the forms of government of the churches;
 - c. the confession concerning the church;
 - d. the reflection on contacts and relations with other churches.
2. Mutual help in the execution of the missionary mandate in the missionary situation of our time.
3. Basis and name of the Reformed International Conference.

4. Meaning and authority of the judgments and conclusions of the Reformed International Conference.

5. By-laws concerning:

- method of delegation;
- frequency of meetings;
- drafting the agenda;
- method of dealing with the agenda.

The General Assemblies of the sister-Churches in Australia, Canada, Korea, Sumba, South-Africa are being asked to authorize its Committees for Fraternal Relations, a. to appoint delegates; b. to help draft the agenda of the Constituent Assembly.

ENCLOSURE — HISTORICAL REVIEW Presbyterian Church Korea HISTORICAL REVIEW OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN KOREA (Continued)

I. INTRODUCTION

In our title we have added between brackets the word "continued." We have done this because what here follows is basically a continuation of the *Historical Review* that this Committee sent to General Synod Toronto 1974. As such we do not propose to repeat most of those details. Rather we will confine ourselves to elaborating on and revising what you can find on the bottom of page 10 and the top of page 11 of that report.

II. THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH SCENE IN KOREA — GENERAL

If one were to count all of the different Protestant church bodies in Korea today, the number would be at least in the nineties. Among these bodies, the churches that call themselves "Presbyterian" amount to a minimum of *nineteen*. This was not always the case. Prior to 1945 there was only one Presbyterian Church in Korea, but by 1968 divisions and schisms had drastically changed that figure in an upward direction. Of these nineteen Presbyterian bodies at least *ten* use the same name — the Presbyterian Church of Korea — and claim to be the legal representative and continuation of the original Presbyterian Church of Korea (henceforth abbreviated as PCK).¹ Needless to say this confusion of identical names for different church bodies has led to an additional name being attached to each church in order to distinguish the one from the other, hence PCK (Koryu-Pa), PCK (Hap Dong), PCK (Tonghap or Ecumenical), etc.

The first major division in the PCK occurred in 1952 with the establishment of the PCK (Koryu-Pa or Koryo or Kosin).² This was followed by another division in the main-line PCK in 1954 which led to the formation of the Presbyterian Church of the Republic of Korea (PCROK).³ Some years later in 1959 there was another split of major proportions in the main PCK which divided that Church into two parts, namely, the pro-ecumenical, liberal influenced PCK (Ecumenical or Tonghap) and the anti-ecumenical, conservative PCK (Hap Dong or Sungdong or NAE).⁴ In 1960 a merger took place between the PCK (Koryu-Pa) and the PCK (Hap Dong).⁵ This merger lasted until 1963 when a large number of formerly Koryu-Pa churches left the united church and re-established the Koryu-Pa.

In light of our contact with the PCK (Koryu-Pa) and their request for correspondence with the Canadian Reformed Churches, it is fundamental that we have at least a *rudimentary* understanding of what led to this union between the Hap Dong and the Koryu-Pa, what caused its subsequent break-up, what bearing this has had on the Koryu-Pa especially, but also on how we must view the Hap Dong. We have underlined "rudimentary" because it is doubtful whether we will ever understand all of the factors involved in this reunion and division. Dr. Harvie M. Conn, veteran O.P.C. missionary in Korea and presently an associate Professor at Westminster Theological Seminary, remarked, when asked about the reasons for the division, "I think there were 50,000 reasons. Oh, it's complicated. We (the O.P.C. Mission) spent almost a whole year trying to study that when it happened."⁶ Nevertheless, before proceeding to un-earth some of the main causes for the division, we would like to acquaint you with some of the factors that brought about the union in the first place.

III. THE UNION OF 1960 — ITS NATURE AND ORIGIN

That there should arise a union between the Koryu-Pa and the Hap Dong would seem in certain aspects not to be surprising. They had any number of things in common: an identical confessional basis in the Westminster Standards, a similar church polity of presbyterian character, a conservative approach to

matters of theology and Bible interpretation, a resistance to involvement in ecumenical endeavours, like the WCC, etc.

Yet it is doubtful whether all of these common factors and others were adequately emphasized and carefully developed so as to lay a firm basis for a lasting union. Furthermore it is even more doubtful whether there was a real awareness at the laymen level of the outstanding differences that existed between the two groups. All of our sources characterize the union as hasty and ill conceived. To cite one, Dr. Conn remarks, "Our Mission (OPC) was not at all particularly happy with the merger, simply because we felt that it was far too quick."⁷ Rev. T. Hard, who in addition to being a missionary for the O.P.C. in Korea for over twenty years, is also on the staff of Koryu Seminary, remarked in 1963, "The union was hasty, ill planned and, unfortunately, short-lived."⁸

Part of the reason for this hasty merger on the Hap Dong side may well have been an over-reaction in light of its split the previous year — 1959 — with the Tonghap group. As a result of that split the Hap Dong lost control of a number of educational institutions, lost its seminary buildings, was cut off from receiving massive injections of foreign church aid and severed its international church ties.⁹ Bereft of all this it does not seem difficult to imagine that the Hap Dong yearned for closer ties — even union — with a body with which it had a number of basic things in common. As for other reasons, we have to admit that we remain very much in the dark as to the complete Hap Dong desire for union.

On the Koryu side, the reasons for merger are also to a certain extent unclear. Once again we can stress the common ground that they had with the Hap Dong. Besides this several other factors may have played a more or less decisive role. Just before the union the Koryu-Pa was experiencing various difficulties. There was dissension between the Kyonggi Presbytery and the General Assembly. This led in September of 1960 to the withdrawal and the formation of a separate Kyonggi Presbytery with nineteen ministers.¹⁰ Another problem just before the merger was the flare-up between Dr. Park Yun-son, President of Koryu Seminary, and the local presbytery and the Board of the Seminary. The original difficulty centered around the fact that Dr. Park had missed a morning worship service and ridden in a taxi on the Lord's Day in order to say farewell to an O.P.C. missionary and his wife, Rev. and Mrs. A. Boyce Spooner, who were returning to America. These actions, according to the presbytery, meant that Dr. Park had not paid proper heed to the observance of the Sabbath. In addition he was also suspended by the Board from his teaching position until the time that he admitted his mistake, and removed from the presidency — a position that rotated among the faculty members every year. These actions in turn led to charges and counter-charges, to power struggles, to pamphleteering, and to general discontent in the Koryu-Pa. As a direct consequence of these difficulties, one analyst states, "there arose a quick reunion movement with the Sungdong Pa" (Hap Dong).¹¹

IV. THE UNION OF 1960-1963 — ITS BASIS AND WEAKNESS

The actual reunion movement was started by the Munchang Church in Masan and spread rapidly to the presbyteries of both sides, with the result that a meeting of nineteen representatives from both churches was held at the Central Church in Taejon on October 25, 1960.¹² Out of these meetings there arose the following "Principles of Reunion" which were adopted.¹³

I. Principles for Reunion

- A. Doctrine: We accept the twelve-point doctrine which is explicitly listed in the Constitution of the PCK according to the Westminster Confession of Faith.
- B. Theology: We accept the Calvinistic Theology for our reunion.

II. Reunion Programs

- A. The Committee for Amending the Constitution would be established with five representatives from both sides
- B. In the area of church polity and Christian life, we observe regulations as a good example of worship and according to the Constitution.
- C. The newly united seminary will be under the control of the General Assembly through the Board of Directors which has equal representation from both sides.
- D. The work of both presbyteries will continue to proceed independently as it has been.
- E. Foreign missions will proceed as they have been.

The first Joint Assembly was held on December 13, 1960. At this meeting there were 364 commissioners (131 — Koryu-Pa, 233 — Sungdong Pa or Hap Dong). Han Sang-dong, an influential Koryu-Pa leader, was elected moderator and Kim Yune-chan of the Hap Dong was elected as vice-moderator.¹⁴ By common consensus the reunion was a joyous occasion.

Nevertheless, the joy soon began to evaporate. It appeared that both sides had entered the union with inherent weaknesses. On the Koryu-Pa side, there existed internal discord. There was the desire of some leaders for union based on the wrong motives. There was the ignorance of the "laity" who wanted union but who were unaware of the real issues that had separated them to begin with from the Hap Dong. Finally, there was a blind following of certain leaders.¹⁵ On the Hap Dong side, there were also problems. Infighting among their leaders was a reality too. There was the inclination of some members towards the International Council of Christian Churches (ICCC), led by the American clergyman Carl McIntire.¹⁶ There was a previous history of compromise with liberals and ecumenicals. There was a looking down on the Koryu-Pa and a high regard for themselves as being "the church," "the recognized church."¹⁷ There was finally the accusation that the Hap Dong was guilty of the misappropriation of funds.¹⁸

Still, not only were there weaknesses to be found with both parties, there were also weaknesses in the union itself. As we have indicated already, the union was hasty and as such neither side entered it having sufficiently prepared their people. Then, too, it was a union between two numerically unequal groups concentrated in different regions of the country. The Koryu-Pa had about one-third of the membership of the Hap Dong. The Koryu-Pa was concentrated in the south; whereas the Hap Dong was stronger in the north.¹⁹

It should also be mentioned that both sides entered the union with certain ecclesiastical positions which they were determined to maintain at all costs. The Hap Dong was adamant in the matter of having one seminary, in maintaining the idea of the legal succession of the PCK, and certain other elements as well, such as northern presbytery representation in the Assembly and property holdings, etc. The Koryu-Pa, on the other hand, was just as adamant in maintaining that they were the champions of reformation in the Korean church, that Koryu Seminary must continue to exist, that the Masan Presbytery keep its legal name "Kyungnam Presbytery," and certain other points relating to the Students for Christ movement, mission work in Formosa (Taiwan), etc.²⁰

Although such entrenched positions did not augur well for the future, it has been said that leaders on both sides tried hard to make the union a success.²¹ However, they failed. Why?

A host of factors seems to have been involved. The fact that the Koryu-Pa was a minority and was consistently out-numbered and out-voted by the larger Hap Dong majority seems to have been a constant irritant. Then too, charges of corruption against the majority began to fill the air. Also, the majority was suspicious of and failed to understand and accept the Students for Christ

movement as it had been started by Koryu-Pa men. In addition, the majority failed to show real interest in the missionary cause started by the Koryu-Pa.

Still, all of these issues seem to take a back seat to what was certainly the predominant difficulty and the major point of controversy, namely, the Seminary issue. Almost right from the start there seems to have been a difference of opinion and interpretation on the future of Koryu Seminary. The majority, as represented by the Hap Dong, adopted what can be called the *Tan 11* ("only one seminary") position; whereas the minority, as reflected by the Koryu-Pa, adopted the *11 Won* ("under one head") position.²² The latter position had been included in the basis of union but seems to have been open to misinterpretation.²³

As a consequence of these differences and the numerical majority of the Hap Dong men, the decision was repeatedly made to close Koryu Seminary and to strengthen the official seminary in Seoul. The 46th General Assembly of September 1961 supported this action.

In reaction to these developments, certain leaders of the old Koryu church called a meeting of the former Koryu Kyongnam (Baptong) Presbytery on October 19, 1961. It resulted in the publication of an anti-Hap Dong statement which accused them of corruption and which pointed out some major violations of the majority.

I. Concerning the seminary

- A. That the two seminaries were to be working toward gradual simplification and not to be unified into one was violated.
- B. An equal number in the Board of Trustees was not maintained.
- C. Quantity of students rather than quality was emphasized in theological education.

II. Concerning the polity

- A. The majority (Sungdong) carried out illegal actions against the minority (Koryo)
- B. They (Sungdong) persecuted the pastors and churches which encouraged the restoration of the Koryo PC.
- C. Concerning the Christian faith, they left the pure Calvinistic faith for secularism, conformity, and convenience and tried to cooperate with adulterated denominations.²⁴

The effect of this statement on the majority seems to have been minimal for in December of 1961 the Seminary Board decided to close Koryu Seminary in Pusan by accepting no new students, transferring all third year students to Seoul for their fourth and final year and bringing some noted theologians from Pusan to Seoul.²⁵

At this point many in the Koryu-Pa group felt that the majority had broken the terms of the union contract and that they were no longer under any obligation to obey the terms of the contract. On October 13, 1962, Han Sang-dong, the former Moderator of the Joint Assembly and the chairman of the Board of Directors of Koryu Seminary,²⁶ met with several other ministers and announced the full restoration of Koryu Seminary.²⁷ Subsequent to this the Board of Trustees of the Joint General Assembly Presbyterian Seminary in Seoul called an emergency meeting for November 7, 1962, to discuss the differences; however, no Koryu-Pa representatives showed up. A compromise was proposed in any case by the Hap Dong men under which Koryu Seminary was allowed to continue as a branch seminary. It would, however, hold its graduation ceremonies with the main seminary in Seoul.²⁸ On December 24, 1962, the Kyongnam Presbytery, in whose area Koryu Seminary was located, held an emergency session and went on record as being unanimously opposed to the full restoration of Koryu Seminary.²⁹

More than anything else the call for the full restoration of Koryu Seminary seems to have initiated a full-scale return to the re-establishment of the old PCK (Koryu-Pa). On August 8, 1963, the Pusan Restoration Presbytery was organized.

It was quickly followed by the Cholla Presbytery (August 12); Kyongbuk Presbytery (September 3); Kyonggi Presbytery (September 4); Kyongdong Presbytery (September 4); Chinju Presbytery (September 5); Kyongnam Presbytery (September 10).

On September 13, 1963, the 13th General Assembly of the Koryu PC (Restoration) was held in Pusan with seven presbyteries representing 445 churches and 116 ministers.³⁰ They published the following statement:³¹

1. We return to our former General Assembly (of the Koryo PC).
2. We uphold Calvinistic theology.
3. We maintain the Westminster Confession of Faith.
4. We follow the previous Constitution and Regulations of the Koryo PC before the Joint General Assembly took place (in December 1960).
5. We exert ourselves to live a sanctified life according to the Christian standard in Calvinistic theology.
6. We put forth efforts for the work of evangelism.
7. We recognize our former General Assembly in cooperation with other Christians in the nation.

They also confessed that they had been wrong in participating in the union and voted to observe a one week period of self-discipline. Finally, they decided to seek fraternal relations with the church (the former reunion Church) which they had just left.³²

One of the consequences of this restoration was that the Koryu-Pa suffered numerically. In fact, 150 congregations that had once been Koryu-Pa refused to join the re-established church.³³ Meanwhile, the PCK (NAE) which was now overwhelmingly Hap Dong, survived the defection with a total of 1,450 churches.³⁴

Up till now in our report the impression may have been given that the failure of the Union of 1960-1963 rests more upon the shoulders of the majority than the minority. Such a conclusion is not justified. After having carefully studied the whole matter, the Rev. B.F. Hunt, veteran O.P.C. missionary in Korea, stated, "Neither side has succeeded in keeping even the form of the union. (a) Neither side has followed proper legal procedure toward the other, hence neither side can be charged with the sin of schism above the other. (b) A strong case can be made by either side to show that the other side first broke the union, rejecting their brothers' legitimate pleas for justice."³⁵ Another member of the O.P.C. Mission in Korea at this time stated, "We did not feel that the Koryu-Pa was justified in its action . . . I think that there is truth in what the Koryu-Pa argues that the Hap Dong broke its promise, but I think the Koryu-Pa broke its promises too."³⁶ In fact the O.P.C. missionaries, along with missionaries of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod, "strongly opposed this 'Return,' speaking of it as schismatic, and felt that they should have nothing to do with it."³⁷

V. FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS

Since the division of 1963 the Koryu-Pa and the Hap Dong Churches have continued on their separate ways, although, as has already been pointed out, a fraternal relationship does exist between them.³⁸ With the passage of time various disturbances have continued to rock both churches. It may also be pertinent to state here that after the division, the Hap Dong was until 1968 extensively involved in reunion discussions with the Tong Hap Church from which they had split in 1959. The impetus for this merger came from both the anti-ecumenical wing in the Tong Hap who were willing to leave the WCC and from the pro-ecumenical side which wanted to retain WCC membership along with other ecumenical attachments. The Hap Dong, however, rejected this call for merger after it became clear that the liberal and pro-ecumenical group gained control in the Tong Hap and refused to alter either its theology or its approach to church relations.³⁹

VI. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE HAP DONG AND THE KORYU-PA

We would now like to direct your attention to another matter, which to some extent has been touched on, but which needs further clarification, namely, the differences between the Hap Dong and the Koryu-Pa. In our *Historical Review*, addressed to General Synod Toronto 1974 we stated, "Modernism is gaining ground in the Hap Dong church, especially among the clergy."⁴⁰ Further research, however, forces us to retract this statement and to declare that we have found no evidence for growing modernism in the Hap Dong. Indeed your Committee has come to the conclusion that there is no basic difference in church doctrine, church polity or church practices between the Hap Dong and the Koryu-Pa.

This conclusion is based on the consideration and compilation of quotes from a number of different sources. The Rev. D. DeJong, who visited Korea in October of 1977, stated after discussions with Dr. K.S. Lee and Dr. P.S. Oh, professors at Koryu Seminary in Pusan "there is no doctrinal difference."⁴¹ The Rev. Bruce F. Hunt stated in his letter to our Committee that,

"I would not like to say that the Hap Dong is any less 'staunchly Reformed' than the Kosin There is a kind of difference, however, between the two. In the post 2nd World-War days, the Kosin, which was smaller, more localized in the two Kyungsang Provinces (North and South) centering in Pusan and Taegu, was more in contact with the O.P.C., McIntire's Bible Presbyterian Church and later the R.P.C.E.S. (Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod — Committee), the CRC (Christian Reformed Church-Committee) and later the 'Liberated Church' in Holland. The Hap Dong, for a while, after Korea's liberation, continued within and was a part of the large Korean Presbyterian Church, during the period when liberalism and the ecumenical movement were becoming more boldly vocal and strengthening their control of the church and foreign mission work. To the credit of the Hap Dong, it must be remembered, that, with *no* missionary backing from *within* (we, O.P.C. were already outside with Kosin) their own ranks, they broke with the World Council of Churches and later with the RES. One of the reasons for the break with the RES was that it continued to have members that were in the World Council of Churches."⁴²

Dr. Harvie M. Conn, after being shown our previous report (the one sent to Synod 1974) which alleged that there was growing modernism in the Hap Dong, reacted in the following way,

"I disagree completely with the first sentence: 'Modernism is gaining ground in the Hap Dong church especially among the clergy.' I don't know of any justification for that statement at all Modernism in the Hap Dong? Nonsense! You can quote me.

I think it would be quite true to say, 'Modernism is gaining ground in the Tong Hap church' The Hap Dong Seminary publishes a quarterly theological journal, I think the English title is *The Presbyterian Quarterly Review*. I receive that regularly and read it and I don't smell a trace of liberalism. In fact, I get concerned because I think that they are heading in the other direction. Many of their students, for example, are going now to Faith Seminary, a Philadelphia institution, Carl McIntire Over 60% of the students there are international students, the level of learning is extremely low The Hap Dong is not involved in the International Council of Christian Churches (ICCC). I guess one of the things that has worried me about the Hap Dong much more than liberalism, are the feelers that are being floated out generally in McIntire's direction. There have always been in the Hap Dong church, people who have been strongly attracted to McIntire In terms of church polity there is not too much difference in terms of basic questions. Theologically I just do not see that much of a difference. I would say that the Koryu-Pa has always had a richer background in distinctive Reformed thinking."⁴³

Finally, there is the Rev. T. Hard who stated in *Torch and Trumpet* (December 1963),

"Both of these groups, the 'Seungdong' and the 'Koryu,' with their aggregate of some 1900 congregations represent, humanly speaking, the hope of the Reformed faith in Korea. Both are moving towards a more consistent theological orthodoxy, giving new attention to Dutch and American Calvinism. This can be seen in seminary texts, published articles, etc. This writer feels that the most improvement and the best stand have been taken by the 'Koryu' group. But both sides have dimmed the light of their testimony by a deplorable lack of unity and love, which has been accompanied by an undue stress on legality in many of their actions. The temptation arises to accuse one or another side of schism, yet blame must be taken by both sides also for this."⁴⁴

VII. THE O.P.C. CONNECTION WITH THE HAP DONG AND THE KORYU-PA

Since your Committee has already retracted one of its previous statements, it takes this opportunity to retract another as well. This can be found on page 11 of the *Historical Review* addressed to Synod 1974. It states "At the division in 1962, the Orthodox Presbyterian Church chose for the Hap Dong and against the Koryu-Pa The fact that the Orthodox Presbyterian Church chose for the Hap Dong is very sad for the Presbyterian Church Koryu-Pa in Korea. The churches in Korea originated from the mission work of the Presbyterian Churches, also from that of the O.P.C. From the very beginnings of Koryu-Seminary, the O.P.C. missionaries have been its strongest supporters." This statement, we have since discovered, is untrue and misleading. Our sources at that time left something to be desired.

The following quotations and explanations should clear up the matter, a matter incidentally that has been misunderstood not only by your Committee but also by others. Our Dutch sister-churches — De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland — have gone on record at the Synod of Groningen-Zuid, 1978 by stating,

"De Orthodoxe Presbyterianische Kerk heeft kerkelijke correspondentie met de Hap Dong, echter niet met onze zusterkerken in Korea. De verschillen tussen onze zusterkerken in Korea en de Hap Dong zijn moeilijk aan te geven. Er schijnt geen leersverschil te bestaan."⁴⁵

Also *Clarion* — *The Canadian Reformed Magazine* in its editorial of June 16, 1979, seemed uncertain as to the O.P.C. position with regard to the Hap Dong and Koryu-Pa. The Editor writes,

"This brings us to the fact that in Korea there are different groups of Presbyterian Churches. Do we have to make a choice? The Orthodox Presbyterian Church has official fraternal relations with the Hap Dong Church, although missionaries of the O.P.C. also lecture at the Busan Seminary, while our Dutch sister-Churches established correspondence with the Koryu-Pa."⁴⁶

These statements give the impression that the O.P.C. has official fraternal relations with *only* the Hap Dong. Such, however, is not the case. The O.P.C. has fraternal relations with *both* the Hap Dong and the Koryu-Pa. It has consistently received and appointed fraternal delegates from and to the General Assemblies of both the Hap Dong and Koryu-Pa.⁴⁷

To verify the above statement we draw your attention to a number of sources. The *Minutes* of the Thirty-First General Assembly (April 28-May 2, 1964) of the O.P.C. contain the following, "Since the division, they (our missionaries) have continued to work with both groups."⁴⁸ The *Minutes* of the Thirty-Second General Assembly (July 8-13, 1965) of the O.P.C. explain, "Our Mission works with the Hap Dong and Kosin churches . . . both groups."⁴⁹ The Rev. B.F. Hunt explains the actual approach as follows,

"At the same time I saw enough faults in what each side was doing that I did not believe one side alone should be charged with schism. I felt we should try to work with both sides in so far as we could. After all, 'Missionary membership' is different from regular membership. The other members of the Mission

at first disagreed with me as my letter (1) shows, so we at least *refrained* from teaching in the seminaries of *either* side. Later we began to teach in seminaries of *both* sides, as invited, and to speak in churches and hold Bible conferences for churches of *both* sides. Since that time, Mr. Conn taught in the Hap Dong Seminary in Seoul, Mr. Hard has been appointed a full time professor in Korea Theological Seminary (Kosin), in Pusan. Until retirement, I taught in the Kosin *and* Hap Dong Seminaries in Pusan, and Mr. Ralph English is teaching in *both* the Hap Dong and Kosin Seminaries in Pusan at present. Rev. Son of our Mission, who grew up as a young man in the Kosin movement, is teaching in the Hap Dong seminary in Seoul. He is our latest missionary to Korea. The R.P.E.S. missionaries who, like our men, were very much against the 'Return' movement, thinking of it as schismatic, at the time, are now teaching in both Hap Dong and Kosin Seminaries, and are working with churches of *both* groups."⁵⁰

On this same point, Dr. H.M. Conn states, after reading our erroneous Committee statement in the *Historical Review*,

"I think that's inaccurate. The O.P.C. did not choose for anything. This is totally inaccurate. The Assembly (O.P.C.) has fraternal relations with both churches. The Korean Mission has worked very, very hard at trying to have relationship with both. Now if this sentence comes from a Koryu-Pa source, then what it may well be expressing is a Koryu-Pa judgment about what we have been trying to do. As far as the Koryu-Pa is concerned, our decision to work with both would I presume be a judgment against working solely with the Koryu-Pa. If it were true, for example, then we would have pulled out of teaching at Koryu Seminary, which we never have, we would have stopped working with the Grace Hospital, which we never have, we would not have been preaching in Koryu-Pa churches, which we never have. It just is not accurate."⁵¹

On being asked whether the O.P.C. was closer to the Hap Dong, Dr. Conn replied, "I don't think so. Historically we're closer to the Koryu-Pa. We don't forget those historical roots. Officially, in terms of the O.P.C., there is no difference, because they have fraternal relations with both groups. Delegates are sent to both assemblies. In fact, I've been more frightened that the closer relations are with the Koryu-Pa. Because up till now, the last year of the missionaries on the field, let's say when Bruce Hunt was there with three missionaries, all three were in Pusan which is Koryu-Pa territory. All three teaching at Koryu Seminary. None teaching in the official seminary in Seoul. Ted (Hard) taught for a little bit; he taught one course up there. There is a Hap Dong regional seminary in Pusan and I think both Ted and Bruce (Hunt) taught in that seminary as well as in Koryu."⁵²

From the aforementioned it seems clear that the O.P.C. has tried to follow an even-handed policy with both sides, although in actual missionary involvement, the Koryu-Pa seems to receive more attention, at least at the seminary level.

Now as for the origin of the misunderstanding regarding the O.P.C. and their relations to the Hap Dong and Koryu-Pa, it may be due to the fact that *officially* the O.P.C. missionaries are members of a Hap Dong presbytery. Prior to the Union of 1960 the O.P.C. missionaries were officially members of a Koryu-Pa presbytery, but when the Union became a fact their official membership was transferred to the reunion church. When the division came in 1963 the O.P.C. missionaries stayed with the reunion church and refused to join the "return movement" of the Koryu-Pa. They, by and large, considered it, as we have touched on already, schismatic.⁵³ This also explains the statement made by the Rev. T. Hard in *Torch and Trumpet* (December 1963),

"The three missionary couples from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and the two missionary couples from World Presbyterian Missions (Covenant Seminary group in St. Louis, Mo.) went along with the union of 1960. Until now they have remained with this church. As individuals, however, they maintain close ties with the "Koryu" group, trying to assist both groups, although

reserving official cooperation only with the union assembly."⁵⁴
The Rev. D. DeJong in his *Report* adds,
"The O.P.C. missionaries are members of the Hap Dong Presbytery (official tie), not members of the Presbytery of the Koryu-Pa. But they are lecturers at the Pusan Seminary of the Koryu-Pa. Officially they are closer to the Hap Dong, but *practically* much closer to the Koryu-Pa."⁵⁵

VIII. CONCLUSIONS

Your Committee, on the basis of what we have learned and revealed in this report, comes with the following conclusions:

- a) The Union of the Hap Dong and Koryu-Pa was hasty and ill-conceived;
- b) The Division of 1963 cannot be blamed exclusively on either the one party or the other. The blame must be equally shared:
- c) The reasons for the Division are exceedingly difficult to unearth in their entirety, although it is possible to center out the Seminary issue as a major cause and to list personal power struggles, regionalism and a host of others as lesser causes;
- d) There are no basic differences between the Hap Dong and Koryu-Pa in either doctrine or church polity;
- e) The O.P.C. maintains the same official relationship with both the Hap Dong and the Koryu-Pa, namely, fraternal relations. As individuals, the O.P.C. missionaries are officially members of the Hap Dong.

IX. 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.

The Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad,
c/o Rev. J. Visscher,
18080 - 57A Avenue,
Surrey, B.C. V3S 1J6.
June 28, 1980

FOOTNOTES

¹ Bong Rin Ro, *Division and Reunion in the Presbyterian Church in Korea 1959-1968* (unpublished Th.D. thesis, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, 1969), pp. 1, 30.

² T. Hard, missionary of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Korea writes, "This 'Koryu' group maintained a strong stand for orthodoxy. It made the greatest commitment and witness to the Reformed faith. It sought the theological climate of the Free University of Amsterdam and of Westminster, Calvin, Faith and later also Covenant Seminaries in America, while the larger group from which it divided continued with few exceptions to seek the breeze of Princeton, Union, etc. In Koryu Seminary and the fledgling Calvin College it warmly welcomed the theology of Kuyper, Bavinck, Schilder, and Dooyeweerd together with the voices of the Hodges, Warfield, Vos, Machen, Berkhof and the present faculty leaders of Westminster and Calvin in America. From its inception this group was assisted by missionaries from the Orthodox Presbyterian and the Bible Presbyterian churches, and after a split in the latter group also from the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. The Christian Reformed Church gave tens of thousands of dollars for seminary, hospital and church work through its diaconal relief committees and sent frequent visitors for survey or lecture purposes. By 1960 this group attained a size of 590 churches with some 140,000 constituents." *Torch and Trumpet* (December 1963), p. 8.

³ T. Hard writes, "A third group with some 667 churches is popularly called the 'Hangook' Seminary group. It has a constituency of 130,346. It is the product of a split in 1954, three years after the 'Koryu' group reformed. Many of its leaders were precisely the men against whom the 'Koryu' group had been protesting. The mother body, having cut off the continually scratching foot, finally discovered that there was an infection worth scratching about. Thus this new split. Barthian in its seminary and some of the publications of its leaders, it is militantly outspoken against orthodoxy and for the ecumenical movement. It has a high reputation for scholarship and numbers many members who are influential government officials. It is aided by missionaries from the United Church of Canada, who are probably more liberal than their Korean colleagues." *Torch and Trumpet* (December 1963), p. 8.

It may be noted here as well that this group is also called the *Kichang* group. It is the most modernistic of any Presbyterian church in Korea, a fact that is also made obvious by its membership in the World Council of Christian Churches (WCCC).

⁴ T. Hard states, "The largest (group of Presbyterians), presently called the 'Tonghap' group, totals 1950 congregations and is supported by missionaries of the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S., the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. and the Australian Presbyterian Church. It has partial or complete control of two large universities, three colleges and several seminaries. The size of the missionary body assisting it and the large denominations which these missionaries represent make for massive aid in financing, in literature, in education and in international church contacts" (p. 7). He then goes on to say about the Hap Dong, "Claiming both legal and spiritual succession, it also possesses the original minutes, seal and gavel of the historical church. It regards the other dissenting body ('Tonghap') as a split from itself, since that group did not reconvene with them after an emergency recess had been called by the moderator of the 1959 General Assembly because of chaos on the floor. Called the 'Seungdong' [yet another name for the Hap Dong — JV] group, it continues bereft of its former missionary assistance, colleges, seminary buildings and international church ties. It retained about 1250 congregations. Its battle within the church has been against the encroaching dangers of the ecumenical movement and liberalism,

together with a growing distrust of the missionaries and their policies." *Torch and Trumpet* (December 1963), p. 8.

Rev. D. DeJong in his discussions with Dr. R. English, another O.P.C. missionary in Korea, reports, "The *Tong Hap* churches are not liberal at the grass-roots but they have liberal professors at the Seoul seminary. They are connected with the World Council of Christian Churches (but at the grass-roots still basically Presbyterian); to be compared with synodical Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland." *Report — DeJong* (October 1977), p. 2.

⁵ T. Hard again remarks, "In 1960 the 'Koryu' and 'Seungdong' groups united as long separated brothers who, although in separate organizations, had been fighting the same battles. *Torch and Trumpet* (December 1963), p. 8.

⁶ Quoted from an interview held with Dr. H.M. Conn on July 12, 1978, at the University of British Columbia. *Interview-Transcript*, p. 1.

⁷ Conn, *Interview-Transcript*, p. 2.

⁸ *Torch and Trumpet* (December 1963), p. 8.

⁹ *Torch and Trumpet* (December 1963), p. 8.

¹⁰ Bong Rin Ro, pp. 78, 79.

¹¹ Bong Rin Ro, p. 82.

¹² Bong Rin Ro, p. 82.

¹³ Bong Rin Ro, pp. 82-83.

¹⁴ Bong Rin Ro, p. 83.

¹⁵ Bruce F. Hunt, *Introductory Letter* and "Assessment" Addressed to the Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad of the Canadian Reformed Churches. Dated: August 17, 1978, p. 6.

¹⁶ The ICCC is an organization of churches of strong fundamentalist beliefs characterized by militant opposition to Communism, to the World Council of Churches, and to defections from orthodox Christianity. The main founder of the movement was Carl McIntire, an American Presbyterian minister who was also instrumental in the founding of the Bible Presbyterian Church (it split in 1937 from the Presbyterian Church of America formed in 1936; the remainder of the PCA became the Orthodox Presbyterian Church), Faith Theological Seminary, Sheldon College and the American Council of Christian Churches. The ICCC was founded in Amsterdam in 1948. In 1972 there were 155 "denominations" in the ICCC, most of them small.

¹⁷ The Hap Dong possesses the original minutes, seal and gavel of the Presbyterian Church of Korea.

¹⁸ Hunt, "Assessment," pp. 6, 7.

¹⁹ Bong Rin Ro, p. 86.

²⁰ Hunt, "Assessment," p. 7.

²¹ Hunt, "Assessment," pp. 7, 8.

²² Hunt, "Assessment," pp. 7, 8.

²³ Dr. Conn commenting on this very point said, "Whether it meant union in the sense of merger or whether it meant union in the sense of linking the two institutions under one board of trustees, that was even vague in the Korean language." *Conn, Interview-Transcript*, p. 2.

²⁴ Bong Rin Ro, pp. 85, 86.

²⁵ Bong Rin Ro, p. 84.

²⁶ Rev. Han, according to some of our sources, was a major force in the restoration, not only of the Seminary, but also of the Koryu-Pa as a separate church again. Rev. B.F. Hunt, however, dissents from this opinion by stating, "I did not get the impression that he (Dr. Han) took the lead in the re-establishment, though he continued to be recognized as a leader, if not *the* leader of the Koryu-Pa" (from his letter to Rev. J. Visscher, dated March 10, 1980).

²⁷ Bong Rin Ro, p. 87.

²⁸ Bong Rin Ro, p. 88.

²⁹ Bong Rin Ro, p. 89.

³⁰ Bong Rin Ro, p. 89.

³¹ Bong Rin Ro, pp. 89, 90.

³² Hunt, "Assessment," p. 9.

³³ On August 29, 1963, some fifty ministers who had formerly been in the Koryu-Pa met together and voiced their opposition to the restoration of their former church. They stated:

"We oppose the division of the Church.

1. We desire that the Koryo Seminary continues as a branch seminary according to the agreed 'Principles of Reunion' and oppose the restoration of the seminary to the status before the reunion, because it destroys the reunion.
2. The division of the Church cannot be allowed.
 - a. It is not Scriptural for the Church to be divided on the issue of differences in church polity
 - b. We cannot accept the illegal break of the Presbyterian Church because it is sin." Bong Rin Ro, pp. 87, 88.

³⁴ Hard, *Torch and Trumpet*, p. 8.

³⁵ Just prior to these statements, Hunt said,

"The union was formed too hastily:

- a. The union was formed without following proper legal procedures and as a consequence many on both sides of the contract fail to feel a binding compulsion of law toward the other.
- b. Few on either side had much sympathy for those of the opposite side at the time union was contracted and the feeling of mutual respect has not increased. I would judge that a majority of the Kosin (Koryu-Pa) side and a majority of the Sungdong (Hap Dong) side feel no special attraction toward the opposite side or desire for closer fellowship, compelling them to true unity.
- c. The union was technical and motivated by expediency, by a majority on both sides and was consummated by the hasty agreement on terms of union drawn up by a few, whose leading the majority of both sides was willing to accept for varying motives of expediency." Hunt, "Assessment," p. 9.

³⁶ Conn, *Interview-Transcript*, pp. 1, 2. In light of the above, it would seem that the following evaluation found in our *Historical Review* to General Synod 1974 was one-sided in favour of the Koryu-Pa, "As main reason for the separation is given that the Hap Dong group broke its promise that each side could keep its seminary" (p. 10, last paragraph).

³⁷ Hunt, *Introductory Letter* to the "Assessment," p. 1.

³⁸ Hunt, "Assessment," p. 9. Also *Report — DeJong* supports this, "The Koryu-Pa has fraternal relations with the Hap Dong since 1963, right after the split; this was the result of a decision of the General Assembly. This relationship includes also pulpit exchange. The practice is that the churches of the Koryu-Pa seldom invite Hap Dong pastors, but the Hap Dong congregations quite often invite our (Koryu-Pa) pastors. The reason is that the Hap Dong churches have more lack of Pastors than the Koryu-Pa. Sometimes the Hap Dong pastors complain about this. This complaint was discussed at the latest General Assembly but no decision was made," p. 1.

³⁹ Bong Rin Ro, pp. 280, 290, 292. See also footnote 4 — the last paragraph — in this report where the Tong Hap is discussed. The leadership of this church seems to be in the hands of pro-WCC, Barthian theologians. The President of their Seminary, who happens to be a Barthian as well, was at the meeting of Reformed Institutions for Higher Learning in Potchefstroom. The Lay members seem to be of a more conservative orientation.

⁴⁰ p. 11 (top line).

⁴¹ *Report — DeJong*, p. 2. From this *Report* we give the following excerpts: *Discussions with Dr. K.S. Lee and Dr. P.S. Oh, professors at the Seminary at Pusan*

1.5 Re: Difference between Koryu-Pa and Hap Dong.

a. Seminary conflict

b. Life style: the Hap Dong is more easy-going, e.g., they have more free and

broader contact with the government; they are less strict in life (businessmen attitude); yet they have great zeal and are active in missionary works. We (Koryu-Pa) have more of a martyr church. Yet, we appreciate the Hap Dong as well, but the style is different. The Orthodox Presbyterian Church does not agree with us that we mention these things as a reason for separation.

Emphatically it was said: there is no doctrinal difference

Discussions with Dr. English, who is an O.P.C. missionary, American by birth, lecturer of missiology at the Pusan Seminary and is in Korea for 5 years now.

2.3 The Koryu-Pa is stronger on repentance with regard to the shrine issue (Shinto) than the Hap Dong. But there is no doctrinal difference between the two groups. The Koryu-Pa is a little bit schismatic. We (O.P.C.) join with both Koryu-Pa and Hap Dong. There are no biblical grounds for division. The point is that here in Korea there is a tremendous following of important leaders. We are officially connected with the Hap Dong but we work more with the Koryu-Pa.

As to life style: in the Koryu-Pa is a stronger personal piety, especially strong against drinking and smoking. They are very strict about repentance. Their piety is other-worldly, not really pious but more pietistic.

About the studies at the Seminary: there are too many devotions, more study would be better.

The Koryu-Pa is lacking in social concern. But this applies also to a certain extent to the Hap Dong (the social concern meant is as pertains to the nation, politically).

The Koryu-Pa is a ministers-church (a clerical situation)

Discussions with Dr. Choi (pronounce: che), who is a Hap Dong minister in a 2000 seat church in Pusan, previously moderator of the General Assembly of the Hap Dong.

3.1 Re: Koryu-Pa and Hap Dong.

The Koryu-Pa (with 700 churches) and the Hap Dong (with 2900 churches; the largest Presbyterian church) have the same doctrine. After World War II leaders coming out of Japanese prisons organized the Koryu-Pa, they are stricter than the Hap Dong. The Hap Dong leaders said: If you bowed down for Shinto, you must repent, accept Jesus Christ and you will be forgiven. The Hap Dong cooperates with the O.P.C. and also with the Christian Reformed Church but has no official ties with the latter (pp. 2, 30).

⁴² Hunt, *Introductory Letter* to the "Assessment," p. 2. Hunt goes on to say "Within the Hap Dong, which to start with, was a much larger denomination, having strong centres in more numerous parts of the country, you can find more varieties of opinion among leading men than in the Kosin.

1. McIntire is still looked to by some as a voice that should not be completely ignored, though both Kosin and Hap Dong have refrained from joining the ICC.
2. There was a period when leaders turning away from the WCC connections and questioning McIntire's extreme positions, wondered about and sought NAE fellowship, but were given a rather cold reception. Some still think there is hope there, and lean toward Neo-Evangelicalism.
3. There is another element with strong leaders but now largely older leaders who are outspoken in their opposition to Neo-Evangelicalism, saying it is liable to be like Neo-Orthodoxy, a blind to lead people away from the true orthodoxy" (p. 2).

It should be noted here that the Koryu-Pa discontinued membership in the RES in 1967 after our Dutch sister-Churches made it a condition for sister-Church relationship.

⁴³ Conn, *Interview-Transcript*, pp. 4, 5, 6.

⁴⁴ Hard, *Torch and Trumpet*, pp. 8, 9.

⁴⁵ ACTA, 1978, Article 189. "The Orthodox Presbyterian Church has ecclesiastical

correspondence with the Hap Dong, however, not with our sister-Churches in Korea. The differences between our sister-Churches in Korea and the Hap Dong are difficult to pinpoint. There does not appear to be any doctrinal difference.”
⁴⁶ J. Faber, “Our Korean Connection,” an editorial in *Clarion* (June 16, 1979) Vol. 28, No. 12, p. 263.

⁴⁷ *Minutes* of the 36th General Assembly, p. 103.

⁴⁸ *Minutes*, p. 40.

⁴⁹ *Minutes*, p. 53.

⁵⁰ Hunt, *Introductory Letter* to the “Assessment,” pp. 1, 2.

⁵¹ Conn, *Interview-Transcript*, pp. 5, 6.

⁵² Conn, p. 8.

⁵³ Hunt, *Introductory Letter* to the “Assessment,” p. 2, contains the following remarks, “We personally had worked with the Kosin the longest, and those who ‘Returned’ naturally felt badly that we did not ‘Return’ with them. But they knew, more than anyone, that we had cautioned against going into the union so hastily, and that it was *they* who had made it one of the conditions of the union that the ‘missionary members,’ working with them, should be received as ‘missionary members’ of the Hap Dong at the time of their forming the union. Some, using an old Korean saying, have said, especially of me, that I was ‘a wild pigeon sitting in a tree with its heart in the bean field,’ meaning that though we’ve technically remained as ‘missionary members’ of the Hap Dong, our heart is in the Kosin. This is partly true. But, it must be remembered that many fine Kosin leaders did not ‘Return’ and are still in the Hap Dong, also.”

⁵⁴ Hard, *Torch and Trumpet*, p. 8.

⁵⁵ *Report — DeJong*, p. 2 (1, 4).

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