

COMMITTEE FOR CORRESPONDENCE  
WITH CHURCHES ABROAD.

ADDITIONAL REPORT TO GENERAL SYNOD, TORONTO, 1974  
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Esteemed Brethren,

Your Committee deems it advisable to submit an additional report to General Synod, since more information has been received after June 24, 1974, the date on which our report was closed off.

I GENERAL ACTIVITIES

1. The second provisional agenda has been sent to the Deputies for Correspondence of our Sister Churches abroad, informing them also that the Churches according to the rules of correspondence will gladly admit delegates of these Sister Churches to General Synod Toronto 1974 as advisors.
2. A copy of our report to General Synod 1974 (plus this addition) has also been forwarded to the Sister Churches and the Fraternal Relations Committee of the Presbyterian Church in Korea.

II THE FREE REFORMED CHURCHES IN AUSTRALIA

1. Our Australian Sister Churches expressed their best wishes for the work of Synod.  
We passed this part of a letter (Sept. 18, 1974) on to the convening Church at Toronto.
2. In the same letter Deputies answered our question what the practical problems were with regard to the rule made re Bachelors of Divinity who did not study at a College of a Sister Church and whether this difficulty only existed with respect to the faculty in Hamilton, which was the impression given. (See Report p. 7 and 9 bottom-paragraph.) Deputies reply that "de kwestie was, dat Uw Theological College ons heeft verklaard het practisch niet mogelijk te achten een eventuele candidaat in Australie te toetsen op zijn wetenschappelijke bekwaamheid. Wel heeft de Senaat van Uw College een oordeel gegeven over de theologische opleiding te Geelong (Australia), waar de toenmalige candidaat D., die geexamineerd moest worden, had gestudeerd. De Australische kerken hebben zich bij die verklaring van de Senaat neergelegd. Voor zover we ons kunnen herinneren - op dit moment kunnen we niet het Synode-archief raadplegen - is er toen geen poging meer gedaan "Kampen" in te schakelen."

We report this quite extensively because your Committee is of the opinion that it is of the greatest importance also for our Churches how Sister Churches abroad admit such candidates to the ministry of the Word of God.  
For one of the rules of correspondence is: to permit each other's ministers to the Ministry of the Word and Sacraments.

3. The Synod of The Free Reformed Churches will convene in March 1975.

### III DE GEREFORMEERDE KERKEN IN NEDERLAND

1. The Church at Toronto considered it not within their jurisdiction to invite Sister Churches to a Synod but that this is the task of Synod if such an invitation is required, since according to the rules of correspondence delegates of Sister Churches are automatically welcome. (See Report p. 12 sub h.)  
Your Committee deems it advisable that with a view to the future Synod express itself whether or not Sister Churches should be invited to send delegates to a General Synod and whose task this is.
2. The Deputies of our Dutch Sister Churches sent a Summary of a discussion which they had with the Rev. Professor J.H. Stek, representative of the Christian Reformed Church.  
A copy of this Summary has been passed on to our Committee on Contact with the Christian Reformed Church.
3. From the same Deputies we received "Rapport inzake de herziening van de Kerkorde, aan de Generale Synode van De Gereformeerde kerken, Kampen, 1975."  
This has been passed on to our Committee on Revision of the Church Order.
4. It might further interest you that our Dutch Sister Churches published a booklet "The Reformed Churches in the Netherlands and What they stand for", of which your Committee received a few copies.

### IV DIE VRYE GEREFORMEERDE KERKE IN SUID AFRIKA

1. In "Nederlands Dagblad" (June 19, 1974) the following announcement appeared under Church News:  
"Naar wij vernemen zal op 1 Juli a.s. een synodevergadering bijeen komen van Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke in Zuid Afrika. Op deze synode zullen bezwaarschriften aan de orde komen van een aantal personen, waarbij in beroep wordt gegaan tegen de schorsing en afzetting van Ds. J.G.M. te Pretoria en tegen een aantal handelingen van de kerkeraad verband houdend met genoemde schorsing en afzetting."  
We sent a telegram expressing the hope that this Synod may serve the unity of the Churches in South Africa.
2. In a letter of June 22, 1974, Deputies of Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke apologized for not answering our letters at an earlier date. (See Report p. 16, 17 sub e, f, g)  
They confirmed that indeed the consistory of Pretoria's Church had suspended the Rev. J.G.M. "in eigen verantwoordelijkheid", but that in the meantime the consistory at Pretoria and Capetown have agreed "t.a.v. de noodzaak om conform art. 79 en 80 K.O. te moeten handelen met Ds. J.G.M. .... Een gemeenschappelijk opgesteld en getekend verslag van de

procedure wordt U zo spoedig mogelijk toegezonden."

We received this report and may conclude that in this matter Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke did not deviate from the Reformed Confession in doctrine and Church Order,

3. After a Synod was held (July 1-4, 1974) Deputies notified us (Aug. 21, 1974) that the sessions "een byzonder rustig en prettig verloop hadden." They enclosed a copy of the officially adopted Short Report to inform us about decisions taken. "Om inzake de z.g.n. "Kwestie Johannesburg" tot een verantwoord besluit te komen, wordt D.V. 27 en 28 September a.s. een laatste zitting gehouden." (See Report p. 18 sub c)

Although we did not receive yet the Acts of this Synod - which invited the Rev. H.J. de Vries, minister of the Gereformeerde Kerk te Amsterdam Z.W., The Netherlands, to participate as advisor - it appears from the above mentioned Short Report that "'t geschonden kerkverband" is being restored and that the confederation of Churches in South Africa is at work and desires to be faithful to God's Word and to maintain in their situation the adopted Church Order, also in dealing with appeals against decisions of Synod Pretoria 1972 and of the consistory at Pretoria.

4. The convening Church at Toronto passed on to your Committee (Aug. 28, 1974) a letter (plus enclosures) dated Jan. 28, 1974, from Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerk at Pretoria (pr. Dr. C. van der Waal) asking to be informed about the date General Synod 1974 would be convened, which information has been sent.

After your Committee has sent this Church (pr. Dr. C. van der Waal) also our evaluation of their letter of June 1, 1973 (a reaction to our Advice re "both parties"; see Report p. 16 sub d and enclosure 2) nothing has been heard.

Your Committee has as yet no evidence that the teachings concerning marriage and divorce have been rescinded or that the relation to the Confederation of Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid Afrika has been changed.

5. On the basis of the above your Committee maintains its advice to the Churches (given in a letter of Febr. 26, 1973) and recommends General Synod

- a. to continue the correspondence with Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid Afrika;
- b. not to establish correspondence with Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerk at Pretoria (pr. Dr. C. van der Waal);
- c. to appeal to Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerk at Pretoria (pr. Dr. C. van der Waal) to rescind their teachings concerning marriage and divorce and to earnestly seek the unity and fellowship of the faith with Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid Afrika.

#### V THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN KOREA

Your Committee has no additional news re contact with this Church, since as yet nothing has been received.

The Deputies of our Dutch Sister Churches, however, informed

us (July 27, 1974) that the changes in Confession and Church Order (see Report p. 19 sub IX, 3-6) have been finalized; they have asked to translate them in English and to send this translation also to your Committee.

Respectfully submitted by your Committee,

E.C. Baartman  
A.C. Lengkeek  
J. Mulder  
M. van Beveren

October 23, 1974.

Post Scriptum:

After this additional report had been completed on October 23, 1974, we received the following letter from Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerk at Pretoria (pr. Dr. C. van der Waal):

"DIE VRYE GEREFORMEERDE KERK TE PRETORIA

10th October, 1974

Committee on Correspondence with Churches Abroad,  
c/o. Rev. J. Mulder,  
18080 - 57 A Avenue,  
Surrey.  
B.C.  
CANADA.

Dear brethren,

We hereby inform you that the consistory of "die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerk te Pretoria" is sending his minister, Dr. C. van der Waal, to various countries abroad. During October/November 1974 he will visit Canada and will represent our church at your coming Synod. May he be well received.

Wishing you God's guidance during your discussions.

For the Consistory,  
(signed) A. Jansen  
Anton Jansen.  
Clerk.

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As to this informative statement of Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerk at Pretoria, that Dr. C. van der Waal

"will represent our church at your coming Synod",  
your Committee recommends Synod

not to receive Dr. C. van der Waal as a representative of a Sister Church abroad.

Ground: To receive Dr. C. van der Waal as delegate of a Sister Church would be inconsistent with the Advice of your Committee given to the Churches (letter of Febr. 26, 1974,

see enclosure 1):

not to address nor to receive attestations from Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerk at Pretoria (pr. Dr. C. van der Waal),

and the recommendation made (on p. 3 sub 5 of this additional report):

not to accept Die Vrye Gereformeerde Kerk at Pretoria (pr. Dr. C. van der Waal) as a Sister Church by establishing correspondence with it.

The Committee for Correspondence,

E.C. Baartman  
A.C. Lengkeek  
J. Mulder  
M. van Beveren