



1 **Day 8 — Morning Session**
2 **Thursday, May 19, 2022**

3 **Article 94 – Reopening**

4 Synod reopened in plenary session. The chairman observed all synod members were present. He
5 welcomed everyone including a newly arrived fraternal observer. He had those present sing
6 Hymn 72:3,4,5, read Philippians 3:12-16, and led in opening prayer.

7
8 **Article 95 – Acts**

9 The prepared articles of the *Acts* were corrected and adopted.

10
11 **Article 96 – CRTS (Board of Governors) Supplementary Report (*Funding Foreign***
12 ***Students*)**

13 Committee 3 presented draft 2 of a report on the Supplementary Report of the Board of
14 Governors on Funding for Foreign Students from the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa.
15 The report was discussed. The committee took the report back for refinement.

16 As Rev. Boon, the fraternal delegate from the FRCSA, was leaving, assurance was given him
17 that while we struggle with *how* to provide financial support for theological students from the
18 FRCSA, support will be provided.

19
20 **Article 97 – Appeal against RSW 2021 Art. 31 (*Worship*)**

21 Committee 3 presented draft 1 of a report on an appeal against RSW 2021 Art. 31 (*Worship*).
22 The report was discussed. The committee took the report back for refinement.

23
24 **Article 98 – Financial Report of GS 2019**

25 **1. Material**

- 26 1.1 Financial Report of the Convening Church of GS 2019 (Edmonton-Immanuel) (8.2.14.1
27 – see Appendix 22)

28 **2. Admissibility**

- 29 2.1 The report was declared admissible.

30 **3. Decisions**

31 **Synod decided:**

- 32 3.1 To receive the Report of the Convening Church of GS 2019 with thankfulness.

33
34 **Article 99 – Acts – GS 2022 Art. 80-82**

35 Confidential

36
37 **Article 100 – Appeal against GS 2019 art. 98 and Art. 141 (*Personal*)**

38 Confidential



1
2 **Article 101 – Overture RSE 2021 re: Shorter Lord’s Supper Forms**

3 Committee 3 presented draft 1 of RSE Overture 2021 for Shorter Lord’s Supper Forms. The
4 report was discussed. The committee took the report back for refinement.

5
6 **Article 102 – CRCA-CCCNA Study Report on the exercise of CO Art. 50**

7 Committee 2 presented draft 1 of a report on the CRCA-CCCNA study report. The report was
8 discussed. The committee took the report back for refinement.

9
10 *Synod adjourned until 1:15pm for lunch.*

11
12 **Day 8 — Afternoon Session**
13 **Thursday, May 19, 2022**

14 **Article 103 – Reopening**

15 Synod reopened in plenary session. The chairman had the meeting sing Psalm 95:1,3. He
16 observed that all synod members were present.

17
18 **Article 104 – HRC Fraternal Observer Address**

19 Rev. Vandeburgt introduced Rev. Pieter Vanderhoek, credentialed delegate of the Heritage
20 Reformed Churches of North America (HRC). Rev. Vanderhoek addressed Synod describing the
21 HRC, our common heritage and communal ties, our unity in Christ, and the differences between
22 us. The text of his address can be found in **Appendix**. The chairman spoke some words in
23 response.

24 Rev. J. Temple led in prayer, bringing the needs of the HRC before the Lord.

25
26 **Article 105 – Overtures RSE 2020 and RSW 2021 re GS 2004 Art. 115 (Hymn Cap)**

27 AC 1 presented draft 1 of a majority report and draft 1 of a minority report on Overtures RSE
28 2020 and RSW 2021 re GS 2004 Art. 115 (Hymn Cap). The reports were discussed. The
29 Majority Advisory Committee Report was voted on first (as per Synod Guidelines III.A.5) and
30 adopted.

31
32 **1. Material**

- 33 1.1 Overture: RSE 2020 to Remove the Current Hymn Cap for the *Book of Praise* (8.4.1).
34 1.2 Overture: RSW 2021 to Rescind the decision of GS 2004 art. 115 re: Hymn Cap (8.4.3).
35 1.3 Submissions from the following churches:
36 Toronto-Bethel (8.3.2.41), Owen Sound (8.5.1.1), Carman-West (8.5.1.2), Brampton-
37 Grace (8.5.1.3), Niagara-South (8.5.1.4), Nooksack Valley (8.5.1.5), St. Albert (8.5.1.6),
38 Willoughby Heights (8.5.1.7), Smithville (8.5.1.8), Yarrow (8.5.1.9), Cloverdale
39 (8.5.1.10), Attercliffe (8.5.1.11), Coaldale (8.5.1.12), Carman-East (8.5.1.13),
40 Flamborough-Redemption (8.5.1.14), Fergus-Maranatha (8.5.1.15), Glanbrook-Trinity



1 (8.5.1.16), Barrhead (8.5.1.17), Neerlandia (8.5.1.18), Edmonton-Immanuel (8.5.1.19),
2 Lynden (8.5.1.20), Burlington-Ebenezer (8.5.1.21), Grand Rapids (8.5.1.22),
3 Edmonton-Providence (8.5.1.23), Owen Sound (8.5.3.1), Ancaster (8.5.3.2),
4 Willoughby Heights (8.5.3.3), Neerlandia (8.5.3.4), Edmonton-Immanuel (8.5.3.5),
5 Langley (8.5.3.6)

6 **2. Admissibility**

- 7 2.1 Overture RSE 2020 to Remove the Current Hymn Cap for the *Book of Praise* was
8 declared admissible.
9 2.2 Overture RSW 2021 to Rescind the Decision of GS 2004 art. 115 re: Hymn Cap was
10 declared admissible.
11 2.3 The submissions from the churches were declared admissible.

12 **Ground**

13 Both overtures are applying the decision of GS 2019 (Art. 64, Cons. 4.4) and CO Art.
14 33.

15 **3. Decisions**

16 **Synod decided:**

- 17 3.1 To work with both overtures together;
18 3.2 To deny the recommendation of both overtures to remove the cap of 100 hymns
19 regarding the *Book of Praise*.

20 **4. Grounds**

21 4.1 Re: 3.1:

- 22 4.1.1 Both overtures seek the removal of the cap of 100 hymns regarding the *Book of*
23 *Praise*, although providing different considerations.
24 4.1.2 Most churches interacted with both overtures in one submission to GS 2022.

25 4.2 Re: 3.2:

- 26 4.2.1 GS 2004 expressed the principle that Psalms have a predominant place in the
27 liturgy of the Reformed churches, and on that basis, set a limit. Any decision to
28 rescind the conclusion of GS 2004 should demonstrate that the basis of that
29 decision is erroneous.
30 4.2.1.1 GS 2004 (Art. 44 Cons. 4.3) affirmed this principle when it states that the
31 CRCA is correct that a “proper proportion between the number of hymns in
32 itself reflects the importance – even the priority – of the Psalms”.
33 4.2.1.2 GS 2007 (Art. 133 Rec. 5.3) did likewise when it mandated the CRCA to
34 “end the discussion [with the GKv] about the proportion of Psalms and
35 hymns by expressing the concern that the vast multiplication of hymns does
36 nothing to advance the priority of Psalm singing and places at risk this
37 principle”.
38 4.2.2 Although RSE acknowledged the unique, privileged, and predominant role of the
39 singing of Psalms in the liturgy of the churches, and that they should be retained as
40 such, it then concluded that limiting the number of hymns in the *Book of Praise* is
41 not an effective way of achieving this goal. Many of the churches, however,
42 appreciated how the hymn cap flows from the principle of the predominance of

1 Psalms in Reformed liturgy. As one church put it, “Why should the appearance of
2 a thing not testify to and confirm the underlying principle of that very thing? If
3 Psalms [are] predominant, then that should be visibly testified to and confirmed by
4 a greater number of Psalms than hymns in the church’s songbook.”

5 4.2.3 Additionally, RSW argued that “it is clear from the Preface of the *Book of Praise*
6 that the hymns are not less desirable” (Cons. 2.5). This argument is a round-about
7 way of stating, that when it comes to the selection of songs to sing in the worship
8 services, there is to be no distinction between hymns and Psalms. This is not the
9 Reformed principle held since the Reformation, and stated time and again by our
10 general synods (e.g. GS 2004 Art. 44 Cons. 4.3; GS 2007 Art. 133 Cons. 4.2; GS
11 2013 Art. 173 Cons. 3.6). RSW did not treat the Preface from the *Book of Praise*
12 forthrightly, specifically where it states “Although in Reformed liturgy the *Psalms*
13 *have a predominant place*, our churches have not excluded the use of scriptural
14 hymns”.

15 4.2.4 Although RSW argued that a limit of 100 hymns makes it likely that there would
16 be less room for hymns that are traditionally sung during specific seasons of the
17 Christian calendar, such a claim is unsubstantiated. In fact, as one church argued,
18 for hymns to be useful to the churches, they would largely centre around the days
19 of commemoration and would leave out many other hymns of praise, adoration,
20 supplication, petition, etc. since there are Psalms which do the same.

21 4.2.5 Although RSE and RSW suggested that the hymn cap needlessly limits the
22 churches in their choice of other Christian songs, limiting the churches’ selection
23 is exactly the purpose of CO Art. 55, and therefore, does not serve as an argument
24 for additional hymns.

25 4.2.6 Although RSE and RSW argued that a hymn cap does not guarantee the primacy
26 of Psalm singing, numerous churches, both in favour and against removing the
27 hymn cap, have argued for a change to CO Art. 55 that includes a statement re: the
28 primacy of Psalm singing as a way to maintain the practice of this principle.

29 4.2.7 It is true that RSE and RSW argued that the specified limit of 100 hymns is
30 arbitrary and has no other function than to force the churches to choose from
31 among the best hymns for inclusion in the *Book of Praise* rather than allow for the
32 consideration of all best hymns, also as they continue to be written.

33 4.2.7.1 This implies, however, that the *Book of Praise* will never be a completed
34 book, and that it needs to include an unlimited number of hymns.

35 4.2.7.2 Despite the considerations of RSW and RSE, a goal of a church songbook
36 should be that the congregation can know it well, can memorize it, and make
37 it part of its everyday life. The proliferation of hymns works against this. As
38 such, it does a disservice to the churches. This sentiment was expressed by
39 the Committee Church Books, Psalms and Hymns Section (1980) when they
40 wrote, “if we keep changing the rhymings, the rhymed Psalms and the hymns
41 will never become ‘part and parcel’ of the lives of believers and they will
42 never become such an integral part of the knowledge of faith...” Such would
43 also be the case when the churches add and change the *Book of Praise*
44 regularly.



1 4.2.7.3 Many churches rightly expressed concern with the claim of arbitrariness. As
 2 one church put it, “this is true as far as it goes, but both overtures then leap to
 3 the conclusion that this means there should be *no* limit on the number of
 4 hymns. This does not follow from the question of arbitrariness.”

5 4.2.8 Although RSW argued that a limit on the hymns means that the churches will have
 6 to struggle with the process of removing good hymns to make room for better
 7 hymns, this process has benefits since it continuously forces us to evaluate the
 8 strength of new hymns by comparing them to existing ones. Without the limit on
 9 hymns, the churches may well resort to a default practice of simply adding new
 10 hymns without deciding if they are an improvement on existing hymns. A hymn
 11 cap helps the churches to be careful when adding hymns.
 12

13 For the text of the Minority Advisory Committee Report that was not voted on, as the Majority
 14 Advisory Committee Report was adopted, see **appendix**. (*With respect to retaining this*
 15 *document, see **Article 115***) – *For the Provisional Acts published on the Website, see the end of*
 16 *this document.*

17 **Article 106 – SCBP – Additional Psalms and Hymns**

18 Committee 1 presented draft 3 of a report on the Standing Committee for the Publication of the
 19 *Book of Praise* (SCBP) report regarding additional psalms and hymns (8.2.2.1-3) and related
 20 submissions from churches. The report was discussed. The committee took the report back for
 21 refinement.
 22

23
 24 *Synod adjourned until 7:30pm for committee work.*
 25

26 **Day 8 — Evening Session**

27 **Thursday, May 19, 2022**

28 **Article 107 – Reopening**

29 Synod reopened in plenary session. The chairman had the meeting sing Psalm 98:1. He observed
 30 that all synod members were present, except two, who were absent with notice.
 31

32 **Article 108 – CRCA-CCCNA Study Reports on the Execution of CO Art. 50**

33 **1. Material**

- 34 1.1 CRCA-CCCNA Majority Report (8.2.12.1)
 35 1.2 CRCA-CCCNA Minority Report (8.2.12.2)
 36 1.3 Submissions from the following churches: Dunnville dd. Oct 19, 2021 (8.3.12.1);
 37 Burlington Waterdown-Rehoboth (8.3.12.2); Orangeville (8.3.12.3); Carman-West
 38 (8.3.12.4); Ancaster (8.3.12.5); Attercliffe (8.3.12.6); Niagara South (8.3.12.7); Lynden
 39 (8.3.12.8); Elora (8.3.12.9); St. Albert (8.3.12.10); Fergus-North (8.3.12.11); Guelph-
 40 Emmanuel (8.3.12.12); Willoughby Heights (8.3.12.13); Aldergrove (8.3.12.14);
 41 Smithville (8.3.12.15); Yarrow (8.3.12.16); Cloverdale (8.3.12.17); Owen Sound
 42 (8.3.12.18); Vernon (8.3.12.19); Chilliwack (8.3.12.20); Spring Creek Tintern



(8.3.12.21); Coaldale (8.3.12.22); London-Pilgrim (8.3.12.23); Flamborough-Redemption (8.3.12.24); Fergus-Maranatha (8.3.12.25); Fergus-Maranatha (8.3.12.26); Fergus-Maranatha (8.3.12.27); Calgary (8.3.12.28); Chatham-Ebenezer (8.3.12.29); Glanbrook-Trinity (8.3.12.30); Glanbrook-Trinity (8.3.12.31); Glanbrook-Trinity (8.3.12.32); Hamilton-Cornerstone (8.3.12.33); Burlington-Fellowship (8.3.12.34); Winnipeg-Redeemer (8.3.12.35); Neerlandia (8.3.12.36); Edmonton-Immanuel (8.3.12.37); Langley (8.3.12.38); Hamilton-Providence (8.3.12.39); Toronto-Bethel (8.3.12.40); Langley-Refuge (8.3.12.41); Grassie-Covenant (8.3.12.42); Burlington-Fellowship (8.3.11.4); Ancaster (8.3.1.1).

Points raised by the churches:

- Churches generally expressed favour for either the majority or minority report.
- Federative unity is not always the goal of efforts to seek ecclesiastical relationships; rather the goal, as stated by CO Art. 50, is that of a sister church relationship (Ecclesiastical Fellowship).
- Diversity of opinion and practice in our federation should not drive our decision-making with respect to changing our current practice.
- The Proposed Joint Church Order (PJCO) 2012 has no official standing and thus should not be used to determine our direction.
- The direction of the Majority Report could be adopted with additional safeguards such as the approbation of classis and the concurring advice of deputies of Regional Synod. Such safeguards both agree with the principles of our Church Order and is a sound check and balance to independentism.
- There are concerns about the danger of independentism.
- Membership in NAPARC and ICRC should not determine our ecclesiastical relationships.
- Local experience strongly confirms that the recommendations of the Majority Report will function well.
- Pulpit and table fellowship should be possible only when there is official contact at a federative level.
- Different classes in our federation acting differently when it comes to inter-church relationships has the potential of creating disunity in our own federation.
- There is concern that the Minority Report binds the conscience of the local consistory.
- Input regarding the proposed change to CO 50:
 - a proposed change to the CO must come by way of a submission by the churches following the ecclesiastical route;
 - the proposed addition of the phrase “minor points of doctrine” is concerning.
- The 12-year term is too long as it has the potential pitfall of ministers becoming too invested in this work.
- The proposed change to the committee’s makeup will not necessarily lighten the workload.
- The level of involvement and access to General Synod material that fraternal delegates and observers are granted is concerning.



- 1 • The phraseology of “transfer of membership” instead of “attestations” is
- 2 concerning.
- 3 • To characterize our current approach to ecclesiastical relationships as top-down or
- 4 hierarchical is inaccurate.
- 5 • The phraseology “element of spectrum to our relationships” can inadvertently lead
- 6 to losing sight of the scriptural norm of church unity.

7 **2. Admissibility**

- 8 2.1 The reports were declared admissible.
- 9 2.2 The submissions from the churches were declared admissible.

10 **3. Decisions**

11 **Synod decided:**

- 12 3.1 To receive the reports and correspondence with gratitude;
- 13 3.2 To thank the CRCA and CCCNA committee members for their work;
- 14 3.3 To appoint one committee to be mandated to oversee all aspects of ecumenical relations,
- 15 and to name this committee the Committee on Ecumenical Relations (CER)
- 16 (Recommendation 4. Single Committee);
- 17 3.4 To appoint twelve members to the CER from across the federation, one of whom should
- 18 be convenor (Recommendation 5. Size of Committee);
- 19 3.5 To set the length of time on the committee to be three years, renewable three times
- 20 (Recommendation 6. Number of Consecutive Terms on the Committee);
- 21 3.6 To give to the CER the following general mandate (Recommendation 7. General
- 22 Mandate):
 - 23 a) To continue contact with churches with whom we are in ecumenical relations;
 - 24 b) To send an appropriate number of delegates to represent the CanRC churches
 - 25 at ICRC and NAPARC;
 - 26 c) To work in consultation with individual CanRC churches and classes that
 - 27 maintain contact with churches for which the CER also has a mandate;
 - 28 d) Upon request, to advise CanRC churches regarding the identity of other
 - 29 churches and our relationship with them;
 - 30 e) To report on any contact with a church with whom we are not in an ecumenical
 - 31 relationship;
 - 32 f) To appoint one of its members to validate and submit to the treasurer of the
 - 33 General Fund all expenses being submitted for committee work;
 - 34 g) To submit its report to the churches six months prior to the convening of
 - 35 general synod (a supplementary report can be submitted if necessary);
 - 36 h) To facilitate hospitality support for fraternal delegates and observers, in
 - 37 consultation with the convening church, at each general synod;
- 38 3.7 To adopt the following protocols for hosting fraternal delegates and observers to general
- 39 synod (Recommendation 8. Protocols for Hosting at General Synods).
 - 40 a) Invitations: It is the responsibility of the CER to send invitations to all
 - 41 churches in Ecclesiastical Fellowship. The CER may also send invitations to
 - 42 any other church when they deem it would be beneficial to our ecumenical
 - 43 relations. The CER shall inform the convening church of these invitations.



- 1 b) Hospitality: It is the responsibility of the CER, in consultation with the
2 convening church, to facilitate the transport of invited delegates and official
3 observers between a nearby airport, the location of the synod meetings, and
4 their place of accommodation, and to provide lodging and meals for all those
5 invited (and spouses if applicable) for the duration of their attendance at the
6 general synod. Costs associated with this hospitality shall be paid out of the
7 general fund. The CER will assist the convening church and synod in hosting
8 invited delegates and official observers from other churches, explaining
9 procedures, ensuring delegates have the materials they are entitled to, etc.,
10 especially as some delegates will be from foreign (church) cultures.
- 11 c) Fraternal Delegates: (churches with whom we have Ecclesiastical Fellowship)
12 Fraternal delegates shall:
13 i. have access to all internal synod documents;
14 ii. be invited to participate in deliberations in meetings of advisory
15 committees;
16 iii. be given an opportunity to address the synod;
17 iv. be given the privilege of the floor (entitled to deliberate and advise,
18 but not vote).
- 19 d) Fraternal Observers: (other churches)
20 Fraternal observers shall:
21 i. be given an opportunity to address the synod;
22 ii. be invited to be present at meetings of advisory committees;
23 iii. be given the privilege of the floor during the time of their bringing
24 greetings to the synod on behalf of the churches that sent them;
25 iv. be given other privileges if synod executive deems that to be of
26 benefit.

27 3.8 To request the CER to further consider the mandate of GS 2019 (Art. 149 Rec. 4.1.1),
28 specifically taking into account the input received from the churches in response to the
29 majority and minority reports regarding the matters of:

30 3.8.1 Categories of Ecumenical Relationships (Recommendation 1);

31 3.8.2 Rules for Ecumenical Relationships (Recommendation 2);

32 3.8.3 Revision of Church Order Article 50 (Recommendation 3):

33 3.8.3.1 To consider, if a change to CO Art. 50 is deemed necessary, whether this
34 should be initiated by a local church.

35 3.9 To request the CER:

36 3.9.1 to ensure that rule 6 of our Rules for Ecclesiastical Fellowship is honoured;

37 3.9.2 to demonstrate in its report the consistency of its proposals with Scripture,
38 Confession, and Church Order.

39 4. Grounds

40 4.1 Re 3.2: there is complete agreement between the Majority and Minority reports
41 regarding recommendations 4-8. The implementation of these recommendations will
42 serve the churches well.

43 4.2 Re 3.8, 3.9:



- 1 4.2.1 Opportunity was not afforded to the members of the committees to fully interact
2 with both the Majority and Minority Reports before they were submitted to
3 GS 2022.
- 4 4.2.2 Though much work has been done, there are matters in the report that appear
5 unfinished and could lead to unintended consequences. For example, see letter of
6 Ancaster (8.3.1.1) which indicates that there may be unintentional loss of pulpit
7 fellowship for foreign churches who had an EF relationship but have been moved
8 to Corresponding Relationship.
- 9 4.2.3 Adopting a new structure for ecclesiastical relations is very significant for the
10 churches. Though some churches speak of a local urgency, the weightiness of this
11 matter and the significant amount of feedback received from the churches calls for
12 prudence.
- 13 4.2.4 Re 3.9.1: it was ascertained that the adopted rules of ecclesiastical fellowship were
14 not fully followed. Rule 6 states “When major changes or additions are being
15 considered to the confessions, church government or liturgy, the churches shall be
16 informed in order that as much consultation can take place as possible before a
17 final decision is taken”.
- 18 4.2.5 Re 3.9.2: it is important that the churches understand the rationale of any proposed
19 changes.
- 20

21 **Article 109 – Appeal against RSW 2021 Art. 31 (*In-person Worship*)**

22 **1. Material**

- 23 1.1 Letter of Appeal from Br. T. Kanis & Sr. C. Kanis including supporting documents.
24 (8.6.11.1)

25 **2. Admissibility**

- 26 2.1 The appeal was declared admissible.

27 **3. Decisions**

28 **Synod decided:**

- 29 3.1 To deny the appeal.

30 **4. Grounds**

- 31 4.1 The appellants request that GS 2022 “...overturn the decision of the prior assemblies”
32 i.e., the prior decisions of a council, a classis, and a regional synod. CO Art. 37,
33 however, restricts general synods to judging the decisions of regional synods.
- 34 4.2 The appellants request that GS 2022 “reviews all the documents that have been
35 provided and to either overturn the decision of the prior assemblies or show clearly
36 using scripture (sic) that the consistory has the authority to forbid in-person worship.”
37 It is, however, the appellants’ responsibility to demonstrate that a decision of a minor
38 assembly is contrary to the Word of God or the Church Order (CO Art. 31). The
39 appellants have not done so.

40 The following synod member requested that his abstention from voting be recorded: K. Janssen.

41 The following synod member requested that his negative vote be recorded: B. Vane.



1
2 *During the making of this decision one of the previously absent synod members joined the*
3 *meeting.*
4

5 **Article 110 – Appeals against GS 2019 Art. 142 (application of CO Art. 55)**

6 **1. Material**

- 7 1.1 Appeals of Fergus-Maranatha (8.6.8.1) and Calgary (8.6.8.2) asking GS 2022 to judge
8 that GS 2019 “erred in giving the SCBP the mandate to provide the churches with a list
9 of songs for immediate testing, in the worship services” and to “re-affirm the principle
10 that CO Article 55 limits the use of psalms and hymns in the worship services to those
11 approved by General Synod.”

12 **2. Admissibility**

13 The appeals were declared admissible.

14 **3. Decisions**

15 **Synod decided:**

- 16 3.1 To deal with the appeals together.
17 3.2 To sustain the appeals of Fergus-Maranatha and Calgary that GS 2019 erred, because it
18 had approved sight unseen the songs for use in worship.

19 **4. Grounds**

- 20 4.1 Both appeals request the same judgments.
21 4.2 In CO Article 55, the churches agreed that “The metrical Psalms adopted by general
22 synods as well as hymns approved by general synod shall be sung in the worship
23 services.” While GS 2010 recognized that CO Art. 55 clearly limits “the churches’
24 singing to synodically-adopted songs” (Acts GS 2010 Art. 171, Cons. 3.5), it also
25 recognized that general synod may provisionally approve songs for use in worship in
26 order to test them (Acts GS 2010 Art. 161, Cons. 3.3, Rec. 4). However, in “giving the
27 SCBP the mandate to provide the churches with a list of songs for immediate testing, in
28 the worship services,” GS 2019 exceeded the limits imposed by CO Art. 55 by
29 approving songs for use in the worship services sight unseen.
30

31 The following synod member abstained from voting as per CO Art. 32: L. Kok.
32

33 **Article 111 – SCBP – Additional Psalms and Hymns**

34 **1. Material**

- 35 1.1 Report of the Standing Committee of the Book of Praise;
36 1.1.1 Supplement Report 1 – Psalms and Hymns (8.2.2.2);
37 1.1.2 Supplement Report 2 – Psalms and Hymns (8.2.2.3).
38 1.2 Submissions from the following churches: Dunnville (8.3.2.1), Niagara-South (8.3.2.2),
39 Elora (8.3.2.3), Nooksack Valley (8.3.2.4), St. Albert (8.3.2.5), Fergus-North (8.3.2.6),
40 Burlington/Waterdown-Rehoboth (8.3.2.7), Aldergrove (8.3.2.8), Devon (8.3.2.9, 8.3.2.10),



1 Smithville (8.3.2.11), Yarrow (8.3.2.12), Spring Creek (8.3.2.13), Coaldale (8.3.2.14),
 2 Fergus-Maranatha (8.3.2.15), Carman-East (8.3.2.16), Flamborough-Redemption
 3 (8.3.2.17), Owen Sound (8.3.2.18), Calgary (8.3.2.19), Glanbrook-Trinity (8.3.2.20),
 4 Barrhead (8.3.2.21), Willoughby Heights (8.3.2.22), Hamilton-Cornerstone (8.3.2.23),
 5 Winnipeg-Redeemer (8.3.2.24), Grand Valley (8.3.2.25), Ancaster (8.3.2.26, 8.3.2.27,
 6 8.3.2.28, 8.3.2.29), Neerlandia (8.3.2.30), Edmonton-Immanuel (8.3.2.31), Lynden
 7 (8.3.2.32), Carman-West (8.3.2.33), Orangeville (8.3.2.34, 8.3.2.35, 8.3.2.36), Hamilton-
 8 Providence (8.3.2.37, 8.3.2.38), Burlington-Ebenezer (8.3.2.39), Grand Rapids (8.3.2.40),
 9 Toronto-Bethel (8.3.2.41), Lincoln-Vineyard (8.3.2.42), Langley-Refuge (8.3.2.43),
 10 Coaldale (8.7.2).

11 2. Admissibility

- 12 2.1 The report was declared admissible.
 13 2.2 Supplement 1 was declared admissible.
 14 2.3 Supplement 2 was declared admissible.
 15 2.4 The submissions from the churches were declared admissible.

16 Grounds re Supplement 2 – Psalms and Hymns – late submission

- 17 2a The sheer volume of work required to process feedback from the churches was too
 18 great a task for the committee to complete six months prior to GS 2022.
 19 2b It is wise to treat proposed additions to the *Book of Praise* as one project, rather
 20 than a number of different projects at different stages. The Supplements 1 and 2
 21 are part of the report as a whole.

22 3. Decisions

23 Synod decided:

- 24 3.1 To provisionally approve the songs as updated and recommended by the SCBP in the
 25 Supplements 1 and 2 of the Report for testing in the churches (optional use in the
 26 worship services) for final consideration and decision by Synod 2025.
- 27 3.1.1 Psalms: 4, 5 (Recommendation 1), 8, 11, 13, 19, 22, 23, 32, 39, 41, 46, 51, 57, 59,
 28 64, 69, 84, 90, 95, 98, 100, 103, 104, 106, 110, 111, 112, 113, 117, 120, 130, 149,
 29 150.
- 30 3.1.2 Hymns: A Shoot Will Spring, Abide With Me, All Creatures of Our God and
 31 King, Amazing Grace, Angels From the Realms of Glory, Before the Throne of
 32 God Above, Christians Awake, Come Thou Almighty King, Come O Fount of
 33 Every Blessing (with updated language), Come Thou Long Expected Jesus, Come
 34 You Faithful Raise the Strain, Crown Him with Many Crowns, For Your Gift of
 35 God the Spirit, God Moves in a Mysterious Way, Guide Me O My Great
 36 Redeemer, Hark the Herald Angels Sing, How Bright Appears the Morning Star,
 37 How Deep the Father's Love for Us, How Great Thou Art, In Christ Alone, Joy to
 38 World! The Lord is Come, Let All Things Now Living, Man of Sorrows! What a
 39 Name, May the Mind of Christ My Saviour, My Lord I Did Not Choose You, O
 40 Christ Our Hope Our Desire, O Come All Ye Faithful, O Sacred Head Now
 41 Wounded, Sing and Praise to God Who Reigns Above, Speak O Lord, Take My
 42 Life and Let It Be, Threefold Amen, When I Survey the Wondrous Cross, When



1 Peace Like a River, Yet Not I But Through Christ in Me, Your Law O Lord is Our
2 Delight

3 3.2 To approve the recommendations of the SCBP to remove certain psalms and hymns
4 from the original submission.

5 3.2.1 Psalms: 30, 55, 60, 63, 145

6 3.2.2 Hymns: A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing, Come Behold the Wondrous Mystery, Hail
7 the Day That Sees Him Rise, How Shall They Hear the Word of God, Praise the
8 Saviour Now and Ever, Worship Christ the Risen King

9 3.2.3 Churches which would like to interact further with the rationale of the SCBP
10 concerning these songs may make these submissions to the SCBP for their further
11 consideration.

12 3.3 To mandate the SCBP re: Proposed Psalms and Hymns 2022:

13 3.3.1 To provide the churches with a single file of the updated and recommended songs;

14 3.3.2 To receive for evaluation the above submissions from the churches;

15 3.3.3 To encourage the churches to send responses directly to the committee before
16 March 1, 2024. Individual church members are asked to send their submissions
17 through their consistories or councils;

18 3.3.4 To review the suitability of individual hymns which we already have in our Book
19 of Praise, for possible change, deletion, or improvement;

20 3.3.5 To evaluate additional input from the churches and prepare a report for the
21 churches with recommendations no less than 6 months prior to the next General
22 Synod.

23 4. Grounds

24 4.1 Many churches express concerns about the lack of time available for giving feedback.
25 This was made more challenging by the restrictions on public worship as a result of
26 COVID-19.

27 4.2 Waiting for a final decision from General Synod 2025 provides the churches ample time
28 to give additional feedback, and the committee to take the time to consider further its
29 recommendations.

30 4.3 None of the churches which interacted with specific songs flagged any of them for
31 scriptural error. Concerns regarding versification, language, and melody can be
32 considered through the testing process.

33 34 **Article 112 – SCBP – Report Sections 1, 3 and 4**

35 Committee 1 presented draft 1 of a report on the Report of the Standing Committee for the
36 Publication of the *Book of Praise*. The report was discussed. The committee took the report back
37 for refinement.

38 39 **Article 113 – Closing Devotions**

40 Some announcements were made regarding agenda items and housekeeping matters.

41 Rev. Slaa had those present sing Ps. 119:26, read Psalm 119:65-72, and led in closing prayer.



1 *Synod adjourned until 9:30 am the next day.*

2
3 **Appendix: Minority Report on RS overtures re GS 2004 Art. 115 (Hymn Cap)**

4 *Note: The following report was not voted on by GS 2022. See GS 105 Art. 105 and Art. 115*
5 *regarding its status and inclusion as an appendix in these Synod Acts.*

6
7 **1. Material**

8 1.1 Overture: RSE 2020 to Remove the Current Hymn Cap for the *Book of Praise* (8.4.1)

9 1.2 Overture: RSW 2021 to Rescind the decision of GS 2004 art. 115 – re: Hymn Cap

10 1.3 Submissions from the following churches:

11 Toronto-Bethel (8.3.2.41), Owen Sound (8.5.1.1), Carman-West (8.5.1.2), Brampton-
12 Grace (8.5.1.3), Niagara-South (8.5.1.4), Nooksack Valley (8.5.1.5), St. Albert (8.5.1.6),
13 Willoughby Heights (8.5.1.7), Smithville (8.5.1.8), Yarrow (8.5.1.9), Cloverdale
14 (8.5.1.10), Attercliffe (8.5.1.11), Coaldale (8.5.1.12), Carman-East (8.5.1.13),
15 Flamborough-Redemption (8.5.1.14), Fergus-Maranatha (8.5.1.15), Glanbrook-Trinity
16 (8.5.1.16), Barrhead (8.5.1.17), Neerlandia (8.5.1.18), Edmonton-Immanuel (8.5.1.19),
17 Lynden (8.5.1.20), Burlington-Ebenezer (8.5.1.21), Grand Rapids (8.5.1.22), Edmonton-
18 Providence (8.5.1.23), Owen Sound (8.5.3.1), Ancaster (8.5.3.2), Willoughby Heights
19 (8.5.3.3), Neerlandia (8.5.3.4), Edmonton-Immanuel (8.5.3.5), Langley (8.5.3.6)

20
21 **2. Admissibility**

22 2.1 RSE 2020 to Remove the Current Hymn Cap for the *Book of Praise* was declared
23 admissible.

24 2.2 RSW 2021 to Rescind the Decision of GS 2004 Art. 115 – re: Hymn Cap was declared
25 admissible.

26 2.3 Submissions from the churches were declared admissible.

27 **Grounds**

28 2.1 Both overtures are applying the decision of GS 2019 (Art. 64, Cons. 4.4) and CO Art. 33.

29 **3. Decisions**

30 Synod decided:

31 3.1 To work with both overtures together.

32 3.2 To adopt the recommendation of both overtures to remove the cap of 100 hymns
33 regarding the *Book of Praise*.

34 **4. Grounds**

35 4.1 Re: 3.1

36 4.1.1 Both overtures seek the removal of the cap of 100 hymns regarding the *Book of*
37 *Praise*, although providing different considerations.

38 4.1.2 Most churches interacted with both overtures in one submission to GS 2022.

39 4.2 Re: 3.2

- 1 4.2.1 RSE 2020, along with many churches, correctly note that the Psalms must retain a
2 predominant place in the liturgy of the Reformed churches. That was also the
3 SCBP’s rationale for setting a limit of 100 hymns. In its report to General Synod
4 Chatham 2004, the SCBP references as confirmation of this position the preface to
5 the *Book of Praise* (p. v). There we find a brief history of congregational singing in
6 the context of Reformed churches which includes the following statement,
7 “Although in Reformed liturgy the Psalms have a predominant place, our churches
8 have not excluded the use of scriptural hymns. They, too, constitute a thank offering
9 of praise when we sing of the facts of redemption by God in Jesus Christ our Lord.”
- 10 4.2.2 The churches have received the 150 psalms from the hand of the LORD, and we
11 should value them as a treasure. However, having a hymn cap will not guarantee
12 such valuing to continue. The predominance of psalm-singing is a matter of
13 principle, not a matter of song availability. Realistically, the predominance of psalm-
14 singing in the worship services will only be maintained by the oversight of the
15 consistory in approving the liturgy as presented for worship each week. That
16 decision is rooted in the exercise of sound Reformed liturgical principle, not by a
17 stringently limited hymn section.
- 18 4.2.3 The current measure of limiting the number of hymns to 100 gives the perception
19 that singing hymns is less desirable than singing psalms. However, it is clear from
20 the preface of the *Book of Praise* that hymns are not less desirable.
- 21 4.2.4 Though some churches are concerned that removing the hymn cap will be to the
22 detriment of psalm-singing, the possibility still exists that churches sing more
23 hymns than psalms or even hymns exclusively within the context of a 100-hymn
24 cap. On the other hand, churches can still value the psalms as a treasure and sing
25 them within the context of no hymn cap.
- 26 4.2.5 Although some churches see the capping of hymns as helpful in ensuring that only
27 doctrinally sound hymns are added to the *Book of Praise*, CO Art. 55 ensures the
28 cooperation of the churches regarding the hymns sung in worship and prevents the
29 singing of hymns in worship which have not been agreed to by the churches. This
30 regulation will continue to function without the hymn cap.
- 31 4.2.6 The current measure of limiting the number of hymns has the unfortunate effect
32 that we deprive ourselves of many good hymns. So long as good hymns exist, and
33 new ones are written, the churches will constantly wrestle with the difficulty of
34 having to remove good hymns to make room for other excellent hymns.
- 35 4.2.7 Although some churches suggest that a limit of 100 hymns allows for enough
36 hymns aligning with the seasons of the Christian calendar, the reality is that there
37 is very little room to approve additional hymns for specific occasions. There
38 should be room for additional suitable hymns.
- 39 4.2.8 Several churches caution Synod 2022 about the historical development and alleged
40 consequences of additional hymns. However, there remain many faithful churches
41 today with a larger collection of hymns, including those with which we have
42 ecclesiastical fellowship.
- 43 4.2.9 Increasing the selection of hymns available for use in the churches does not mean
44 the churches will be less selective regarding quality. Hymns will still need to be
45 approved by a general synod (CO Art. 55).



-
- 1 4.2.10 Although there is a concern that the pressure for more hymns appears to be a direct
2 influence of evangelical worship in our culture and surroundings, this is an
3 unproven assertion.
4 4.2.11 Although some churches express concern about the number of songs in a new
5 *Book of Praise* and the ability to truly know the content of the book, these are
6 subjective concerns which do not present a barrier to removing the hymn cap.
7