



ACTS

of

General Synod 2022

of the

Canadian Reformed Churches

held at

Guelph, Ontario

from

May 10-23, 2022

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Abbreviations and Nomenclature.....	12
Day 1 — Morning Session	17
Article 1 – Opening of Synod	17
Article 2 – Credentials	17
Article 3 – Election of Officers.....	17
Article 4 – Constitution of Synod	17
Day 1 — Afternoon Session.....	18
Article 5 – Reopening	18
Article 6 – Late Submissions	18
Article 7 – Housekeeping Matters	18
Article 8 – Agenda	19
Article 9 – Advisory Committees	27
Day 1 — Evening Session	28
Article 10 – Reopening	28
Article 11 – ERQ – Fraternal Delegate Address.....	28
Article 12 – URCNA – Fraternal Delegate Address.....	28
Article 13 – OPC – Fraternal Delegate Address	28
Article 14 – RCUS – Letter of Greetings.....	28
Article 15 – GGRI – Letter of Greetings	28
Article 16 – GKN – Letter of Greetings	29
Article 17 – DGK – Letter of Greetings	29
Article 18 – Prayer	29
Article 19 – CRTS - Appointment of Professor of Ministry and Mission.....	29
Article 20 – Closing Devotions.....	30
Day 2 — Morning Session	30
Article 21 – Reopening	30
Article 22 – Adoption of the Acts, Publication on the Internet	30
Article 23 – Voting	30
Day 2 — Evening Session	30
Article 24 – Reopening	30
Article 25 – KPCK – Fraternal Delegate Address	31
Article 26 – FRCNA – Fraternal Observer Address	31
Article 27 – FRCA – Fraternal Delegate Address	31

Article 28 – FRCSA – Fraternal Delegate Address	31
Article 29 – Archives	31
Article 30 – Address Church.....	33
Article 31 – Days of Prayer	34
Article 32 – General Fund.....	34
Article 33 – Closing	35
Day 3 — Morning Session	35
Article 34 – Reopening	35
Article 35 – Acts	35
Article 36 – Coaldale request re GS 2019 Art. 62 and 64	36
Article 37 – SCBP (Standing Committee for the Publication of the <i>Book of Praise</i>)	36
Article 38 – Overture RSE 2020 to remove the bracketed qualifier “For the Second Service” from the Abbreviated Form for the Celebration of the Lord’s Supper	36
Day 3 — Evening Session	36
Article 39 – Reopening	36
Article 40 – RCNZ – Fraternal Delegate Address	36
Article 41 – ARPC – Fraternal Observer Address.....	37
Article 42 – GS 2019 Expenses	37
Article 43 – Overture RSE 2020 to remove the bracketed qualifier “For the Second Service” from the Abbreviated Form for the Celebration of the Lord’s Supper	38
Article 44 – CWeb (Committee for the Website).....	39
Article 45 – Housekeeping Matter	40
Article 46 – Closing Devotions.....	40
Day 4 — Morning & Afternoon Session	40
Article 47 – Reopening	40
Article 48 – Acts	41
Article 49 – Appeal against GS 2004 Art. 115 and GS 2019 Art. 142 (<i>Hymn Cap</i>)	41
Article 50 – SCBP – Additional Psalms and Hymns	41
Article 51 – CRCA-CCCNA Study Reports on the Execution of CO Art. 50	41
Article 52 – Appeal against GS 2019 Art. 141	41
Article 53 – Closing Devotions.....	41
Day 5 — Morning Session	42
Article 54 – Reopening	42
Article 55 – Acts	42
Article 56 – CRTS (Board of Governors).....	42
Article 57 – SCBP – Section 2.....	42
Article 58 – Appeal against GS 2004 Art. 115 and GS 2019 Art. 142 (<i>Hymn Cap</i>)	42
Day 5 — Afternoon Session.....	42



Article 59 – Reopening	42
Article 60 – Confidential	42
Article 61 – CRTS (Board of Governors).....	43
Article 62 – Appeal against GS 2004 Art. 115 and GS 2019 Art. 142 (<i>Hymn Cap</i>)	44
Article 63 – SCBP – Section 2.....	45
Article 64 – Appeal against RSE 2019 Art. 9.....	45
Article 65 – Appeal against RSE 2020 Art. 13 (<i>Language of questions in Liturgical Forms</i>) 46	
Day 5 — Evening Session	46
Article 66 – Reopening	46
Article 67 – CRTS (Board of Governors).....	46
Article 68 – Closing Devotions.....	46
Day 6 — Morning Session	47
Article 69 – Reopening	47
Article 70 – Acts	47
Article 71 – SCBP – Section 2.....	47
Article 72 – CPTPF (Committee for Pastoral Training Program Funding).....	49
Article 73 – Appeal against RSW 2021 Art. 33 (<i>Hymn Cap Overture – procedure</i>).....	50
Article 74 – Appeal against RSW 2021 Art. 33 (<i>Hymn Cap Overture – grounds</i>)	50
Day 6 — Afternoon Session.....	50
Article 75 – Reopening	50
Article 76 – Appeal against RSW 2021 Art. 33 (<i>Hymn Cap Overture – procedure</i>).....	50
Article 77 – Appeal against RSW 2021 Art. 33 (<i>Hymn Cap Overture – grounds</i>)	51
Article 78 – Appeal against RSE 2020 Art. 13 (<i>Language of questions in Liturgical Forms</i>) 52	
Article 79 – Appeal against RSW 2021 Art. 31 (<i>In-person Worship</i>).....	54
Article 80 – Acts – GS 2022 Art. 60.....	54
Article 81 – Confidential	54
Article 82 – Appeal against GS 2019 Art. 98 and Art. 141 (<i>Personal</i>)	54
Day 6 — Evening Session	54
Article 83 – Reopening	54
Article 84 – GGRCI – Fraternal Delegate Address	54
Article 85 – Closing Devotions.....	55
Day 7 — Morning Session	55
Article 86 – Reopening	55
Article 87 – Acts	55
Article 88 – CRCA-CCCNA Study Reports on the Execution of CO Art. 50	55
Article 89 – CRTS (Board of Governors) Supplementary Report (<i>Foreign Students</i>).....	55
Article 90 – Overtures RSE 2020 and RSW 2021 re GS 2004 Art. 115 (<i>Hymn Cap</i>)	55

Day 7 — Afternoon Session.....	56
Article 91 – Reopening	56
Article 92 – Overtures RSE 2020 and RSW 2021 re GS 2004 Art. 115 (<i>Hymn Cap</i>) (cont’d) 56	
Article 93 – Closing Devotions.....	56
Day 8 — Morning Session	56
Article 94 – Reopening	56
Article 95 – Acts	56
Article 96 – CRTS (Board of Governors) Supplementary Report (<i>Foreign Students</i>).....	56
Article 97 – Appeal against RSW 2021 Art. 31 (<i>In-person Worship</i>).....	56
Article 98 – Financial Report of GS 2019	57
Article 99 – Acts – GS 2022 Art. 80-82	57
Article 100 – Appeal against GS 2019 art. 98 and Art. 141 (<i>Personal</i>)	57
Article 101 – Overture RSE 2021 re Shorter Lord’s Supper Forms.....	57
Article 102 – CRCA-CCCNA Study Report on the Execution of CO Art. 50.....	58
Day 8 — Afternoon Session.....	58
Article 103 – Reopening	58
Article 104 – HRCNA Fraternal Observer Address	58
Article 105 – Overtures RSE 2020 and RSW 2021 re GS 2004 Art. 115 (<i>Hymn Cap</i>)	58
Article 106 – SCBP – Additional Psalms and Hymns	61
Day 8 — Evening Session	61
Article 107 – Reopening	61
Article 108 – CRCA-CCCNA Study Reports on the Execution of CO Art. 50	61
Article 109 – Appeal against RSW 2021 Art. 31 (<i>In-person Worship</i>).....	65
Article 110 – Appeals against GS 2019 Art. 142 (<i>Application of CO Art. 55</i>)	66
Article 111 – SCBP – Additional Psalms and Hymns	66
Article 112 – SCBP – Report Sections 1, 3 and 4	68
Article 113 – Closing Devotions.....	68
Day 9 — Morning Session	69
Article 114 – Reopening	69
Article 115 – Acts	69
Article 116 – Not Archiving Certain Sensitive Items.....	69
Article 117 – Appeal against RSE 2019 Art. 10 (<i>Worship Services on Days of Commemoration</i>).....	69
Article 118 – Overture RSE 2021 re Shorter Lord’s Supper Forms.....	69
Article 119 – CRTS (Board of Governors) Supplementary Report (<i>Foreign Students</i>).....	69
Article 120 – SCBP – Report Sections 1, 3 and 4	71
Article 121 – CER (Committee on Ecumenical Relations) General Mandate.....	72

Article 122 – FRCA (Free Reformed Churches of Australia)	73
Day 9 — Afternoon Session.....	73
Article 123 – Reopening	73
Article 124 – IRB (Reformed Churches in Brazil)	73
Article 125 – GGRI (Reformed Churches in Indonesia)	74
Article 126 – GGRCI (Calvinist Reformed Churches in Indonesia)	75
Article 127 – GGRI-Timor (Reformed Churches in Indonesia - Timor).....	76
Article 128 – KPCK (Kosin Presbyterian Church in Korea)	77
Article 129 – IRCK (Independent Reformed Church in Korea).....	77
Article 130 – RCK (Reformed Churches in Korea).....	77
Article 131 – GKv (Reformed Churches in The Netherlands (liberated)).....	77
Article 132 – DGK (The Reformed Churches [The Netherlands]).....	78
Article 133 – GKN (Reformed Churches The Netherlands)	78
Article 134 – FCS (Free Church of Scotland)	78
Article 135 – FCC (Free Church of Scotland (Continuing))	79
Article 136 – FRCSA (Free Reformed Churches in South Africa)	79
Article 137 – ICRC (International Conference of Reformed Churches)	79
Article 138 – Reopening	80
Article 139 – Appeals against RSE 2019 Art. 11 (<i>Pulpit Access</i>)	80
Day 9 — Evening Session	80
Article 140 – Reopening	80
Article 141 – Appeals against RSE 2019 Art. 11 (<i>Pulpit Access</i>)	80
Article 142 – Appeal against RSE 2019 Art. 10 (<i>Worship Services on Days of Commemoration</i>).....	80
Article 143 – Overture RSE 2021 re Place of Preparatory Exams	81
Article 144 – KPCK (Kosin Presbyterian Church in Korea)	83
Article 145 – ICRC (International Conference of Reformed Churches)	83
Article 146 – RCNZ (Reformed Churches in New Zealand)	85
Article 147 – FRCSA (Free Reformed Churches in South Africa)	85
Article 148 – DGK (The Reformed Churches [The Netherlands]).....	86
Article 149 – GKN (Reformed Churches The Netherlands)	87
Article 150 – Appeal against GS 1980 and GS 1983 (<i>Changes to Liturgical Forms</i>)	88
Article 151 – Closing Devotions.....	90
Day 10 — Morning Session	90
Article 152 – Reopening	90
Article 153 – Acts	90
Article 154 – Not Archiving Certain Sensitive Items	90

Article 155 – Appeals against RSE 2019 Art. 11 (<i>Pulpit Access</i>)	91
Article 156 – Overture RSE 2021 re Shorter Lord’s Supper Forms	92
Article 157 – CNSF (Committee for the Needy Students’ Fund).....	93
Article 158 – CBT (Committee on Bible Translations).....	94
Article 159 – NAPARC (North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council)	95
Article 160 – ERQ (Reformed Churches in Quebec)	96
Article 161 – FRCNA (Free Reformed Churches of North America).....	96
Article 162 – HRCNA (Heritage Reformed Churches in North America).....	97
Article 163 – KPCA-K (Korean Presbyterian Church in America (Kosin))	98
Article 164 – OPC (Orthodox Presbyterian Church).....	98
Article 165 – RCUS (Reformed Church in the United States).....	99
Article 166 – RPCNA (Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America)	99
Article 167 – URCNA (United Reformed Churches in North America).....	100
Article 168 – ARPC (Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church).....	101
Article 169 – FRCA (Free Reformed Churches of Australia)	101
Article 170 – Appointments.....	103
Article 171 – Reporting of the Convening Church and the Review Church	104
Article 172 – Submission of Committee Reports to the Churches and Synod	104
Article 173 – Confidential Acts	105
Article 174 – Concluding Matters.....	105
Article 175 – Chairman’s words.....	105
Article 176 – Closing	106
APPENDICES	107
APPENDIX 1 – Opening Address by Rev. Peter Feenstra.....	107
APPENDIX 2 – Église réformée du Québec (ERQ) – Address by Rev. Paulin Bédard	109
APPENDIX 3 – United Reformed Churches in North America (URCNA) – Address by Rev. Steve Swets	112
APPENDIX 4 – Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC) – Address by Mr. Mark Bube	115
APPENDIX 5 – Reformed Church in the United States (RCUS) – Letter from Rev. Ron Potter	118
APPENDIX 6 – Reformed Churches in Indonesia (GGRI) – Letter from Rev. Sarius Ismail	119
APPENDIX 7 – Reformed Churches The Netherlands (GKN) – Letter received from Mr. Ad Scheele	120
APPENDIX 8 – The Reformed Churches [in The Netherlands] (DGK) – Letter from Rev. C. Koster	121
APPENDIX 9 – Kosin Presbyterial Church in Korea (KPCK) – Address by Rev. HyungTae Kim.....	122

APPENDIX 10 – Free Reformed Churches of North America (FRCNA) – Address by Rev. Rob VanDoodewaard	124
APPENDIX 11 – Free Reformed Church of Australia (FRCA) – Address by Rev. Axel Hagg	126
APPENDIX 12 – Free Reformed Churches in South Africa (FRCSA) - Address by Rev. Pieter Boon	129
APPENDIX 13 – Reformed Churches of New Zealand (RCNZ) – Address by Rev. David Stares	132
APPENDIX 14 – Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (ARPC) – Address by Rev. Jeff Kingswood	134
APPENDIX 15 – Calvinist Reformed Churches in Indonesia (GGRCI) – Address by Rev. Yonson Dethan	136
APPENDIX 16 – Heritage Reformed Church in North America (HRCNA) – Address by Rev. Pieter van der Hoek	138
APPENDIX 17 – Address to GS 2022 by Dr. Reuben Bredenhof	141
APPENDIX 18 – Address to GS 2022 by Dr. Jason VanVliet.....	143
APPENDIX 19 – Address to GS 2022 by Dr. Arjan deVisser	145
APPENDIX 20 – Speech by FRCA on Ecumenical Relations.....	146
APPENDIX 21 – Speech by FRCSA on Ecumenical Relations.....	149
APPENDIX 22 – Closing Address by Rev. John Ludwig.....	151
APPENDIX 23 – Regulation Ecclesiastical Exams.....	153
APPENDIX 24 – Minority Advisory Committee Report on RS overtures re GS 2004 Art. 115 (<i>Hymn Cap</i>).....	155
APPENDIX 25 – Report of the Edmonton-Immanuel CanRC regarding the finances of GS 2019.....	157
APPENDIX 26 – General Fund Report	158
APPENDIX 27 – Press Release General Synod 2022	159
APPENDIX 28 – Guidelines for General Synods	162
APPENDIX 29 – Guidelines for the Convening Church of a General Synod Regarding Synod Expenses.....	167
APPENDIX 30 – EF: Rules for Ecclesiastical Fellowship.....	168
Church Order of the Canadian Reformed Churches.....	169
I. Introduction	169
II. Offices and Supervision of Doctrine	169
III. The Assemblies	174
IV. Worship, Sacraments, and Ceremonies	177
V. Christian Discipline.....	179
Forms of Subscription.....	181



*From left to right: J. Temple, J. Jonker, C. Oosterhoff, B. Vane, C. Deboer, L. Kok, J. VanWoudenberg, L. Toet, P. Engbers
G. Bartels, H. Leyenhorst, J. Slaa, R. Vermeulen, C.J. VanderVelde, H. Moes, C. Feenstra, J. VanSpronsen, D. Wynia
Seated: A. Witten, K. Janssen, E. Kampen, J. Ludwig, S.C. Van Dam, D. Vandeburgt*



Executive: K. Janssen (1st clerk), E. Kampen (Vicechair), J. Ludwig (Chair), S.C. Van Dam (2nd clerk)



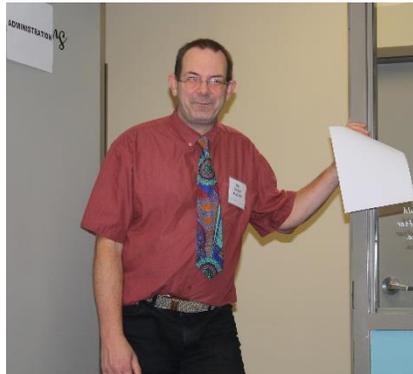
*J. Ludwig
Chair*

*E. Kampen
Vicechair*



*Jackie DeVries
Clerk's Assistant*

*Laura Vanleeuwen
Admin Assistant*



*K. Janssen
First Clerk*

*S.C. Van Dam
Second Clerk*





All delegates, fraternal delegates and fraternal observers attending on May 12, 2022



Guest delegates present on May 12, 2022

*From left to right: A. Hagg, S. 'tHart, J. Dykstra, D. VanBrugge, P. Boon, S. Swets
C. Cruchet, T. Collins, B.S. Sim, H.T. Kim, M. Bube, P. Bedard, J. Kingswood*

Abbreviations and Nomenclature

Since GS 2016 the following principles have been followed:

1. The abbreviation for a subcommittee is the abbreviation of the main committee dash abbreviation of the subcommittee. (E.g. CRCA-SRN, CCU-SCO).
2. Names of churches are shortened to “the PLACE NAME CanRC”. If a church is referred to by further qualifiers, a dash is added to the place name and then the qualifier is added. (E.g. the Aldergrove CanRC, the Carman East CanRC, the Neerlandia (North) CanRC, the Glanbrook-Trinity CanRC, the Tintern Spring Creek CanRC).
3. Other church federations are referred to by their name in English. The abbreviation used is the one used in the language of origin. (E.g. The Reformed Church of Quebec (ERQ), The Reformed Churches in The Netherlands (GKv)).
4. References to acts of general synods are according to the following formula: GS YEAR Art. ### Obs./Cons./Rec. #.#. If there is potential for confusing synods, the denominational acronym is added to GS (e.g. GS-GKv 2017 = the general synod of the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands held in 2017; GS-CanRC 2019 = the general synod of the Canadian Reformed Churches held in 2019).

Because various abbreviations have been used over the years, the following list has the most common English and language of origin abbreviations, with notes where church federations have changed names in the course of time.

The following list attempts to cover the abbreviations used in the *Acts* of GS 2013 through GS 2022.

Language of origin	<i>English equivalent</i>	Spelled out
ARC	<i>ARC</i>	American Reformed Church (part of the federation of CanRC)
ARPC	<i>ARPC</i>	Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church
ARTS	<i>ARTS</i>	Association of Reformed Theological Schools
ATS	<i>ATS</i>	Association of Theological Schools
BBK	<i>RCA</i>	<i>Betrekkingen met Buitenlandse Kerken</i> (Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad of a Dutch church federation)
BC	<i>BC</i>	Belgic Confession
BoG	<i>BoG</i>	Board of Governors (of CRTS)
CA	<i>CA</i>	Classis Alberta
CanRC	<i>CanRC</i>	Canadian Reformed Church(es)
CanRCs	<i>CanRCs</i>	Multiple Canadian Reformed Churches
CBT	<i>CBT</i>	Committee on Bible Translations (for the CanRC)

Language of origin	English equivalent	Spelled out
CBTNIV	<i>CBTNIV</i>	Committee on Bible Translation for the New International Version (of the Bible)
CCCNA	<i>CCCNA</i>	CCCNA Committee for Contact with Churches in North America
CCO	<i>CCO</i>	Classis Central Ontario
CCU	<i>CCU</i>	Committee for Church Unity
CCU-C	<i>CCU-C</i>	Committee for Church Unity - Coordinators
CCU-SCO	<i>CCU-SCO</i>	Committee for Church Unity – Subcommittee for Church Order
CCU-STE	<i>CCU-STE</i>	Committee for Church Unity – Subcommittee for Theological Education
CEIR	<i>CEIR</i>	Committee on Ecumenical and Interchurch Relations (of the OPC)
CER	<i>CER</i>	Committee on Ecumenical Relations (of the CanRC) – formed in 2022 through the merging of the CRCA and CCCNA
CERCU	<i>CERCU</i>	Committee for Ecumenical Relations and Church Unity (of the URCNA)
CGKN	<i>CRCN</i>	<i>Christelijk Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland</i> (Christian Reformed Churches in The Netherlands)
CICR	<i>CICR</i>	Committee on Interchurch Relations (of the ERQ)
CM	<i>CM</i>	Classis Manitoba
CNSF	<i>CNSF</i>	Committee for Needy Students' Fund
CN	<i>CN</i>	Classis Niagara
CO	<i>CO</i>	Church Order
COW	<i>COW</i>	Classis Ontario West
CPE	<i>CPE</i>	Classis Pacific East
CPW	<i>CPW</i>	Classis Pacific West
CPTPF	<i>CPTPF</i>	Committee for Pastoral Training Program Funding
CRCA	<i>CRCA</i>	Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad (of the CanRC)
CRCA-SRN	<i>CRCA-SRN</i>	Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad – Subcommittee for Relations with churches in The Netherlands
CRCAus	<i>CRCAus</i>	Christian Reformed Churches of Australia

Language of origin	English equivalent	Spelled out
CRCNA	<i>CRCNA</i>	Christian Reformed Church in North America
CRTs	<i>CRTS</i>	Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary
CWeb	<i>CWeb</i>	Committee for the Official Website (of the CanRC)
DGK	<i>TRC</i>	<i>De Gereformeerde Kerken</i> [in The Netherlands] (The Reformed Churches)
EF	<i>EF</i>	Ecclesiastical Fellowship
ERQ	<i>RCQ</i>	<i>Église Réformée du Quebec</i> (Reformed Church of Quebec)
ESV	<i>ESV</i>	English Standard Version (of the Bible)
FCC	<i>FCC</i>	Free Church of Scotland (Continuing)
FCS	<i>FCS</i>	Free Church of Scotland
FERC	<i>FERC</i>	First Evangelical Reformed Church (Singapore)
FRCA	<i>FRCA</i>	Free Reformed Churches of Australia
FRCNA	<i>FRCNA</i>	Free Reformed Churches of North America
FRCSA	<i>FRCSA</i>	Free Reformed Churches in South Africa (English is now the preferred language; previously also known as VGKSA)
FSBF	<i>FSBF</i>	Foreign Students' Bursary Fund
GGRCI GGRC	<i>CRCI</i>	<i>Gereja-Gereja Reformasi Calvini di Indonesia</i> (Reformed Calvinist Churches in Indonesia)
GGRI	<i>RCI</i>	<i>Gereja-Gereja Reformasi di Indonesia</i> (Reformed Churches in Indonesia)
GGRI-KalBar	<i>RCI-KalBar</i>	<i>Gereja-Gereja Reformasi di Indonesia – Kalimantan Barat</i> (Reformed Churches in Indonesia in the Province of Kalimantan Barat)
GGRI-NTT	<i>RCI-NTT</i>	<i>Gereja-Gereja Reformasi di Indonesia – Nusa Tenggara Timur</i> (Reformed Churches in Indonesia in the Province of Nusa Tenggara Timur)
GGRI-Papua	<i>RCI-Papua</i>	<i>Gereja-Gereja Reformasi di Indonesia – Papua</i> (Reformed Churches in Indonesia in the Province of Papua)
GGRI-Timor	<i>RCI-Timor</i>	<i>Gereja-Gereja Reformasi di Indonesia – Timor</i> (Reformed Churches in Indonesia on the island of Timor)

Language of origin	English equivalent	Spelled out
GKH DGK	<i>RCR</i> <i>TRC</i>	<i>Gereformeerde Kerken – Hersteld</i> (Reformed Churches – Restored) – now known as <i>De Gereformeerde Kerken</i> (The Reformed Churches)
GKN GKNvv	<i>RCN</i> <i>RCNvf</i>	<i>Gereformeerde Kerken Nederland</i> (Reformed Churches The Netherlands) – previously <i>Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (voorlopig verband)</i> (Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (temporary federation))
GKSA	<i>RCSA</i>	<i>Gereformeerde Kerke in Suid Afrika</i> (Reformed Churches in South Africa aka “Dopper Kerken”)
GKv	<i>RCN</i>	<i>Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland – vrijgemaakt</i> (Reformed Churches in the Netherlands – liberated)
HC	<i>HC</i>	Heidelberg Catechism
HRC HRCNA	<i>HRC</i> <i>HRCNA</i>	Heritage Reformed Churches in North America
ICRC	<i>ICRC</i>	International Conference of Reformed Churches
IPB	<i>PCB</i>	<i>Igreja Presbiteriana do Brasil</i> (Presbyterian Church of Brazil)
IRB	<i>RCB</i>	<i>Igrejas Reformadas do Brazil</i> (Reformed Churches in Brazil)
IRC	<i>IRC</i>	Interchurch Relations Committee (of the RPCNA)
IRCK	<i>IRCK</i>	Independent Reformed Church in Korea
KJV	<i>KJV</i>	King James Version (of the Bible)
KPCA-K	<i>KPCA-K</i>	Korean Presbyterian Church in America (Kosin)
KPCK	<i>KPCK</i>	Kosin Presbyterian Church in Korea (Previously cited as PCK (Kosin))
LRCA	<i>LRCA</i>	Liberated Reformed Church at Abbotsford
NAPARC	<i>NAPARC</i>	North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council
NASB	<i>NASB</i>	New American Standard Bible
NGK	<i>NRC</i>	<i>Nederlands Gereformeerde Kerken</i> (Netherlands Reformed Churches)
NIV/NIV84	<i>NIV/NIV84</i>	New International Version – 1984 Edition (of the Bible)
NIV2011	<i>NIV2011</i>	New International Version – 2011 Edition (of the Bible)

Language of origin	English equivalent	Spelled out
NKJV	<i>NKJV</i>	New King James Version (of the Bible)
NRSV	<i>NRSV</i>	New Revised Standard Version (of the Bible)
OPC	<i>OPC</i>	Orthodox Presbyterian Church
PCA	<i>PCA</i>	Presbyterian Church in America
PHC	<i>PHC</i>	Psalter-Hymnal Committee (of the URCNA)
PJCO	<i>PJCO</i>	Proposed Joint Church Order (for a merged CanRC & URCNA)
PNG	<i>PNG</i>	Papua New Guinea
PRCA	<i>PRCA</i>	Presbyterian Reformed Church of Australia
PTP	<i>PTP</i>	Pastoral Training Program (of CRTS)
RCK	<i>RCK</i>	Reformed Churches in Korea
RCNZ	<i>RCNZ</i>	Reformed Churches of New Zealand
RCUS	<i>RCUS</i>	Reformed Church in the United States
RPCC	<i>RPCC</i>	Reformed Presbyterian Church of Canada
RPCNA	<i>RPCNA</i>	Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America
RSE	<i>RSE</i>	Regional Synod East (of the CanRC)
RSW	<i>RSW</i>	Regional Synod West (of the CanRC)
SCBP	<i>SCBP</i>	Standing Committee for the Publication of the <i>Book of Praise</i>
SIP	<i>SIP</i>	Statement of Institutional Purpose (of the CRTS)
SRN	<i>SRN</i>	Subcommittee for Relations with churches in The Netherlands (subcommittee of the CRCA)
TPH	<i>TPH</i>	<i>Trinity Psalter-Hymnal</i> (of the URCNA and OPC)
TUK	<i>TUK</i>	<i>Theologische Universiteit Kampen</i> (Theological University in Kampen (of the RCN))
URCNA	<i>URCNA</i>	United Reformed Churches in North America

Day 1 — Morning Session
Tuesday, May 10, 2022

Article 1 – Opening of Synod

On behalf of the convening church, the Guelph-Emmanuel CanRC, Rev. Peter Feenstra called the meeting to order. He reflected on the uncertainty of the years since the last synod and expressed thanks to God for the fact that Synod could convene without restrictions. He spoke some further words of reflection (see [Appendix 1](#)), then read Ephesians 3:14-21, led in prayer, and had the assembly sing Hymn 61. He spoke some encouraging words to the delegates regarding the work before them.

Article 2 – Credentials

The credentials were examined by the Guelph-Emmanuel CanRC and found to be in good order. Twenty-three primary delegates and one alternate delegate were present and signed the attendance list.

Delegated by Regional Synod West 2021:

Ministers: Roelf (Karlo) Janssen, John Ludwig, James Slaa, S. Carl Van Dam, Doug Vandeburgt, Julius VanSpronsen.

Elders: Chris de Boer, Lyndon Kok, Harold Leyenhorst (alt.), Harry Moes, Lawrence Toet, Bert Vane.

Delegated by Regional Synod East 2021:

Ministers: Eric Kampen, Jeff Temple, Clarence J. VanderVelde, John VanWoudenberg, Rodney Vermeulen, Dick Wynia.

Elders: George Bartels, Peter Engbers, Cornell Feenstra, James Jonker, Carl Oosterhoff, Art Witten.

Article 3 – Election of Officers

The following officers were elected to serve Synod for its duration:

Chairman: Rev. John Ludwig

Vice-chairman: Rev. Eric Kampen

First Clerk: Rev. Karlo Janssen

Second Clerk: Rev. Carl Van Dam

Article 4 – Constitution of Synod

On behalf of the convening church, Rev. Feenstra declared Synod constituted. Rev. Ludwig thanked the assembly for the confidence expressed in the elected officers of Synod. He expressed appreciation to the convening church for all the work done in preparation for Synod. The chairman then called for a break to give the executive the opportunity to come with proposals regarding the proceedings of Synod and the division of tasks among the various members of Synod.

Synod adjourned until 1:30pm.

Day 1 — Afternoon Session
Tuesday, May 10, 2022

Article 5 – Reopening

Synod reopened in plenary session. The chairman had the meeting sing Psalm 122:3. He read the roll and noted all Synod members were present.

Article 6 – Late Submissions

The executive presented recommendations regarding late submissions. The following was decided:

1. The London-Pilgrim CanRC dd. April 10, 2022 re CanRC re CRTS supplement report.
Inadmissible: no reason was given for it being submitted past the deadline for submissions.
2. Various letters of greeting from sister churches and contact churches.
Admissible: these qualify as addresses to General Synod.
3. The Burlington-Ebenezer CanRC dd. April 30, 2022 re appointment of new archivist.
Received for information. It is for the Burlington-Ebenezer CanRC to decide as to who does the actual work it is mandated, not General Synod.
4. The Carman East CanRC report re General Fund.
Admissible as it was mandated by GS 2019.

Article 7 – Housekeeping Matters

The executive presented recommendations on housekeeping matters. The following was decided:

1. *Presence on the Internet*: Synod will publish the *Acts of Synod* on the federation website as they become available. As the *Acts* are adopted, Synod will decide whether there are any decisions which should not be posted immediately on the internet. Confidential Acts will not be posted. All plenary sessions will be live streamed only for official fraternal delegates and observers not present in person. Plenary sessions in which individuals address General Synod and the churches as a whole, will be live streamed publicly.
2. *Privileges of the floor*: At the discretion of the executive, Synod will give privilege of the floor to all official representatives of churches with whom the CanRC are in ecclesiastical fellowship.
3. *Time Schedule*: Monday to Friday
Morning session – 9:00 - 12:00 (lunch at 12:15)
Afternoon session – 2:00 - 5:00 (supper at 5:30)
Evening session – 7:00 - 9:00
4. *Devotions*: Synod shall begin and close each day in plenary session with Scripture reading, prayer and singing. A schedule will be handed out for who will lead in devotions.
5. *Press Release*: A press release shall be published after Synod has been closed.
6. *Committees*: Advisory committees shall submit their proposals via email to the first clerk before they are dealt with in plenary session. The first clerk will ensure distribution.

7. *Synod Documents*: Copies of synod documents are available only to members of synod and fraternal delegates. Officially delegated observers will receive all non-confidential materials.
8. *Guidelines*: For all procedures, the Guidelines for Synod shall apply.
9. *Travel expenses*: Expenses are to be submitted, with receipts, through the internal synod website.
10. *Roll call*: Roll call shall take place each plenary session by means of a visual check by the executive.
11. *Advisory Committee Reports*: Advisory Committee reports shall be submitted to the first clerk using the template provided.

Regarding point 8:

By means of a letter, a motion was made and seconded. Following discussion, this motion was amended to read in succinct format:

Rather than format the acts in the system, “materials-admissibility-observations-considerations-recommendations” to format the acts in the system, “materials-admissibility-decisions-grounds.”

A vote determined that there was majority support for the underlying principle of this motion.

A template with examples was created and distributed to the delegates.

Article 8 – Agenda

1. Opening on behalf of the convening church
2. Examination of the credentials
3. Election of the officers
4. Constitution of General Synod 2022
5. Information from the convening church
6. Adoption of the agenda
7. Setting of the time schedule
8. Incoming mail
 - 8.1 General Matters
 - 8.1.1 RSW 2021 re Board of Governors nominations
 - 8.1.2 RSE 2021 re Board of Governors nominations
 - 8.1.3 RSW 2021 re Delegates to GS 2022 (credentials)
 - 8.1.4 RSE 2021 re Delegates to GS 2022 (credentials)
 - 8.1.5 Convening Church, Guelph-Emmanuel re General Synod Expenses dd. March 7, 2022
 - 8.1.6 Willoughby Heights re Appointments to committees by GS 2022 dd. March 14, 2022
 - 8.1.7 Glanbrook-Trinity re Timing of Report Submission dd. March 21, 2022
 - 8.2 Committee Reports
 - 8.2.1 Committee on Relations with the Churches Abroad (CRCA)
 - 8.2.1.1 General
 - 8.2.1.2 Australia (FRCA)
 - 8.2.1.3 Brazil (IRB)

- 8.2.1.4 Indonesia (GGRI, GGRCI, GGRI-Timor)
- 8.2.1.5 Korea (KPCK, IRCK, RCK)
- 8.2.1.6 The Netherlands (GKv, DGK, GKN)
 - 8.2.1.6.1 Supplement – The Netherlands (DGK & LRCA)
- 8.2.1.7 New Zealand (RCNZ)
- 8.2.1.8 Scotland (FCS, FCC)
- 8.2.1.9 South Africa (FRCSA)
- 8.2.1.10 International (ICRC)
- 8.2.2 Standing Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise* (SCBP)
 - 8.2.2.1 Report - SCBP
 - 8.2.2.2 Supplement 1 – Psalms and Hymns
 - 8.2.2.3 Supplement 2 – Psalms and Hymns
 - 8.2.2.4 Appointments to SCBP
- 8.2.3 Archives
 - 8.2.3.1 Report – Burlington-Ebenezer + Request to update guidelines + Draft mandate dd. Oct 20, 2021
 - 8.2.3.2 Inspection of Archives – Burlington Waterdown-Rehoboth dd. Sep 11, 2021
- 8.2.4 Board of Governors (BoG) of the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary (CRTS)
 - 8.2.4.1 Report – BoG
 - 8.2.4.2 Supplement Report dd. Jan 2022
 - 8.2.4.3 Appointments to BoG (Finance and Property Committee)
 - 8.2.4.4 Appointments to the Seminary
- 8.2.5 Committee for Pastoral Training Program (PTP)
 - 8.2.5.1 Report – Guelph-Emmanuel
- 8.2.6 Committee for Bible Translation (CBT)
 - 8.2.6.1 Report - CBT
- 8.2.7 Committee for the Official Website (CWeb)
 - 8.2.7.1 Report – CWeb
 - 8.2.7.2 Appointments to CWeb
- 8.2.8 Committee for Needy Students’ Fund
 - 8.2.8.1 Report – Grassie-Covenant dd. Nov 24, 2021
- 8.2.9 Address Church
 - 8.2.9.1 Report – Burlington-Ebenezer dd. Oct 21, 2021
- 8.2.10 Days of Prayer
 - 8.2.10.1 Report – Burlington Waterdown-Rehoboth and Edmonton-Providence dd. Nov 19, 2021
- 8.2.11 Committee for Contact with the Churches in North America (CCCNA)
 - 8.2.11.1 Report – CCCNA
- 8.2.12 CRCA-CCCNA Ecumenical Relationships (Church Order Art. 50)
 - 8.2.12.1 CRCA-CCCNA Majority Report
 - 8.2.12.2 CRCA-CCCNA Minority Report
 - 8.2.12.3 Appointments to the CRCA-CCCNA (or CER)
- 8.2.13 General Fund
 - 8.2.13.1 Report – Carman East

- 8.2.13.2 Report of Financial Review – Carman West
- 8.2.14 Convening Church last General Synod
 - 8.2.14.1 Report – Edmonton-Immanuel
- 8.3 Letters from the churches regarding the reports
 - 8.3.1 Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad (CRCA)
 - 8.3.1.1 Ancaster dd. Feb 3, 2022
 - 8.3.1.2 Glanbrook-Trinity dd. March 21, 2022
 - 8.3.2 Standing Committee for the *Book of Praise* (SCBP)
 - 8.3.2.1 Dunnville dd. Dec 22, 2021
 - 8.3.2.2 Niagara South dd. Feb 23, 2022
 - 8.3.2.3 Elora dd. March 1, 2022
 - 8.3.2.4 Nooksack Valley dd. Jan 28, 2022
 - 8.3.2.5 St. Albert dd. March 14, 2022
 - 8.3.2.6 Fergus North dd. March 5, 2022
 - 8.3.2.7 Burlington Waterdown-Rehoboth dd. March 7, 2022
 - 8.3.2.8 Aldergrove dd. March 14, 2022
 - 8.3.2.9 Devon dd. March 10, 2022
 - 8.3.2.10 Devon dd. March 11, 2022
 - 8.3.2.11 Smithville dd. Feb 14, 2022
 - 8.3.2.12 Yarrow dd. March 10, 2022
 - 8.3.2.13 Spring Creek dd. March 16, 2022
 - 8.3.2.14 Coaldale dd. March 2022
 - 8.3.2.15 Fergus-Maranatha dd. March 18, 2022
 - 8.3.2.16 Carman East dd. Feb 26, 2022
 - 8.3.2.17 Flamborough-Redemption dd. March 22, 2022
 - 8.3.2.18 Owen Sound dd. March 24, 2022
 - 8.3.2.19 Calgary dd. Feb 22, 2022
 - 8.3.2.20 Glanbrook-Trinity dd. March 21, 2022
 - 8.3.2.21 Barrhead dd. March 22, 2022
 - 8.3.2.22 Willoughby Heights dd. March 25, 2022
 - 8.3.2.23 Hamilton-Cornerstone dd. March 26, 2022
 - 8.3.2.24 Winnipeg-Redeemer dd. March 23, 2022
 - 8.3.2.25 Grand Valley dd. March 26, 2022
 - 8.3.2.26 Ancaster dd. March 15, 2022
 - 8.3.2.27 Ancaster dd. March 15, 2022
 - 8.3.2.28 Ancaster dd. March 26, 2022
 - 8.3.2.29 Ancaster dd. March 26, 2022
 - 8.3.2.30 Neerlandia (North) dd. March 2022
 - 8.3.2.31 Edmonton-Immanuel dd. March 2022
 - 8.3.2.32 Lynden dd. March 26, 2022
 - 8.3.2.33 Carman West dd. March 21, 2022
 - 8.3.2.34 Orangeville dd. March 19, 2022
 - 8.3.2.35 Orangeville dd. March 15, 2022
 - 8.3.2.36 Orangeville dd. March 23, 2022
 - 8.3.2.37 Hamilton-Providence dd. March 25, 2022

- 8.3.2.38 Hamilton-Providence dd. March 25, 2022
- 8.3.2.39 Burlington-Ebenezer dd. March 25, 2022
- 8.3.2.40 Grand Rapids dd. March 28, 2022
- 8.3.2.41 Toronto-Bethel dd. March 12, 2022
- 8.3.2.42 Lincoln-Vineyard dd. March 29, 2022
- 8.3.2.43 Langley-Refuge dd. March 29, 2022
- 8.3.3 Archives
 - 8.3.3.1 Willoughby Heights dd. March 14, 2022
- 8.3.4 Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary (CRTS)
 - 8.3.4.1 Burlington Waterdown-Rehoboth dd. March 7, 2022
 - 8.3.4.2 Willoughby Heights dd. March 14, 2022
 - 8.3.4.3 Aldergrove dd. March 14, 2022
 - 8.3.4.4 Yarrow dd. March 10, 2022
 - 8.3.4.5 Glanbrook-Trinity dd. March 21, 2022
 - 8.3.4.6 Langley dd. March 25, 2022
 - 8.3.4.7 Toronto-Bethel dd. March 12, 2022
 - 8.3.4.8 Toronto-Bethel dd. March 29, 2022
 - 8.3.4.9 Grassie-Covenant dd. March 25, 2022
- 8.3.5 Pastoral Training Program (PTP)
 - None
- 8.3.6 Committee for Bible Translations (CBT)
 - None
- 8.3.7 Official Website (CWEB)
 - 8.3.7.1 Ancaster dd. March 15, 2022
- 8.3.8 Needy Student Fund (CNSF)
 - 8.3.8.1 Willoughby Heights dd. March 25, 2022
 - 8.3.8.2 Calgary dd. Feb 22, 2022
- 8.3.9 Address Church
 - None
- 8.3.10 Days of Prayer
 - 8.3.10.1 Grassie-Covenant dd. March 25, 2022
- 8.3.11 Committee for Contact with Churches in North America (CCCNA)
 - 8.3.11.1 St. Albert dd. March 14, 2022
 - 8.3.11.2 Willoughby Heights dd. March 14, 2022
 - 8.3.11.3 London-Pilgrim dd. March 18, 2022
 - 8.3.11.4 Burlington-Fellowship dd. March 25, 2022
 - 8.3.11.5 Edmonton-Immanuel dd. March 2022
- 8.3.12 CRCA-CCCNA Ecumenical Relationships (Church Order Article 50)
 - 8.3.12.1 Dunnville dd. Oct 19, 2021
 - 8.3.12.2 Burlington Waterdown-Rehoboth dd. Dec 6, 2021
 - 8.3.12.3 Orangeville dd. Dec 29, 2021
 - 8.3.12.4 Carman West dd. Jan 2022
 - 8.3.12.5 Ancaster dd. Feb 3, 2022
 - 8.3.12.6 Attercliffe dd. Jan 26, 2022
 - 8.3.12.7 Niagara South dd. Feb 23, 2022

- 8.3.12.8 Lynden dd. March 9, 2022
- 8.3.12.9 Elora dd. March 1, 2022
- 8.3.12.10 St. Albert dd. March 14, 2022
- 8.3.12.11 Fergus North dd. March 5, 2022
- 8.3.12.12 Guelph-Emmanuel dd. March 7, 2022
- 8.3.12.13 Willoughby Heights dd. March 14, 2022
- 8.3.12.14 Aldergrove dd. March 14, 2022
- 8.3.12.15 Smithville dd. Feb 14, 2022
- 8.3.12.16 Yarrow dd. March 10, 2022
- 8.3.12.17 Cloverdale dd. March 15, 2022
- 8.3.12.18 Owen Sound dd. March 22, 2022
- 8.3.12.19 Vernon dd. Feb 10, 2022
- 8.3.12.20 Chilliwack dd. March 2022
- 8.3.12.21 Spring Creek dd. March 16, 2022
- 8.3.12.22 Coaldale dd. March 2022
- 8.3.12.23 London-Pilgrim dd. Feb 22, 2022
- 8.3.12.24 Flamborough-Redemption dd. March 22, 2022
- 8.3.12.25 Fergus-Maranatha dd. March 18, 2022
- 8.3.12.26 Fergus-Maranatha dd. March 18, 2022
- 8.3.12.27 Fergus-Maranatha dd. March 18, 2022
- 8.3.12.28 Calgary dd. Feb 22, 2022
- 8.3.12.29 Chatham-Ebenezer dd. March 24, 2022
- 8.3.12.30 Glanbrook-Trinity dd. March 21, 2022
- 8.3.12.31 Glanbrook-Trinity dd. March 21, 2022
- 8.3.12.32 Glanbrook-Trinity dd. March 21, 2022
- 8.3.12.33 Hamilton-Cornerstone dd. March 26, 2022
- 8.3.12.34 Burlington-Fellowship dd. March 25, 2022
- 8.3.12.35 Winnipeg-Redeemer dd. March 23, 2022
- 8.3.12.36 Neerlandia (North) dd. March 2022
- 8.3.12.37 Edmonton-Immanuel dd. March 2022
- 8.3.12.38 Langley dd. March 28, 2022
- 8.3.12.39 Hamilton-Providence dd. March 28, 2022
- 8.3.12.40 Toronto-Bethel dd. March 12, 2022
- 8.3.12.41 Langley-Refuge dd. March 29, 2022
- 8.3.12.42 Grassie-Covenant dd. March 25, 2022

8.4 Overtures

- 8.4.1 RSE 2020 to remove the Current Hymn Cap for the *Book of Praise*
- 8.4.2 RSE 2020 to remove the Bracketed Qualifier from the Abbreviated Lord's Supper Form
- 8.4.3 RSW 2021 to rescind the decision of GS 2004 Art. 115 re Hymn Cap
- 8.4.4 RSE 2021 re Preparatory Examinations Home Classis
- 8.4.5 RSE 2021 re Shorter Lord's Supper Liturgical Forms

8.5 Letters from the churches regarding the overtures

- 8.5.1 Overture RSE 2020 Hymn Cap
 - 8.5.1.1 Owen Sound dd. March 2021

- 8.5.1.2 Carman West dd. Jan 2022
- 8.5.1.3 Brampton dd. Feb 8, 2022
- 8.5.1.4 Niagara South dd. Feb 23, 2022
- 8.5.1.5 Nooksack Valley dd. Feb 18, 2022
- 8.5.1.6 St. Albert dd. March 14, 2022
- 8.5.1.7 Willoughby Heights dd. March 14, 2022
- 8.5.1.8 Smithville dd. Feb 14, 2022
- 8.5.1.9 Yarrow dd. March 10, 2022
- 8.5.1.10 Cloverdale dd. March 15, 2022
- 8.5.1.11 Attercliffe dd. March 17, 2022
- 8.5.1.12 Coaldale dd. March 2022
- 8.5.1.13 Carman East dd. Feb 26, 2022
- 8.5.1.14 Flamborough-Redemption dd. March 22, 2022
- 8.5.1.15 Fergus-Maranatha dd. March 18, 2022
- 8.5.1.16 Glanbrook-Trinity dd. March 21, 2022
- 8.5.1.17 Barrhead dd. March 22, 2022
- 8.5.1.18 Neerlandia (North) dd. March 2022
- 8.5.1.19 Edmonton-Immanuel dd. March 2022
- 8.5.1.20 Lynden dd. March 25, 2022
- 8.5.1.21 Burlington-Ebenezer dd. March 25, 2022
- 8.5.1.22 Grand Rapids dd. March 28, 2022
- 8.5.1.23 Edmonton-Providence dd. March 29, 2022
- 8.5.2 Overture RSE 2020 Bracketed Qualifier
 - 8.5.2.1 Ancaster dd. April 8, 2021
 - 8.5.2.2 Brampton dd. Feb 8, 2022
 - 8.5.2.3 Niagara South dd. Feb 23, 2022
 - 8.5.2.4 Guelph-Emmanuel dd. March 7, 2022
 - 8.5.2.5 Smithville dd. Feb 14, 2022
 - 8.5.2.6 Cloverdale dd. March 15, 2022
 - 8.5.2.7 Vernon dd. March 21, 2022
 - 8.5.2.8 Coaldale dd. March 2022
 - 8.5.2.9 Flamborough-Redemption dd. March 22, 2022
 - 8.5.2.10 Fergus-Maranatha dd. March 18, 2022
 - 8.5.2.11 Glanbrook-Trinity dd. March 21, 2022
 - 8.5.2.12 Winnipeg-Redeemer dd. March 23, 2022
 - 8.5.2.13 Edmonton-Immanuel dd. March 2022
 - 8.5.2.14 Langley dd. March 25, 2022
 - 8.5.2.15 Carman West dd. Jan 2022
- 8.5.3 Overture RSW 2021 Hymn Cap
 - 8.5.3.1 Owen Sound dd. Dec 10, 2021
 - 8.5.3.2 Ancaster dd. Feb 3, 2022
 - 8.5.3.3 Willoughby Heights dd. March 14, 2022
 - 8.5.3.4 Neerlandia (North) dd. March 2022
 - 8.5.3.5 Edmonton-Immanuel dd. March 2022
 - 8.5.3.6 Langley dd. March 28, 2022

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- 8.5.4 Overture RSE 2021 Preparatory Examinations
 - 8.5.4.1 Carman West dd. Jan 2022
 - 8.5.4.2 Smithers dd. Feb 28, 2022
 - 8.5.4.3 Willoughby Heights dd. March 14, 2022
 - 8.5.4.4 Yarrow dd. March 10, 2022
 - 8.5.4.5 Cloverdale dd. March 15, 2022
 - 8.5.4.6 Coaldale dd. March 2022
 - 8.5.4.7 Flamborough-Redemption dd. March 22, 2022
 - 8.5.4.8 Fergus-Maranatha dd. March 18, 2022
 - 8.5.4.9 Calgary dd. March 10, 2022
 - 8.5.4.10 Chatham-Ebenezer dd. March 24, 2022
 - 8.5.4.11 Glanbrook-Trinity dd. March 21, 2022
 - 8.5.4.12 Neerlandia (North) dd. March 2022
 - 8.5.4.13 Edmonton-Immanuel dd. March 2022
 - 8.5.4.14 Edmonton-Providence dd. March 29, 2022
 - 8.5.5 Overture RSE 2021 Liturgical Forms
 - 8.5.5.1 Carman West dd. Jan 2022
 - 8.5.5.2 Brampton dd. Feb 8, 2022
 - 8.5.5.3 Niagara South dd. Feb 23, 2022
 - 8.5.5.4 Sardis dd. Feb 2022
 - 8.5.5.5 Lynden dd. March 2022
 - 8.5.5.6 Nooksack Valley dd. Feb 18, 2022
 - 8.5.5.7 Winnipeg Grace dd. March 10, 2022
 - 8.5.5.8 Guelph-Emmanuel dd. March 7, 2022
 - 8.5.5.9 Willoughby Heights dd. March 14, 2022
 - 8.5.5.10 Smithville dd. Feb 14, 2022
 - 8.5.5.11 Owen Sound dd. March 22, 2022
 - 8.5.5.12 Vernon dd. March 21, 2022
 - 8.5.5.13 Coaldale dd. March 2022
 - 8.5.5.14 Carman East dd. Feb 26, 2022
 - 8.5.5.15 Fergus-Maranatha dd. March 18, 2022
 - 8.5.5.16 Calgary dd. Feb 22, 2022
 - 8.5.5.17 Glanbrook-Trinity dd. March 21, 2022
 - 8.5.5.18 Winnipeg-Redeemer dd. March 23, 2022
 - 8.5.5.19 Neerlandia (North) dd. March 2022
 - 8.5.5.20 Edmonton-Immanuel dd. March 2022
 - 8.5.5.21 Lincoln-Vineyard dd. March 28, 2022
 - 8.5.5.22 Edmonton-Providence dd. March 29, 2022
 - 8.5.5.23 Langley-Refuge dd. March 29, 2022
 - 8.6 Appeals
 - 8.6.1 GS 2004 Art. 115 (*Hymn Cap*)
 - 8.6.1.1 Winnipeg-Redeemer dd. Feb 13, 2020
 - 8.6.2 GS 2019 Art. 141 (*Personal – procedural & substantial*)
 - 8.6.2.1 Dunnville dd. Oct 20, 2020
 - 8.6.2.2 Lincoln-Vineyard dd. March 23, 2022

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- 8.6.2.3 S. and M. Vanderwoude dd. March 28, 2022
 - 8.6.2.4 Letter from Living Hope Presbyterian Church dd. March 9, 2021 related to the Lincoln appeals
 - 8.6.3 RSE 2019 Art. 9 (*Admissibility*)
 - 8.6.3.1 Bethel-Toronto dd. Nov 20, 2021
 - 8.6.4 RSE 2019 Art. 10 (*Worship service – special days*)
 - 8.6.4.1 Bethel-Toronto dd. Nov 20, 2021
 - 8.6.4.2 Flamborough-Redemption dd. March 8, 2022
 - 8.6.5 RSE 2019 Art. 11 (*Pulpit Access*)
 - 8.6.5.1 Jubilee-Ottawa dd. Feb 7, 2022
 - 8.6.5.2 Bethel-Toronto dd. Nov 20, 2021
 - 8.6.5.3 Hamilton-Blessings dd. March 25, 2022
 - 8.6.6 RSW 2021 Art. 33 (*Hymn Cap*)
 - 8.6.6.1 Chilliwack dd. Feb 12, 2022
 - 8.6.6.2 Chilliwack dd. Feb 12, 2022
 - 8.6.7 GS 2019 Art. 98 (*Personal*)
 - 8.6.7.1 Lincoln-Vineyard dd. March 23, 2022
 - 8.6.7.2 Letter from Living Hope Presbyterian Church dd. March 9, 2021 related to the Lincoln appeals
 - 8.6.7.3 S. and M. Vanderwoude dd. March 28, 2022
 - 8.6.8 GS 2019 Art. 142 (CO Art. 55 – Psalms and Hymns)
 - 8.6.8.1 Fergus-Maranatha dd. March 18, 2022
 - 8.6.8.2 Calgary dd. Feb 21, 2022
 - 8.6.9 RSE 2020 Art. 13 (Language of questions in Liturgical Forms)
 - 8.6.9.1 Hamilton-Blessings dd. March 25, 2022
 - 8.6.10 GS 1980 and 1983 (*Liturgical Forms*)
 - 8.6.10.1 Burlington-Fellowship dd. March 25, 2022
 - 8.6.11 RSW 2021 Art. 9 (*Worship*)
 - 8.6.11.1 T. and C. Kanis dd. March 28, 2022
 - 8.7 Letters from the churches – *uncategorized*
 - 8.7.1 Coaldale re GS 2019 Art. 62 dd. Jan 27, 2021
 - 8.7.2 Coaldale re GS 2019 Art. 145 (SCBP mandate) dd. April 20, 2021
 - 9. Appointments
 - 10. Censure as per Church Order article 34
 - 11. Financial matters
 - 12. Preparation for next synod
 - 13. Adoption of the acts
 - 14. Approval of the press release
 - 15. Closing

Article 9 – Advisory Committees

The following advisory committees were appointed:

Committee 1:

Members: James Slaa (convener), Clarence VanderVelde, Chris De Boer, Peter Engbers, James Jonker.

Materials: Standing Committee for the *Book of Praise* (8.2.2, 8.3.2), Overtures to remove the hymn cap (8.4.1, 8.4.3, 8.5.1, 8.5.3), Appeal against GS 2004 Art. 115 (8.6.1).

Committee 2:

Members: John VanWoudenberg (convener), Rodney Vermeulen, Harry Moes, Bert Vane, Cornell Feenstra.

Materials: Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad (8.2.1, 8.3.1), Committee for Contact with Churches in North America (8.2.11, 8.3.11), Study report on the execution of CO Art. 50 (8.2.12, 8.3.12).

Committee 3:

Members: Dick Wynia (convener), Jeff Temple, George Bartels, Carl Oosterhoff, Art Witten.

Materials: Matters relating to the CRTS (8.2.4, 8.3.4), Pastoral Training Program (8.2.5), Bible Translations (8.2.6), Website (8.2.7, 8.3.7), Needy Student Fund (8.2.8, 8.3.8), Overtures regarding Lord's Supper forms (8.4.2, 8.4.5, 8.5.2, 8.5.5), Overture regarding Preparatory Examinations (8.4.4, 8.5.4), Appeal against RSW 2021 Art. 33 (8.6.6), Appeals against GS 2019 Art. 142 (8.6.8), Appeal against RSW 2021 Art. 9 (8.6.11).

Committee 4:

Members: Julius VanSpronsen (convener), Doug Vandeburgt, Lyndon Kok, Lawrence Toet, Harold Leyenhorst.

Material: Appeal against GS 2019 Art. 141 (8.6.2), Appeal against RSE Art. 9 (8.6.3), Appeal against RSE Art. 10 (8.6.4), Appeal against RSE Art. 11 (8.6.5), Appeal against GS 2019 Art. 98 (8.6.7), Appeal against RSE Art. 13 (8.6.9), Appeal against decisions of GS 1980 and GS 1983 on liturgical forms (8.6.10).

Committee 5 (executive):

Members: Eric Kampen (convener), John Ludwig, Karlo Janssen, Carl Van Dam.

Material: General matters (8.1), Archives (8.2.3, 8.3.3), Address Church (8.2.9), Days of Prayer (8.2.10, 8.3.10), General Fund (8.2.13), Convening Church last Synod (8.2.14), Letter re GS 2019 Art. 62 (8.7.1), Letter re GS 2019 Art. 145 (8.7.2)¹.

Following some comments from the chairman regarding housekeeping matters, Synod adjourned for committee work until 7:00pm.

¹ 8.7.2 was subsequently passed on to Advisory Committee 1.

Day 1 — Evening Session
Tuesday, May 10, 2022

Article 10 – Reopening

Synod reopened in plenary session. The chairman had the meeting sing Psalm 105:1. He observed all synod members were present.

Article 11 – ERQ – Fraternal Delegate Address

Rev. Doug Vandeburgt introduced Rev. Paulin Bédard, credentialed delegate of the Reformed Church in Quebec (ERQ). Rev. Bédard addressed Synod describing the ERQ, especially how it struggled during health restrictions due to COVID-19, and requested that the ERQ be remembered in prayer. He expressed gratitude for our sister-church relationship. The full text of his address can be found in [Appendix 2](#). The chairman spoke some words in response.

Article 12 – URCNA – Fraternal Delegate Address

Rev. Jeff Temple introduced Rev. Steve Swets, credentialed delegate of the United Reformed Churches in North America (URCNA). Rev. Swets addressed Synod describing how the URCNA has not been able to meet in synod since 2018; Synod is now scheduled for October 2022. He expressed gratitude for the patience of the CanRC with the URCNA, as this relationship has been in a holding pattern for 6 years, and spoke appreciatively of the relationship between the URCNA and CanRC. The full text of his address can be found in [Appendix 3](#). The chairman spoke some words in response.

Article 13 – OPC – Fraternal Delegate Address

Rev. Doug Vandeburgt introduced Mr. Mark Bube, credentialed delegate of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC). Mr. Bube addressed Synod describing the OPC and its ministries in various places in the world. He noted the impact of persecution and the need for labourers in the field. He expressed gratitude for our sister-church relationship. The full text of his address can be found in [Appendix 4](#). The chairman spoke some words in response.

Article 14 – RCUS – Letter of Greetings

Rev. Jeff Temple read a letter of greeting sent by the Reformed Church in the United States (RCUS), declaring gratitude for our relationship and expressing regret at being unable to attend Synod in person. The full text of the letter can be found in [Appendix 5](#).

Article 15 – GGRI – Letter of Greetings

Rev. Karlo Janssen read a letter of greeting sent by the Reformed Churches in Indonesia (GGRI), declaring gratitude for our relationship and expressing regret at being unable to attend Synod in person on account of health restrictions and lack of funds. The full text of the letter can be found in [Appendix 6](#).

Article 16 – GKN – Letter of Greetings

Rev. Karlo Janssen read a letter of greeting sent by the Reformed Churches The Netherlands (GKN), declaring gratitude for our relationship and expressing regret at being unable to attend Synod in person. The full text of the letter can be found in [Appendix 7](#).

Article 17 – DGK – Letter of Greetings

Rev. Karlo Janssen read a letter of greeting sent by The Reformed Churches (DGK) in The Netherlands, declaring gratitude for our relationship and expressing regret at being unable to attend Synod in person. The full text of the letter can be found in [Appendix 8](#).

Article 18 – Prayer

Rev. Eric Kampen led in prayer, expressing thanks for our relationships and bringing the needs of the ERQ, URCNA, OPC, RCUS, GGRI, GKN, and DGK before the Lord.

Article 19 – CRTS - Appointment of Professor of Ministry and Mission

This matter was dealt with by Synod in closed-restricted session.

1. Material

- 1.1 Letter, with appendices, from the CRTS Board of Governors with a proposal to fill a vacancy in the department of Ministry & Mission (8.2.4.4).
- 1.2 Report of the CRTS Board of Governors (8.2.4.1).

2. Admissibility

The submissions were declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To approve the retirement of Dr. Arjan deVisser at the conclusion of the 2022/2023 academic year;
- 3.2 To express its deep gratitude for the many years of faithful service provided by Dr. Arjan deVisser to the seminary and to the churches;
- 3.3 To direct the Board of Governors (CRTS) to appoint Dr. Reuben Bredenhof, minister of the Mt. Nasura Free Reformed Church of Australia, as Professor of Ministry & Mission.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 In light of the information provided by the Search Committee (as appointed by the Board of Governors), which clearly testifies to a record of pastoral and academic excellence, as well as the testimony of a godly character and life, GS 2022 is convinced that Dr. Bredenhof is eminently qualified for this position.
- 4.2 The positive assessment of Dr. Bredenhof's character and ability was reflected in the recommendations which came from the churches.

Adopted by secret ballot with members of the Board of Governors abstaining.

Rev. Dick Wynia led in thanksgiving and prayer with respect to this decision.

The chairman indicated he would inform the chairman of the Board of Governors of Synod's decision, who would in turn inform Dr. Bredenhof.

Article 20 – Closing Devotions

The chairman made some announcements regarding agenda items and housekeeping matters.

Rev. Eric Kampen read Ephesians 6:10-20, had those present sing Hymn 55:1,2 and led in prayer.

Synod adjourned until 9:00am the next day.

Day 2 — Morning Session

Wednesday, May 11, 2022

Article 21 – Reopening

Synod reopened in plenary session. The chairman observed all synod members were present. He welcomed everyone, including fraternal delegates and observers. He had those present sing Psalm 116:9,10, read Philipians 1:1-11 and led in opening prayer.

Article 22 – Adoption of the Acts, Publication on the Internet

The prepared articles of the *Acts* were corrected. It was determined that a second review of these acts would be done prior to adoption.

It was decided that the composition of the Advisory Committees (GS 2022 Art. 9) would not be made public until after General Synod was ended.

Article 23 – Voting

A ruling from the chair was requested on the application of CO Art. 32. This was taken by the executive for consideration.

Following some comments from the chairman regarding housekeeping matters, Synod adjourned for committee work until 7:00pm.

Day 2 — Evening Session

Wednesday, May 11, 2022

Article 24 – Reopening

Synod reopened in plenary session. In the absence of the chairman, who was taking a phone call from Dr. Reuben Bredenhof, the vice chairman had the meeting sing Psalm 138:1,2. He observed that all synod members were present.

Article 25 – KPCK – Fraternal Delegate Address

Rev. Carl Van Dam introduced Rev. HyungTae Kim and Elder BongSik Sim, credentialed delegates of the Kosin Presbyterian Church in Korea (KPCK). Rev. Kim spoke some personal words of reflection on his experience of a CanRC general synod. He then addressed Synod describing the KPCK and its ministries. He expressed gratitude for our sister-church relationship. The full text of his formal address can be found in [Appendix 9](#). The chairman (who had returned) spoke some words in response.

(General Synod was grateful to Rev. KwangYoung Park and Rev. Daniel Shin for providing translation services.)

Article 26 – FRCNA – Fraternal Observer Address

Rev. Jeff Temple introduced Rev. Rob Vandoodewaard, credentialed delegate of the Free Reformed Churches of North America (FRCNA), who was accompanied by Rev. David VanBrugge. Rev. Vandoodewaard addressed Synod describing the FRCNA, our common heritage and communal ties, and its ministries. He expressed gratitude for our growing relationship and reflected at times on personal experiences with members of Canadian Reformed Churches in attending his congregation's worship services. The text of his address can be found in [Appendix 10](#). The chairman spoke some words in response.

Article 27 – FRCA – Fraternal Delegate Address

Rev. Karlo Janssen introduced Rev. Axel Hagg and Rev. Stephen 't Hart, credentialed delegates of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia (FRCA). Rev. Hagg addressed Synod describing the FRCA and expressing gratitude for our close sister-church relationship. He explained how the FRCA are looking at establishing theological education in Australia. The full text of his address can be found in [Appendix 11](#). The chairman spoke some words in response.

Article 28 – FRCSA – Fraternal Delegate Address

Rev. Carl Van Dam introduced Rev. Pieter Boon, credentialed delegate of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa (FRCSA). Rev. Boon addressed Synod describing the FRCSA. He expressed gratitude for our close sister-church relationship, which has intensified in recent years, especially in the area of theological education. He also pleaded for assistance with the work of mission in South Africa. The full text of his address can be found in [Appendix 12](#). The chairman spoke some words in response.

Article 29 – Archives

1. Material

- 1.1 Report of the Burlington-Ebenezer CanRC re Archives (8.2.3.1).
This report includes a suggestion for an addition to the Synod Guidelines and a Mandate for maintaining the Archives.
- 1.2 Report of the Burlington Waterdown-Rehoboth CanRC re Inspection of the Archives (8.2.3.2).

- 1.3 Letter from the Willoughby Heights CanRC (8.3.3.1) suggesting some edits to the mandate.
- 1.4 Letter from the Burlington-Ebenezer CanRC informing General Synod of the appointment of a new archivist (GS 2022 Art. 6.3).

2. Admissibility

All materials were declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To thank the Burlington-Ebenezer CanRC and Burlington Waterdown-Rehoboth CanRC for fulfilling their mandates;
- 3.2 To express gratitude to br. K. Spithoff for his years of faithful service as archivist;
- 3.3 To add to the Guidelines for General Synod the following addition to the duties of the Second Clerk under the Guidelines for General Synod:

III D 4 He shall ensure that a signed copy of all the correspondence to and from the General Synod and all materials submitted to General Synod be compiled in the order of the agenda and forwarded as soon as possible to the Church responsible for preserving the Archives of General Synod.
- 3.4 To edit the language of the mandate suggested by the Archiving Church (1.1) for clarity and consistency and to address some of the suggestions made by a church (1.3);
- 3.5 To mandate both the Archive Church and the inspecting church to report to the next general synod on their activities six weeks prior to the next general synod;
- 3.6 To adopt the following Mandate for the Church appointed to maintain the Archives of the General Synods of the Canadian Reformed Churches:

**Mandate for the Church appointed to maintain
the Archives of the General Synods
of the Canadian Reformed Churches**

From the first General Synod of the Canadian Reformed Churches, the Synod Homewood in 1954, General Synods have expressed the desirability of maintaining the records of their meetings, the decisions made and all the supporting documents used as rationale for making the decisions. This is in line with the requirements of keeping archives as expressed in Church Order Article 43. In order to consistently preserve and maintain the materials from general synods and from committees appointed to serve general synods, General Synod appoints a church responsible for collecting and preserving the material in an archive. For continuity, the Burlington-Ebenezer Canadian Reformed Church is the designated Archive Church and is to be re-appointed by each General Synod.

The Archive Church shall adhere to the following mandate adopted by General Synod:

- A. The Archive Church shall appoint a person to be the Archivist, who is responsible for the work of collecting and maintaining the archives.
- B. The Archive Church shall provide a suitable secure place for keeping the archives, and shall supply filing cabinets and whatever other items are required. Costs are to be reimbursed from the General Fund.

- C. The Archive Church shall submit a report on the condition and activity of the archives to each General Synod six months prior to convocation.
- D. The Archive Church shall, within three months of the end of each General Synod, send a letter to each committee requesting that they submit for the archives any materials more than ten years old, and which they no longer need for their duties as committees of General Synod. The materials submitted are left to the discretion of the committees, which may decide to keep their own archives to facilitate their duties.
- E. The archives of General Synod shall contain the following materials in hard copy pertaining to General Synods:
- One copy of the acts of each General Synod;
 - One copy of all the reports of the committees of General Synod and their sub-committees;
 - One copy of all correspondence regarding the calling of General Synod sent by the church responsible for calling General Synod;
 - One copy of the credentials of the delegates to General Synod;
 - One signed copy of all the correspondence to and from each General Synod filed in binders, particular to each General Synod, and in the order of the agenda of the General Synod;
 - One copy of all material from the committees and their sub-committees, including meeting minutes, correspondence, and documents; and
 - One copy of each annual yearbook of the Canadian and American Reformed Churches.
- The materials shall be properly catalogued in an index to facilitate reference.
- F. Non-confidential documents of the General Synod archives may be obtained as photocopies at the expense of the person requesting them.
- G. The archives shall be made available for inspection by the delegates from the church appointed by the previous General Synod to inspect the archives and submit a report to the next General Synod.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 Re 3.2: it will help the first clerk in his task by having the second clerk assist him in this manner.
- 4.2 Re 3.4: this mandate will provide clarity for the Archive Church in terms of its role and accountability.

Article 30 – Address Church

1. Material

- 1.1 Report of the Address Church, the Burlington-Ebenezer CanRC (8.2.9). No materials have been received on behalf of the federation since the last General Synod. To increase awareness of the presence and function of the Address Church, it was recommended that General Synod instruct the Committee for the Website (CWeb) to use the canrc.org website to direct appropriate correspondence to the Address Church.

2. Admissibility

The report was declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To thank the Address Church for its readiness to serve;
- 3.2 To instruct the Committee for the Website (CWeb) to use the canrc.org website to direct appropriate correspondence to the Address Church;
- 3.3 To mandate the Address Church to report to the churches on its activities six months prior to the next general synod.

4. Ground

- 4.1 The recommendation is sensible.

Article 31 – Days of Prayer

1. Material

- 1.1 Report from the Burlington-Rehoboth CanRC and the Edmonton-Providence CanRC responsible for calling Days of Prayer (CO Art. 54) (8.2.10).
- 1.2 Letter from the Grassie-Covenant CanRC (8.3.10.1) requesting more clarity with regard to the process of calling for a Day of Prayer and expressing concern that the bar is set too high.

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The materials were declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To express gratitude to the Burlington-Rehoboth CanRC and the Edmonton-Providence CanRC for their reporting;
- 3.2 To appoint two churches to implement CO Art. 54 as needed;
- 3.3 To mandate both churches to report to the churches on their activities six months prior to the next general synod;
- 3.4 Not to grant the request of the Grassie-Covenant CanRC.

4. Ground

- 4.1 Re 3.3: The rationale provided by Burlington-Rehoboth and Edmonton-Providence to Grassie for not calling a Day of Prayer is reasonable and balanced.

Article 32 – General Fund

1. Material

- 1.1 Report of the General Fund by the Carman East CanRC (8.2.13.1) (see [Appendix 26](#)).
- 1.2 Financial Review of the General Fund by the Carman West CanRC (8.2.13.2). This report indicates that the books were found to be in good order.

2. Admissibility

2.1 The reports were declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To receive the reports with gratitude;
- 3.2 To express gratitude to sr. Hilly Kooiker for functioning as treasurer;
- 3.3 To discharge the Carman East CanRC for the duties completed during the period of February 4, 2019, to December 31, 2021;
- 3.4 To authorize a church to collect funds from the churches for the General Fund, as required, until the time of the next General Synod;
- 3.5 To appoint a church to conduct the financial review of the General Fund;
- 3.6 To mandate both churches to report to the next General Synod on their activities six weeks prior to the next general synod;
- 3.7 To require that before any synodical committee submits expenses to the General Fund someone from within that committee must first verify those expenses.

Article 33 – Closing

The first clerk and chairman made some announcements regarding agenda items and housekeeping matters. Rev. Jeff Temple read Psalm 133 and led in closing prayer, expressing thanks for our relationships and bringing the needs of the KPCK, FRCNA, FRCA, and FRCSA before the Lord.

Synod adjourned until 9:00am the next day.

Day 3 — Morning Session

Thursday, May 12, 2022

Article 34 – Reopening

Synod reopened in plenary session. The chairman observed all synod members were present. He welcomed everyone, including two new fraternal observers. He had those present sing Psalm 67:1,2 and read Philippians 1:12-30. Prior to prayer he informed the assembly that Dr. Reuben Bredenhof had accepted his appointment as Professor of Ministry and Mission. Arrangements were being made to have the CRTS senate, staff, and retired professors (with spouses) be hosted at a dinner on Monday evening and for Dr. Reuben Bredenhof and Dr. Arjan de Visser to address Synod. The chairman also noted, with thankfulness, that the federal House of Commons had decided to retain opening prayer in its proceedings. He then led in opening prayer.

Article 35 – Acts

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

It was determined that a second review of the acts of Wednesday evening would be done prior to adoption.

Article 36 – Coaldale request re GS 2019 Art. 62 and 64

1. Material

- 1.1 Letter from the Coaldale CanRC addressed to the convening church of General Synod (8.7.1). Coaldale notes inconsistencies in the way GS 2019 dealt with matters on the agenda, as noted in Articles 62 and 64. It recommended that “the convening church of the next General Synod vet matters presented to General Synod to ensure that only matters that are properly before General Synod be placed on the Agenda.”

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The letter was declared admissible.

3. Decision

Synod decided:

- 3.1 Not to accede to the request.

4. Ground

- 4.1 Broader ecclesiastical assemblies themselves decide on admissibility (CO Art. 74, cf. CO Art. 49). It is, therefore, beyond the jurisdiction of a convening church to vet items sent in by the churches (cf. Synod Guidelines I,D,E).

Article 37 – SCBP (Standing Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise*)

Committee 1 presented draft 1 of a report on the Report of the Standing Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise* (8.6.7.1), seeking advice and direction. The report was discussed. The committee took the matter back for further consideration.

Article 38 – Overture RSE 2020 to remove the bracketed qualifier “For the Second Service” from the Abbreviated Form for the Celebration of the Lord’s Supper

Committee 3 presented draft 1 of a report on Overture RSE 2020 to remove the bracketed qualifier. The report was discussed. The committee took the report back for refinement.

Following some comments from the chairman regarding housekeeping matters, Synod adjourned for committee work until 7:00pm.

Day 3 — Evening Session

Thursday, May 12, 2022

Article 39 – Reopening

Synod reopened in plenary session. The chairman had the meeting sing Psalm 136:1,2,3. He observed that all synod members were present.

Article 40 – RCNZ – Fraternal Delegate Address

Rev. Karlo Janssen introduced Rev. David Stares, credentialed delegate of the Reformed Churches in New Zealand (RCNZ). Rev. Stares addressed Synod via video conferencing,

describing how the RCNZ live in the New Zealand context, and speaking appreciatively of the relationship between the RCNZ and CanRC. The full text of his address can be found in [Appendix 13](#). The chairman spoke some words in response.

Article 41 – ARPC – Fraternal Observer Address

Rev. Jeff Temple introduced Rev. Jeff Kingswood and Rev. Tim Collins, credentialed delegates of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (ARPC) to observe our synod. Rev. Kingswood addressed Synod, describing the ARPC, noting some of the issues before it, and speaking with gratitude of the growing relationship between the ARPC and CanRC. The full text of his address can be found in [Appendix 14](#). The chairman spoke some words in response.

Article 42 – GS 2019 Expenses

1. Material

- 1.1 Letter from the Guelph-Emmanuel CanRC with regards to General Synod expenses. (8.1.5) (see [Appendix 25](#)).

2. Admissibility

The letter was declared admissible.

3. Decision

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To adopt the following guidelines for General Synod expenses for the convening of a general synod and add them as an appendix to the *Acts* (see [Appendix 29](#)):

Guidelines for the Convening Church of a General Synod Regarding Synod Expenses

1. Funding: The convening church shall set up a General Synod Account and appoint a treasurer. The treasurer shall contact the treasurers of the Regional Synods for funding to cover all expenses pertaining to the General Synod. Expenses will be shared between the two Regional Synods on a 50/50 basis. (See Yearbook for treasurers of each Regional Synod).
2. Operational Expenses: Operational expenses incurred as a direct result of hosting the General Synod which do not have a net benefit post-synod to the convening church will be reimbursed at cost. This includes but is not limited to IT, facilities, and correspondence.
3. Travel for fraternal delegates and invited observers as invited by the interchurch relations committee(s):
 - a. Travel to Synod: Cost for travel is the responsibility of the delegating body.
 - b. Transportation during Synod: The convening church will arrange transportation to and from the airport, train station, or bus depot and provide transportation to General Synod and incidental travel during the Synod. Submission for costs incurred in providing transportation in connection with General Synod are to be reimbursed at the CRA rate.

4. Accommodations: For delegates, fraternal delegates and invited observers as invited by the interchurch relation committee(s):
 - a. Accommodations are arranged by the convening church via rental and/or billeting. Accommodations can include support for the spouse of a delegate;
 - b. Submissions for reimbursement of the rentals are administered via the General Synod budget administered by the convening church.
5. Meals:
 - a. Meals are exclusively for the members of General Synod and invited guests via the venue of the General Synod or arranged by the convening church via billeting;
 - b. Reimbursements for meal expenses are administered via the General Synod budget administered by the convening church.
6. At the conclusion of Synod, the books will be reviewed by the church appointed for that purpose. A financial report is to be submitted to the next Synod.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 It is helpful for a convening church to have such a guideline.
- 4.2 There is no need to make travel guidelines for delegates to and from Synod, or reimbursement for loss of income, as this is the responsibility of the Regional Synod.

Article 43 – Overture RSE 2020 to remove the bracketed qualifier “For the Second Service” from the Abbreviated Form for the Celebration of the Lord’s Supper

1. Material

- 1.1. RSE 2020 Overture to Remove the Bracketed Qualifier from the Abbreviated Lord’s Supper Form (8.4.2).
- 1.2 Letters from the following CanRC: Ancaster (8.5.2.1), Brampton-Grace (8.5.2.2), Niagara South (8.5.2.3), Guelph-Emmanuel (8.5.2.4), Smithville (8.5.2.5), Cloverdale (8.5.2.6), Vernon (8.5.2.7), Coaldale (8.5.2.8), Flamborough-Redemption (8.5.2.9), Fergus-Maranatha (8.5.2.10), Glanbrook-Trinity (8.5.2.11), Winnipeg-Redeemer (8.5.2.12), Edmonton-Immanuel (8.5.2.13), Langley (8.5.2.14), Carman West (8.5.2.15).

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The submissions were declared admissible.

3. Decision

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To remove the bracketed qualifier “For the Second Service” from the Abbreviated Form for the Celebration of the Lord’s Supper.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 In their correspondence to GS 2022, a number of churches suggested that the removal of the bracketed qualifier would facilitate the more frequent celebration of the Lord’s Supper, while simultaneously maintaining the priority of the preaching. While neither the length of the liturgical forms, nor of the service as a whole necessarily is an

insurmountable barrier to more frequent communion, it cannot be denied that the adoption of a shorter form *could* facilitate more frequent celebration of the sacrament.

- 4.2 The Acts of GS 1977 do not indicate that any limitation/restriction would be placed on the use of the desired abbreviated form (GS 1977 Art. 60 esp. Cons. 10 and Rec. 4).
- 4.3 GS 1980 provides no grounds, or rationale, for the decision to limit the use of the Abbreviated Form to the second service (GS 1980 Art. 136).
- 4.4 In their correspondence to GS 2022, some churches expressed their concern that eliminating the bracketed qualifier would cause the longer form to be neglected or ignored altogether. No principal or substantive objection was raised against the sufficiency of the content of the Abbreviated Form.
- 4.5 In their correspondence to GS 2022, several churches expressed concern about the absence of the list of transgressions that is found in the longer form. This concern treats the longer form as the norm. Scripture is the norm. Both forms are expressions of the norm. Further, this concern is mitigated by the fact that the Lord's Supper is most often celebrated in the morning service, in which the Law is read. Finally, the Abbreviated Form maintains the call for self-examination and the admonition to repentance.

Article 44 – CWeb (Committee for the Website)

1. Material

- 1.1 Report of the Committee for the Federation Website (CWeb) (8.2.7).
- 1.2 Letter from the Ancaster CanRC (8.3.7.1) requesting that GS 2022 mandate the CWeb to make available English translations of all Dutch materials in the *Acts* of General Synods 1954, 1958, 1962 and 1965.

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The report was declared admissible.
- 2.2 The letter from Ancaster was declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 That the Committee for the Website (CWeb) has fulfilled its mandate;
- 3.2 To thank the members of the committee for their work, and in particular, sr. Christie Hoeksema, br. Jeremy Koopmans and Rev. Anthony Roukema, as they have completed their terms;
- 3.3 To appoint three new members to the committee;
- 3.4 To approve the budget of \$7,050.00 for the period 2022-2025, for ongoing costs related to the website, email forwarding, and the minister email list;
- 3.5 To give the CWeb the following mandate:
 - 3.5.1 To maintain the existing website and associated technical functions;
 - 3.5.2 To revise the content of the website whenever necessary, including:
 - 3.5.2.1 Posting news items and documents upon submission by ministers and clerks of church councils, and by officers of ecclesiastical assemblies who are authorized to post press releases or news items related to classes, regional or general synods;

- 3.5.2.2 Annually auditing the site's information against the yearbook,;
- 3.5.2.3 Maintaining pages for synodical committees with their current mandates and contact information;
- 3.5.2.4 Making reports to general synods available on the web before the next general synod;
- 3.5.3 To make available English translations of all Dutch materials in the *Acts* of general synods of the Canadian Reformed Churches of 1954, 1958, 1962 and 1965, and submit expenses for this work to the General Fund;
- 3.5.4 To provide email forwarding from "@canrc.org" email addresses to personal email accounts for ministers, clerks, and others when requested by clerks of church councils;
- 3.5.5 To submit a report on its activities to the churches 6 months prior to the convening of the next general synod;
- 3.5.6 To function as the administrators of the minister email list;
- 3.5.7 To appoint one of its members to validate and submit to the treasurer of the General Fund all expenses being submitted for committee work.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 CWeb fulfils a vital function in maintaining the presence of the Canadian Reformed Churches on the internet.
- 4.2 Re 3.5.3: It is important to preserve the Acts of the general synods of the Canadian Reformed Churches in their early years in English.

Article 45 – Housekeeping Matter

Some further discussion took place on the format of decisions of GS 2022 and an approach was decided upon.

Article 46 – Closing Devotions

The chairman made some announcements regarding agenda items and housekeeping matters.

Rev. Clarence VanderVelde had those present sing Hymn 42:1,2,3, read Hebrews 6:13-20, spoke some words on the ascension of Christ and his present rule, and led in closing prayer, expressing thanks for our relationships and bringing the needs of the RCNZ and ARPC before the Lord.

Synod adjourned until 9:00am the next day.

Day 4 — Morning & Afternoon Session Friday, May 13, 2022

Article 47 – Reopening

Synod reopened in plenary session. The chairman observed that, with the exception of one member, all synod members were present. He had those present sing Hymn 23:1,2,6, read Philippians 2:1-11, and led in opening prayer. He passed on some housekeeping matters.

Article 48 – Acts

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

Article 49 – Appeal against GS 2004 Art. 115 and GS 2019 Art. 142 (*Hymn Cap*)

Committee 1 presented draft 1 of a report on an appeal against GS 2004 Art. 115 and GS 2019 Art. 142 (*Hymn Cap*) (8.6.1.1). The report was discussed. The committee took the report back for refinement.

Article 50 – SCBP – Additional Psalms and Hymns

Committee 1 presented draft 2 of a report on the Standing Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise* (SCBP) reports regarding additional psalms and hymns (8.2.2.1-3) and related submissions from churches. The report was discussed. The committee took the report back for refinement.

During this discussion the synod member absent at the start of the session joined the meeting.

Article 51 – CRCA-CCCNA Study Reports on the Execution of CO Art. 50

Committee 2 presented two questions regarding the CRCA-CCCNA Study Reports on the Execution of CO Art. 50 (8.2.12.1-2), seeking advice and direction. These matters were discussed. The committee took the matter back for further consideration.

Article 52 – Appeal against GS 2019 Art. 141

Synod dealt with this matter in closed session, with credentialed delegates from sister churches present, and with Rev. Dick Wynia absent.

Committee 4 presented draft 1 of a report on two appeals against GS 2019 Art. 141 (8.6.2.1, 8.6.2.2) and a related letter (8.6.2.4). The report was discussed. The committee took the report back for refinement.

Synod was adjourned until 7:00pm.

Article 53 – Closing Devotions

The chairman made some announcements regarding agenda items and housekeeping matters. Rev. John VanWoudenberg read Psalm 8 and led in closing prayer.

Synod was adjourned until 9:00am Monday, May 16.

Day 5 — Morning Session
Monday, May 16, 2022

Article 54 – Reopening

Synod reopened in plenary session. The chairman observed all synod members were present. He welcomed everyone, including fraternal delegates and observers. He had those present sing Psalm 36:3, read Philippians 2:12-18, and led in opening prayer.

The chairman informed the meeting of some housekeeping matters in relation to proceedings during the evening session.

Article 55 – Acts

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

Article 56 – CRTS (Board of Governors)

Committee 3 presented draft 1 of a report on the Board of Governors Report (8.2.4) and related matters. The report was discussed. The committee took the report back for refinement.

Article 57 – SCBP – Section 2

Committee 1 presented draft 1 of a report on Section 2 of the Report of the Standing Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise* (8.2.2) and related materials. The report was discussed. The committee took the report back for refinement.

Article 58 – Appeal against GS 2004 Art. 115 and GS 2019 Art. 142 (*Hymn Cap*)

Committee 1 presented draft 2 of a report on the appeal of the Winnipeg-Redeemer CanRC against GS 2019 Art. 115 and GS 2019 Art. 142 (8.6.1.1). The report was discussed. The committee took the report back for refinement.

Synod adjourned for committee work until 3:00pm.

Day 5 — Afternoon Session
Monday, May 16, 2022

Article 59 – Reopening

Synod reopened in plenary session. The chairman had the meeting sing Psalm 103:7. He observed that all synod members, except one, were present.

Article 60 – Confidential

Article 61 – CRTS (Board of Governors)

1. Material

- 1.1 Report of the Board of Governors (BoG) of the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary (CRTS) (8.2.4.1).
- 1.2 Appointments to BoG (Finance and Property Committee) (8.2.4.3).
- 1.3 Letter from the Toronto-Bethel CanRC (8.3.4.8), expressing a concern regarding the proposed update to Bylaw 12 Sections 3.8. It urged caution in making decisions by email.

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The submissions were declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To receive the report, as well as all its appendices;
- 3.2 To acknowledge the expiration of the terms of office of Rev. Matthew VanLuik and brs. Butch Medemblik and Frank Oostdyk and to express gratitude for their work;
- 3.3 Pursuant to Section 5(2) of the Act and Section 3.04 of By-Law 12, to appoint, elect or re-appoint six active ministers to hold office until the next General Synod and to appoint at least three substitutes from each Regional Synod area, keeping in mind that the By-laws prohibit anyone from serving more than three consecutive terms:
 - 3.3.1 To relieve Rev. Rob Schouten (from RSW) of his duties on the Board of Governors due to health concerns. GS 2022 expresses its gratitude to Rev. Schouten for his faithful service;
 - 3.3.2 To re-appoint as governors, for a term lasting until the next General Synod: from RSW, Rev. Joe Poppe and Rev. James Slaa; from RSE, Rev. John Louwerse;
 - 3.3.3 To re-appoint as governor, for a term lasting until the second subsequent General Synod: from RSE, Rev. Clarence J. VanderVelde;
 - 3.3.4 To appoint as governors for a term lasting until the third subsequent General Synod: from RSW, Rev. Julius VanSpronsen (first alternate: Rev. Doug Vandeburgt; second alternate: Rev. Dave DeBoer); from RSE, Rev. Jeff Temple (first alternate: Rev. Bill DeJong; second alternate: Rev. Theo Wierenga);
- 3.4 Pursuant to Section 5(2) of the Act and Section 3.04 of By-Law 12, to appoint, elect or re-appoint five non-ministerial governors and to appoint at least two substitutes, keeping in mind that the By-laws prohibit anyone from serving more than three consecutive terms:
 - 3.4.1 To re-appoint as non-ministerial governors for a term lasting until the next General Synod: Brs. Kasper VanVeen and Peter Vandersluis;
 - 3.4.2 To re-appoint as non-ministerial governor for a term lasting until the second subsequent General Synod: Br. Alan Datema;
 - 3.4.3 To appoint as non-ministerial governor for a term lasting until the third subsequent General Synod: Brs. Adrian Bartels and Herman Post (alternates: Brs. Mike Bork and Paul Broekema, in that order);

- 3.5 To request the churches to continue to remember in their prayers the needs of: Mrs. G. Deddens, Mrs. M. DeJong, Dr. & Mrs. N.H. Gootjes, Dr. & Mrs. C. VanDam and Dr. & Mrs. G. Visscher;
- 3.6 To give leave to the Board to appoint Dr. Jason VanVliet as principal for the years 2022-2025;
- 3.7 To give leave to the Board to grant tenure to Dr. Ted VanRaalte;
- 3.8 To approve the proposed updates to Bylaw 12 Sections 3.8 and 13.01 (The complete texts of the proposed updates can be found on pages ten and eleven of the CRTS Board of Governors Report to GS 2022);
- 3.9 To approve all other decisions and actions of the Board and of its committees for the years 2019, 2020 and 2021 until the date of this Report:
 - 3.9.1 To authorize the Board of Governors to review current policies regarding admission standards for mature students (see: Strategic Planning – BoG Report pg.7), recognizing that any proposed changes would need to interact with the decisions of GS 1980 (Art. 44, Section II);
- 3.10 To express gratitude for the support received from the Free Reformed Churches of Australia;
- 3.11 To consider the audited financial statements and the report of the Auditors for the previous fiscal periods; to relieve the Treasurer of the Board of all responsibilities for these fiscal periods; to support and recommend the reappointment of DBK Accounting as Auditor until the next General Synod, subject to the discretion and direction of the Board;
- 3.12 To acknowledge with gratitude, the financial contributions of the Women's Savings Action to the well-being of the Seminary.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 Re 3.8: The proposed update to the bylaw simply provides a process for dealing with proposed resolutions which was already in place for communication by regular mail, by making it applicable to email correspondence. Further, the proposed update to the Bylaw requires a quorum;
- 4.2 Re 3.9.1: Though the decision of GS 1980 (Art. 44) prohibits those who have not obtained a Bachelor's degree from being admitted to the M.Div. program, there is merit in undertaking a review of this policy as part of the long term strategic planning of CRTS.

The following synod members abstained from voting and asked that this be recorded: Rev. James Slaa and Rev. Clarence VanderVelde, both as members of the Board of Governors, Elder George Bartels, Rev. Jeff Temple.

Article 62 – Appeal against GS 2004 Art. 115 and GS 2019 Art. 142 (*Hymn Cap*)

1. Material

- 1.1 Appeal of the Winnipeg-Redeemer CanRC (8.6.1.1) against GS 2004, Art. 115 and GS 2019 Art. 142 re Hymn Cap:

- 1.1.1 Winnipeg-Redeemer appeals the decision of GS 2004 Art.115 “to set the limit of hymns at 100” and the decision of GS 2019 Art. 142 to mandate the SCBP “to compile a list of such hymns keeping in mind that at this time the final number of hymns in the *Book of Praise* should not exceed 100 (as per GS 2004);”
- 1.1.2 This appeal presents two new grounds for removing the limit of 100 hymns: (1) A limit on the number of hymns does not ensure a predominant place of Psalm-singing in the liturgy of the Reformed churches, and (2) the limit of 100 hymns is quite arbitrary.

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The appeal is declared admissible.

3. Decision

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To deny the appeal of the Winnipeg-Redeemer CanRC against GS 2004 Art. 115 and GS 2019 Art. 142.

4. Grounds:

- 4.1 The appeal does not demonstrate how the decisions were in conflict with the Word of God or the Church Order (CO Art. 31);
- 4.2 Previous decisions can be revisited as proposals substantiated by new grounds (CO Art. 33).

Article 63 – SCBP – Section 2

Committee 1 presented draft 2 of a report on Section 2 of the Report of the Standing Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise* (8.2.2) and related materials. The report was discussed. The committee took the report back, given an amendment, for refinement.

Article 64 – Appeal against RSE 2019 Art. 9

1. Material

- 1.1 Appeal of the Toronto-Bethel CanRC against RSE 2019 Art. 9 (8.6.3.1) which contains the decision to declare admissible a late submission by the Orangeville CanRC.

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The appeal was declared admissible.

3. Decision

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To deny the appeal of the Toronto-Bethel CanRC against RSE 2019 Art. 9.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 By including the word “ordinarily” in their regulation (D) concerning appeals, the RSE regulations allow for exceptions to the submission date of material while at the same time guarding against the danger of setting a precedent of admitting late submissions as a “common practice”.

- 4.2 There are no RSE regulations concerning the treatment of late submissions, the distinction between “late” and “extremely late” submissions, the requirement to give notice of the intention to send a late submission, or the need to respect the busy schedules of the men who volunteer their time to serve as delegates to Regional Synod.
- 4.3 As a deliberative major assembly, the delegates of RSE have the right to decide whether to receive late or even extremely late submissions from the churches:
- 4.3.1 RSE 2019 Art. 9 Cons. 1 indicates that the question of whether the delegates had time to properly deal with the appeal was dealt with by the delegates who were present;
- 4.3.2 RSE 2019 Art. 9 Cons. 2-3 indicate that the delegates of RSE 2019 received and accepted the reasons that Orangeville had provided.

Article 65 – Appeal against RSE 2020 Art. 13 (*Language of questions in Liturgical Forms*)

Committee 4 presented draft 1 of a report on an appeal against RSE 2020 Art. 13 (*Language of questions in Liturgical Forms*). The report was discussed. The committee took the report back for refinement.

Synod adjourned for committee work until 7:00pm.

Day 5 — Evening Session

Monday, May 16, 2022

Article 66 – Reopening

Synod reopened in plenary session. The chairman had the meeting sing Psalm 119:40. He observed that all synod members were present.

Article 67 – CRTS (Board of Governors)

The chairman welcomed Dr. Reuben Bredenhof, the faculty, staff, retired professors, and their spouses to the session. Dr. Bredenhof, newly appointed professor of Ministry and Mission, addressed the assembly and audience (see [Appendix 17](#) for his address). The chairman spoke some words in response. Next, Dr. Jason Van Vliet, principal of the CRTS, addressed Dr. Bredenhof and the assembly (see [Appendix 18](#) for his address). Finally, Dr. Arjan de Visser, present professor of Ministry and Mission, addressed Dr. Bredenhof and the assembly (see [Appendix 19](#) for his address). The chairman spoke some words in response, thanking Dr. De Visser for his years of service since the 2004/2005 academic year. The chairman announced Synod’s decision to grant leave to the Board of Governors to grant tenure to Dr. Ted VanRaalte.

Article 68 – Closing Devotions

The chairman made some announcements regarding agenda items and housekeeping matters. Rev. Rodney Vermeulen read 1 Peter 1:13-25 and led in closing prayer, giving thanks and offering prayer for the labours of those involved with CRTS. He then had those present sing Psalm 134:3 as a song of blessing for Dr. Reuben Bredenhof and Psalm 150 to close the session.

Synod adjourned until 9:00am the next day.

Day 6 — Morning Session Tuesday, May 17, 2022

Article 69 – Reopening

Synod reopened in plenary session. The chairman observed all synod members were present. He welcomed all present, including students from the Cornerstone Christian School in Guelph. He had those present sing Psalm 133, read Philippians 2:19-30, and led in opening prayer.

Article 70 – Acts

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

Article 71 – SCBP – Section 2

1. Material

1.1 Report of the Standing Committee for the Book of Praise (SCBP):

1.1.1 Section Two – Committee Proposals (8.2.2.1).

1.2 Submissions from the following churches: Ancaster (8.3.2.28) re further recommendations to update Hymn 1; St. Albert (8.3.2.5) re the notation and wording change to Hymn 1 as recommended by the committee; Owen Sound (8.3.2.18) re the recommendation to change the wording of Hymn 46; Willoughby Heights (8.3.2.22) re proposed changes to Hymn 60:4; Orangeville (8.3.2.36) re support for recommendations of the committee and a suggestion that publication of any changes be made in the next edition of the *Book of Praise*.

2. Admissibility

2.1 The report was declared admissible.

2.2 The submissions were declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

3.1 Re SCBP 11.1: Amend the wording and musical notation of Hymn 1 and the Apostles' Creed:

3.1.1 To adopt the wording and notation recommendations of the committee, being:

Current Version	Proposed Change
	
and sit-teth at the right hand	and is seat-ed at the right hand

3.1.2 To send to the SCBP, for its consideration, the recommended changes to Hymn 1 made by Ancaster;

3.2 Re SCBP 11.2: Hymn 46 – Proposed revision to lyrics in stanza 1:

3.2.1 To maintain the current wording of Hymn 46 re “They that wilds inhabit shall their worship bring”;

3.3 Re SCBP 11.3: Hymn 55 – Proposed revision to lyrics:

3.3.1 To adopt the updated language of this hymn as recommended by the committee;

3.3.1.1 Stanza 1

Who trusts in God, a strong abode
 in heaven and earth possesses;
 who looks in love to Christ above,
 no fear his heart oppresses.
 In you alone, O Lord, we own
 our hope and consolation,
 our shield from foes, our balm for woes,
 our great and sure salvation.

Stanza 2

Though Satan’s wrath beset our path
 and worldly scorn assail us,
 while you are near, we will not fear;
 your strength shall never fail us.
 Your rod and staff shall keep us safe
 and guide our steps forever;
 no shades of death, nor hell beneath
 your people from you sever.

Stanza 3

In all the strife of mortal life
 our feet shall stand securely;
 temptation’s hour shall lose its power,
 for you shall guard us surely.
 O God, each day direct our way;
 renew us by your Spirit
 until we stand at your right hand
 through Jesus’ saving merit.

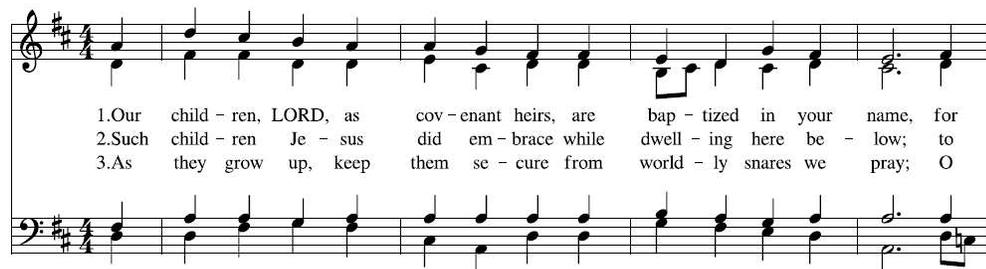
3.4 Re SCBP 11.4: Hymn 60 – Proposed revision to lyrics of stanza 4:

3.4.1 To retain the current wording of Hymn 60:4;

3.5 Re SCBP 11.5: Hymn 58 – Propose to replace the melody:

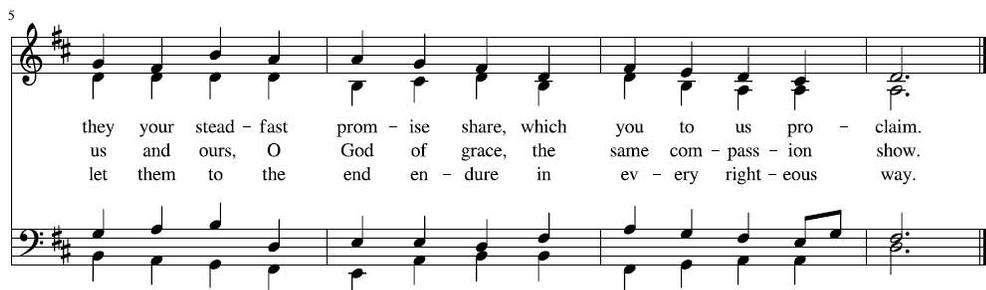
3.5.1 To adopt the change of melody as recommended by the committee, being:

Hymn 58 – “Our Children, LORD, as Covenant Heirs”



1. Our child - ren, LORD, as cov - enant heirs, are bap - tized in your name, for
 2. Such child - ren Je - sus did em - brace while dwell - ing here be - low; to
 3. As they grow up, keep them se - cure from world - ly snares we pray; O

5



they your stead - fast prom - ise share, which you to us pro - claim.
 us and ours, O God of grace, the same com - pass - ion show.
 let them to the end en - dure in ev - ery right - eous way.

- 3.6 To mandate the SCBP to publish these changes in the next edition of the *Book of Praise*;
- 3.7 Prior to the publication of the next edition of the *Book of Praise*, the churches can either maintain past practices or implement these changes.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 Re 3.1.1: Although alternate notation and wording for Hymn 1 were submitted for Synod’s consideration, the recommended change to the wording by the committee was deemed better because it both removes archaic language and maintains familiar notation.
- 4.2 Re 3.1.2: The comments of Ancaster can be considered by the committee (excluding their comment re “is seated”) for consideration by a subsequent synod prior to the publication of a new edition of the *Book of Praise*.
- 4.3 Re 3.2.1: While the suggestion from the committee is meant to address potential offence, the expression “they that wilds inhabit shall their worship bring” beautifully articulates the call of the church to reach every remote region with the gospel, and the wonderful effect of such missional activity. In maintaining this wording, the concern of Owen Sound is addressed.
- 4.4 Re 3.3.1: The suggested change by the committee removes and replaces archaic language in this hymn. This change can be made because the churches have the freedom to do so regarding copyright, and in doing so is consistent with previous synod decisions.
- 4.5 Re 3.4.1: Hymn 60 is a Lord’s Supper hymn. The current version of stanza four retains the connection to Christ’s suffering and how it unites us to him and to each other, by the Holy Spirit, until Christ returns. The proposed version by the committee omits this connection and emphasizes the ascension, which is not the point of the hymn. This also addresses the concern of Willoughby Heights (8.3.2.22) re a preference to return to the original form of the hymn or to delete stanza four altogether.
- 4.6 Re 3.5.1: The new melody recommended by the committee is well-suited to the lyrics of Hymn 58 and serves to enhance the use of this baptism hymn, whereas the original melody feels unfinished and unresolved, which may be an inappropriate ending for a joyous occasion such as baptism.
- 4.7 Re 3.6 and 3.7: While the churches have the ability and freedom to implement these changes locally with the available technologies, these changes do not warrant the printing of a new edition of the *Book of Praise* at this time.

Article 72 – CPTPF (Committee for Pastoral Training Program Funding)

1. Material

- 1.1 Report of the Committee for Pastoral Training Program Funding (CPTPF) with all its appendices (8.2.5.1).

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The report was declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To express gratitude to the Guelph-Emmanuel CanRC and its committee for the work it has done;
- 3.2 To reappoint Guelph-Emmanuel as the Committee for Pastoral Training Program Funding (CTPTF) with the following mandate:
 - 3.2.1 To look after all internship-related funding matters;
 - 3.2.2 To assess the churches each year based on the anticipated funding required for a particular summer;
 - 3.2.3 To report about its activities to the next general synod, which report shall be sent to all the churches at least six months prior to the next general synod.

Article 73 – Appeal against RSW 2021 Art. 33 (*Hymn Cap Overture – procedure*)

Committee 3 presented draft 1 of a report on an appeal by the Chilliwack CanRC against RSW 2021 Art. 33 (8.6.6.1) regarding procedure in dealing with an overture. The report was discussed. The committee took the report back for refinement.

Article 74 – Appeal against RSW 2021 Art. 33 (*Hymn Cap Overture – grounds*)

Committee 3 presented draft 1 of a report on an appeal by the Chilliwack CanRC against RSW 2021 Art. 33 (8.6.6.2) regarding the grounds for an overture. The report was discussed. The committee took the report back for refinement.

After the chairman said goodbye to the students, Synod adjourned until 2:00pm.

Day 6 — Afternoon Session

Tuesday, May 17, 2022

Article 75 – Reopening

Synod reopened in plenary session. The chairman had the meeting sing Psalm 135:6,10. He observed that all synod members were present.

Article 76 – Appeal against RSW 2021 Art. 33 (*Hymn Cap Overture – procedure*)

1. Material

- 1.1 Appeal against RSW 2021 Art. 33 from the Chilliwack CanRC asking GS 2022 to judge that RSW 2021 erred in the way in which it dealt with submissions from Chilliwack (and other churches), in processing an overture presented to RSW 2021 by Classis Pacific East (CPE) Sept. 2020 (8.6.6.1).

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The appeal was declared admissible. However, it was noted that Chilliwack neglected to submit a copy of the relevant Acts of RSW 2021, as well as a copy of the original overture as submitted by CPE as part of their appeal.

3. Decision

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To deny the appeal of the Chilliwack CanRC against the procedure followed by RSW 2021 (Art. 33).

4. Grounds

- 4.1 Though Chilliwack contends that “an overture should come from a local congregation, not a major, or broader, assembly” and concludes, on the basis of that belief, that “it is prohibited to alter any submissions by anyone, after it (sic) has been presented” to a major assembly, this is an incorrect understanding of the nature of overtures. Although overtures originate with a consistory, they are presented to the major assemblies for adoption. Major assemblies have the right to amend overtures, for the sake of their adoption. An adopted overture then becomes the overture of the major assembly which adopted it.
- 4.2 If a major assembly were to amend an overture in such a way that it no longer honoured the original intent of the minor assembly which submitted it, that would, indeed, be improper. However, the information which Chilliwack excerpts from the Acts of RSW 2021 shows that RSW honoured the original intent of the overture submitted by CPE Sept. 2020. The amendments made by RSW 2021 served to strengthen the argument of the overture.
- 4.3 Chilliwack cites excerpts from the Acts of RSW 2021 as suggestions that their submissions were not dealt with impartially. Chilliwack did not, however, submit a complete copy of the relevant portions of the Acts RSW 2021, or of the overture that originated with the Vernon CanRC and was submitted by CPE Sept. 2020 to RSW 2021, or the “list of concerns” presented by Chilliwack to RSW 2021. It is, therefore, not possible, or appropriate, for GS 2022 to make a judgement in this matter.

Article 77 – Appeal against RSW 2021 Art. 33 (*Hymn Cap Overture – grounds*)

1. Material

- 1.1 Appeal against RSW 2021 Art. 33 from the Chilliwack CanRC (8.6.6.2) in which it appeals the overture from RSW to remove the so-called “Hymn Cap”.

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The appeal was declared admissible.

3. Decision

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To deny the appeal of the Chilliwack CanRC against RSW 2021 Art. 33.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 Chilliwack “*wishes to appeal the overture from RSW.*” Churches may interact with overtures by means of letters, but by their very nature, overtures cannot be appealed.
- 4.2 Though Chilliwack asserts “*that the decision of Chatham 2004, must first be proven to be in conflict with either the word of God, or the church order*”, they have not

demonstrated that the decision of RSW 2021 was in conflict with either the Word of God, or the CO.

- 4.3 Though Chilliwack asserts “that RSW 2021 has wronged the churches by its decision to present the overture to GS 2022 without first proving the error of our current practice”, previous decisions can be revisited as proposals (which includes overtures) substantiated by new grounds.

Article 78 – Appeal against RSE 2020 Art. 13 (*Language of questions in Liturgical Forms*)

1. Material

- 1.1 Appeal from the Hamilton-Blessings CanRC against the decision of RSE 2020 (Art. 13) not to adopt the overture of Classis Central Ontario (CCO) May 2020, regarding the amendment of the language of the questions in the liturgical forms (8.6.9.1).
- 1.2 Overture (request), embedded in the appeal, from Hamilton-Blessings that if their appeal to GS 2022 is upheld, GS 2022 would adopt the CCO May 2020 overture to RSE 2020 (8.6.9.1).

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The appeal, and the overture within it, was declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To sustain the appeal of Hamilton-Blessings (1.1);
- 3.2 To deny the overture (request) of Hamilton-Blessings (1.2).

4. Grounds

- 4.1 Re 3.1: RSE 2020’s decision not to take over the overture is based on insufficient grounds as demonstrated by the following:
- 4.1.1 In Consideration 1 RSE 2020 makes an observation about the overture. Hamilton-Blessings is correct to note this. An observation cannot be a ground for a decision without further clarification as to how that observation would form an argument against the overture being adopted. As such, RSE 2020 Art. 13 Cons. 1 is insufficient.
- 4.1.2 RSE 2020 misunderstands the intent of the overture when it states in consideration 2 that the current phrase in our forms, namely, “summarized in the confessions” is “inclusive of what is expressed in the Apostles’ Creed”. Hamilton-Blessings is correct to assert that the overture does not say this, but rather seeks to have the form refer to the Apostles’ Creed to make explicit the historical connection between triune baptism and faith in the triune God as we confess it in the Apostles’ Creed.
- 4.1.3 Although Hamilton-Blessings overstates RSE 2020’s position in Consideration 3 as “a theological blunder” since it is evident from the context in which RSE 2020 made their statement that they did not intend to say that every theological formulation in the confessions is promised to candidates for profession of faith, nevertheless, RSE 2020 in answer to Ground B of the overture uses as a ground the very consideration the overture is contesting in Ground B (GS 1986 Art. 144 Cons.

- 1). It is not sufficient to answer an objection against a consideration by repeating the consideration.
- 4.1.4 RSE 2020 Art. 13 Cons. 4 fails to consider Ground C on its own merits, even though later in Consideration 7, it will acknowledge that the overture does make a historical case that the Apostles' Creed is the correct referent for the phrase "the articles of the Christian faith" in the original liturgical forms. RSE 2020's primary concern with both considerations 4 and 5 is to argue against the overture's conclusion that if the historical referent for the phrase "the articles of the Christian faith" is the Apostles' Creed, then the term "confessional membership" is erroneous. Whether or not the term is erroneous, the overture's contention that the phrase "articles of the Christian faith" cannot mean "confessions" does not necessarily mean the overture seeks to minimize the confessions in the life of the members. Contrary to what RSE 2020 says in Consideration 4, when it refers to Ground D of the overture, there is no evidence that the overture is arguing that the Apostles' Creed is something that "stands alone" from all that is in the Scriptures as summarized in the confessions.
- 4.1.5 RSE 2020 declares in Consideration 6 that no evidence was presented that the sister churches referred to in the overture (URCNA and OPC) "limit their member's confessional vow" to only the Apostles' Creed in their formulations; however, RSE 2020 offers no evidence themselves that the phrase "articles of the Christian faith" in the URCNA membership vows includes more than the Apostles' Creed.
- 4.1.6 Although Hamilton-Blessings did not appeal Consideration 7, the question of whether the 1983 decision changed what the churches were asking in the liturgical forms goes to the heart of what the overture is addressing and, therefore, cannot be used as an argument against the overture.
- 4.2 Re 3.1: GS 2019 Art. 64 Rec. 5.1 left Hamilton-Blessings with the impression that their request could come back to Synod in the form of an overture via the ecclesiastical route when they pointed Hamilton-Blessings to Considerations 4.1, 4.2 and 4.4. This is certainly the impression given by Consideration 4.4 which states, "In this way, *all the churches* will have ample time and opportunity to interact with it through this filtering process." (Italics added)
- 4.3 Re 3.2: It is not possible for GS 2022 to adopt the overture since all the churches have not had the opportunity to interact with the overture through submissions to GS 2022. Since this overture has already been considered by a Regional Synod, a church can take over this exact same overture and submit it directly to GS 2025, at least six months prior to the synod, also distributing it to all the churches, analogous to Synod Guidelines I.F.

During discussion, a motion to amend was made and duly seconded:

To remove:

Since this overture has already been considered by a Regional Synod, a church can take over this exact same overture and submit it directly to GS 2025 at least six months prior to the synod.

And add at this point:

To be considered, the overture should be sent to the next RSE, which can then decide whether to submit the overture to the next general synod as per Synod Guidelines.

The motion was defeated.

During the course of making this decision, it was moved and seconded to divide the question into 3.1 (with 4.1 and 4.2) and 3.2 (with 4.3) This motion was defeated.

Article 79 – Appeal against RSW 2021 Art. 31 (*In-person Worship*)

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

Article 80 – Acts – GS 2022 Art. 60

Synod dealt with this matter in closed session, with credentialed delegates from sister churches present, and with Rev. Dick Wynia absent.

The Acts of GS 2022 Art. 60 were corrected and adopted.

Article 81 – Confidential

Article 82 – Appeal against GS 2019 Art. 98 and Art. 141 (*Personal*)

Synod dealt with this matter in closed session, with credentialed delegates from sister churches present, and with Rev. Dick Wynia absent.

Committee 4 presented draft 1 of a report on an appeal against GS 2019 Art. 98 and Art. 141 (*Personal*). The report was discussed. The committee took the report back for refinement.

Elder Art Witten led in intercessory prayer.

Synod adjourned until 7:00pm.

Day 6 — Evening Session

Tuesday, May 17, 2022

Article 83 – Reopening

Synod reopened in plenary session. The chairman had the meeting sing Psalm 84:6. He observed that, with the exception of two members, all synod members were present.

Article 84 – GGRCI – Fraternal Delegate Address

Rev. Karlo Janssen introduced Rev. Yonson Dethan, credentialed delegate of the Calvinist Reformed Churches in Indonesia (GGRCI). Rev. Dethan addressed Synod via video conferencing, describing the GGRCI, especially its outreach work in various places in Indonesia among Muslim communities, and speaking appreciatively of visits by the GGRCI and CanRC.

The full text of his address can be found in [Appendix 15](#). The chairman spoke some words in response.

During this event one synod member absent at the start of the session joined the meeting.

Article 85 – Closing Devotions

The chairman made some announcements regarding agenda items and housekeeping matters. Rev. Karlo Janssen read Romans 16:25-27, led in closing prayer, remembering the GGRCI in his prayer, and had those present sing Psalm 87.

Synod adjourned until 9:00 am the next day.

Day 7 — Morning Session

Wednesday, May 18, 2022

Article 86 – Reopening

Synod reopened in plenary session. The chairman observed all synod members were present. He welcomed everyone, including fraternal delegates and observers. He had those present sing Psalm 93:1,4, read Philippians 3:1-11, and led in opening prayer.

Article 87 – Acts

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

Article 88 – CRCA-CCCNA Study Reports on the Execution of CO Art. 50

Committee 2 presented draft 1 of a report on the CRCA-CCCNA study report. The report was discussed. Credentialed fraternal delegates from FRCA (see [Appendix 20](#)) and FRCSA (see [Appendix 21](#)) spoke to the matter. The committee took the report back for refinement.

Article 89 – CRTS (Board of Governors) Supplementary Report (*Foreign Students*)

Committee 3 presented draft 1 of a report on the Supplementary Report of the Board of Governors on Funding for Foreign Students from the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa. The report was discussed. The committee took the report back for refinement.

Article 90 – Overtures RSE 2020 and RSW 2021 re GS 2004 Art. 115 (*Hymn Cap*)

Committee 1 presented draft 1 of a majority report and draft 1 of a minority report on Overtures RSE 2020 and RSW 2021 re GS 2004 Art. 115 (*Hymn Cap*). The reports were discussed.

At 12:10pm Synod adjourned for lunch until 1:15 pm.

Day 7 — Afternoon Session
Wednesday, May 18, 2022

Article 91 – Reopening

Synod reopened in plenary session. The chairman had the meeting sing Psalm 19:4. He observed that all synod members were present.

Article 92 – Overtures RSE 2020 and RSW 2021 re GS 2004 Art. 115 (*Hymn Cap*) (cont'd)

Discussion continued on the majority and minority reports of Committee 1. The committee took the reports back for refinement.

Synod adjourned until 5:30 pm for committee work.

Article 93 – Closing Devotions

Rev. Wynia noted that this year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the first publication of the *Book of Praise*. He read Psalm 30 and led in thanksgiving and prayer for supper.

Synod adjourned for committee work, and for the night, until 9:00 am the next day.

Day 8 — Morning Session
Thursday, May 19, 2022

Article 94 – Reopening

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

Article 95 – Acts

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

Article 96 – CRTS (Board of Governors) Supplementary Report (*Foreign Students*)

Committee 3 presented draft 2 of a report on the Supplementary Report of the Board of Governors (BoG) on Funding for Foreign Students from the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa (FRCSA). The report was discussed. The committee took the report back for refinement. As Rev. Pieter Boon, the fraternal delegate from the FRCSA, was leaving, assurance was given him that while we struggle with *how* to provide financial support for theological students from the FRCSA, support will be provided.

Article 97 – Appeal against RSW 2021 Art. 31 (*In-person Worship*)

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

Article 98 – Financial Report of GS 2019

1. Material

- 1.1 Financial Report of the Convening Church of GS 2019, the Edmonton-Immanuel CanRC (8.2.14.1 – see [Appendix 25](#)).

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The report was declared admissible.

3. Decision

Synod decided:

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

Article 99 – Acts – GS 2022 Art. 80-82

Synod dealt with this matter in closed session, with credentialed delegates from sister churches present, and with Rev. Wynia absent.

The Acts of GS 2022 Art. 80-82 were corrected and adopted.

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

Synod dealt with this matter in closed session, with credentialed delegates from sister churches present, and with Rev. Wynia absent.

1. Material

- 1.1 Appeal from br. and sr. S. and M. Vanderwoude against various actions of Lincoln-Vineyard (8.6.2.3 & 8.6.7.3)

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The appeal was declared inadmissible.

Ground:

No minor assembly has dealt with the appeal of br. and sr. Vanderwoude. CO Art. 30 states, “A new matter which has not previously been presented to that major assembly may be put on the agenda only when the minor assembly has dealt with it.”

The following synod members requested that their abstention from voting be recorded:
Harry Moes, James Slaa, Clarence VanderVelde, Art Witten

Article 101 – Overture RSE 2021 re Shorter Lord’s Supper Forms

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

Article 102 – CRCA-CCCNA Study Report on the Execution of CO Art. 50

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

Synod adjourned until 1:15pm for lunch.

Day 8 — Afternoon Session

Thursday, May 19, 2022

Article 103 – Reopening

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

Article 104 – HRCNA Fraternal Observer Address

Rev. Doug Vandeburgt introduced Rev. Pieter Vanderhoek, credentialed delegate of the Heritage Reformed Churches in North America (HRCNA). Rev. Vanderhoek addressed Synod describing the HRCNA, our common heritage and communal ties, our unity in Christ, and the differences between us. The text of his address can be found in [Appendix 16](#). The chairman spoke some words in response.

Rev. Jeff Temple led in prayer, bringing the needs of the HRCNA before the Lord.

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

Committee 1 presented draft 2 of a majority report and draft 2 of a minority report on Overtures RSE 2020 and RSW 2021 re GS 2004 Art. 115 (Hymn Cap). The reports were discussed. The Majority Advisory Committee Report was voted on first (as per Synod Guidelines III.A.5) and adopted.

1. Material

- 1.1 Overture: RSE 2020 to Remove the Current Hymn Cap for the *Book of Praise* (8.4.1).
- 1.2 Overture: RSW 2021 to Rescind the decision of GS 2004 art. 115 re Hymn Cap (8.4.3).
- 1.3 Submissions from the following CanRC and ARC: Toronto-Bethel (8.3.2.41), Owen Sound (8.5.1.1), Carman-West (8.5.1.2), Brampton-Grace (8.5.1.3), Niagara-South (8.5.1.4), Nooksack Valley (8.5.1.5), St. Albert (8.5.1.6), Willoughby Heights (8.5.1.7), Smithville (8.5.1.8), Yarrow (8.5.1.9), Cloverdale (8.5.1.10), Attercliffe (8.5.1.11), Coaldale (8.5.1.12), Carman-East (8.5.1.13), Flamborough-Redemption (8.5.1.14), Fergus-Maranatha (8.5.1.15), Glanbrook-Trinity (8.5.1.16), Barrhead (8.5.1.17), Neerlandia (North) (8.5.1.18), Edmonton-Immanuel (8.5.1.19), Lynden (8.5.1.20), Burlington-Ebenezer (8.5.1.21), Grand Rapids (8.5.1.22), Edmonton-Providence (8.5.1.23), Owen Sound (8.5.3.1), Ancaster (8.5.3.2), Willoughby Heights (8.5.3.3), Neerlandia (North) (8.5.3.4), Edmonton-Immanuel (8.5.3.5), Langley (8.5.3.6).

2. Admissibility

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

2.2 Overture RSW 2021 to Rescind the Decision of GS 2004 Art. 115 re Hymn Cap was declared admissible.

2.3 The submissions from the churches were declared admissible.

Ground

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

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

3.1 To work with both overtures together;

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

4. Grounds

4.1 Re 3.1:

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

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

4.2 Re 3.2:

4.2.1 GS 2004 (Art. 115 Obs. 6.1.1, Cons. 6.2.1, Rec. 6.3) expressed the principle that Psalms have a predominant place in the liturgy of the Reformed churches, and on that basis, set a limit. Any decision to rescind the conclusion of GS 2004 should demonstrate that the basis of that decision is erroneous.

4.2.1.1 GS 2004 (Art. 44 Cons. 4.3) affirmed this principle when it states that the Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad (CRCA) is correct that a “proper proportion between the number of hymns in itself reflects the importance – even the priority – of the Psalms”.

4.2.1.2 GS 2007 (Art. 133 Rec. 5.3) did likewise when it mandated the CRCA to “end the discussion [with the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands (GKv)] about the proportion of Psalms and hymns by expressing the concern that the vast multiplication of hymns does nothing to advance the priority of Psalm singing and places at risk this principle”.

4.2.2 Although RSE 2020 acknowledged the unique, privileged, and predominant role of the singing of Psalms in the liturgy of the churches, and that they should be retained as such, it then concluded that limiting the number of hymns in the *Book of Praise* is not an effective way of achieving this goal. Many of the churches, however, appreciated how the hymn cap flows from the principle of the predominance of Psalms in Reformed liturgy. As one church put it, “Why should the appearance of a thing not testify to and confirm the underlying principle of that very thing? If Psalms [are] predominant, then that should be visibly testified to and confirmed by a greater number of Psalms than hymns in the church’s songbook.”

4.2.3 Additionally, RSW 2021 argued that “it is clear from the Preface of the *Book of Praise* that the hymns are not less desirable” (Cons. 2.5). This argument is a round-about way of stating that, when it comes to the selection of songs to sing in the worship services, there is to be no distinction between hymns and Psalms. This

- is not the Reformed principle held since the Reformation, and stated time and again by our general synods (e.g., GS 2004 Art. 44 Cons. 4.3; GS 2007 Art. 133 Cons. 4.2; GS 2013 Art. 173 Cons. 3.6). RSW 2021 did not treat the Preface from the *Book of Praise* forthrightly, specifically where it states, “Although in Reformed liturgy the *Psalms have a predominant place*, our churches have not excluded the use of scriptural hymns”.
- 4.2.4 Although RSW 2021 argued that a limit of 100 hymns makes it likely that there would be less room for hymns that are traditionally sung during specific seasons of the Christian calendar, such a claim is unsubstantiated. In fact, as one church argued, for hymns to be useful to the churches, they would largely centre around the days of commemoration and would leave out many other hymns of praise, adoration, supplication, petition, etc. since there are Psalms which do the same.
- 4.2.5 Although RSE 2020 and RSW 2021 suggested that the hymn cap needlessly limits the churches in their choice of other Christian songs, limiting the churches’ selection is exactly the purpose of CO Art. 55, and therefore, does not serve as an argument for additional hymns.
- 4.2.6 Although RSE 2020 and RSW 2021 argued that a hymn cap does not guarantee the primacy of Psalm singing, numerous churches, both in favour and against removing the hymn cap, have argued for a change to CO Art. 55 that includes a statement re the primacy of Psalm singing as a way to maintain the practice of this principle.
- 4.2.7 It is true that RSE 2020 and RSW 2021 argued that the specified limit of 100 hymns is arbitrary and has no other function than to force the churches to choose from among the best hymns for inclusion in the *Book of Praise* rather than allow for the consideration of all best hymns, also as they continue to be written.
- 4.2.7.1 This implies, however, that the *Book of Praise* will never be a completed book, and that it needs to include an unlimited number of hymns.
- 4.2.7.2 Despite the considerations of RSW 2021 and RSE 2020, a goal of a church songbook should be that the congregation can know it well, can memorize it, and make it part of its everyday life. The proliferation of hymns works against this. As such, it does a disservice to the churches. This sentiment was expressed by the Committee Church Books, Psalms and Hymns Section (1980) when they wrote, “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...” Such would also be the case when the churches add and change the *Book of Praise* regularly.
- 4.2.7.3 Many churches rightly expressed concern with the claim of arbitrariness. As one church put it, “this is true as far as it goes, but both overtures then leap to the conclusion that this means there should be *no* limit on the number of hymns. This does not follow from the question of arbitrariness.”
- 4.2.8 Although RSW 2021 argued that a limit on the hymns means that the churches will have to struggle with the process of removing good hymns to make room for better hymns, this process has benefits since it continuously forces us to evaluate the strength of new hymns by comparing them to existing ones. Without the limit on

hymns, the churches may well resort to a default practice of simply adding new hymns without deciding if they are an improvement on existing hymns. A hymn cap helps the churches to be careful when adding hymns.

For the text of the Minority Advisory Committee Report that was not voted on, as the Majority Advisory Committee Report was adopted, see [Appendix 24](#). (*With respect to retaining this document, see [GS 2022 Art. 115](#).*)

Article 106 – SCBP – Additional Psalms and Hymns

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

Synod adjourned until 7:30pm for committee work.

Day 8 — Evening Session

Thursday, May 19, 2022

Article 107 – Reopening

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

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

1. Material

- 1.1 CRCA-CCCNA Majority Report (8.2.12.1).
- 1.2 CRCA-CCCNA Minority Report (8.2.12.2).
- 1.3 Submissions from the following CanRC and ARC: Dunnville dd. Oct 19, 2021 (8.3.12.1); Burlington Waterdown-Rehoboth (8.3.12.2); Orangeville (8.3.12.3); Carman-West (8.3.12.4); Ancaster (8.3.12.5); Attercliffe (8.3.12.6); Niagara South (8.3.12.7); Lynden (8.3.12.8); Elora (8.3.12.9); St. Albert (8.3.12.10); Fergus-North (8.3.12.11); Guelph-Emmanuel (8.3.12.12); Willoughby Heights (8.3.12.13); Aldergrove (8.3.12.14); Smithville (8.3.12.15); Yarrow (8.3.12.16); Cloverdale (8.3.12.17); Owen Sound (8.3.12.18); Vernon (8.3.12.19); Chilliwack (8.3.12.20); Tintern Spring Creek (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 (North) (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 interchurch 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.
- The phraseology of “transfer of membership” instead of “attestations” is concerning.
- To characterize our current approach to ecclesiastical relationships as top-down or hierarchical is inaccurate.
- The phraseology “element of spectrum to our relationships” can inadvertently lead to losing sight of the scriptural norm of church unity.

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The reports were declared admissible.

2.2 The submissions from the churches were declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To receive the reports and correspondence with gratitude;
- 3.2 To thank the members of the Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad (CRCA) and Committee for Contact with Churches in North America (CCCNA) for their work;
- 3.3 To appoint one committee to be mandated to oversee all aspects of ecumenical relations, and to name this committee the Committee on Ecumenical Relations (CER) (Report Recommendation 4. Single Committee);
- 3.4 To appoint twelve members to the CER from across the federation, one of whom should be convenor (Report Recommendation 5. Size of Committee);
- 3.5 To set the length of time on the committee to be three years, renewable three times (Report Recommendation 6. Number of Consecutive Terms on the Committee);
- 3.6 To give to the CER the following general mandate (Report Recommendation 7. General Mandate):
 - a) To continue contact with churches with whom we are in ecumenical relations;
 - b) To send an appropriate number of delegates to represent the CanRC churches at the International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC) and North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (NAPARC);
 - c) To work in consultation with individual CanRC churches and classes that maintain contact with churches for which the CER also has a mandate;
 - d) Upon request, to advise CanRC churches regarding the identity of other churches and our relationship with them;
 - e) To report on any contact with a church with whom we are not in an ecumenical relationship;
 - f) To appoint one of its members to validate and submit to the treasurer of the General Fund all expenses being submitted for committee work;
 - g) To submit its report to the churches six months prior to the convening of general synod (a supplementary report can be submitted if necessary);
 - h) To facilitate hospitality support for fraternal delegates and observers, in consultation with the convening church, at each general synod;
- 3.7 To adopt the following protocols for hosting fraternal delegates and observers to general synod (Report Recommendation 8. Protocols for Hosting at General Synods).
 - a) Invitations: It is the responsibility of the Committee on Ecumenical Relations (CER) to send invitations to all churches in Ecclesiastical Fellowship (EF). The CER may also send invitations to any other church when they deem it would be beneficial to our ecumenical relations. The CER shall inform the convening church of these invitations.
 - b) Hospitality: It is the responsibility of the CER, in consultation with the convening church, to facilitate the transport of invited delegates and official observers between a nearby airport, the location of the synod meetings, and their place of accommodation, and to provide lodging and meals for all those invited (and spouses if applicable) for the duration of their attendance at the general synod. Costs associated with this hospitality shall be paid out of the general

fund. The CER will assist the convening church and synod in hosting invited delegates and official observers from other churches, explaining procedures, ensuring delegates have the materials they are entitled to, etc., especially as some delegates will be from foreign (church) cultures.

c) Fraternal Delegates: (delegates from churches with whom we have EF)

Fraternal delegates shall:

- i. have access to all internal synod documents;
- ii. be invited to participate in deliberations in meetings of advisory committees;
- iii. be given an opportunity to address the synod;
- iv. be given the privilege of the floor (entitled to deliberate and advise, but not vote).

d) Fraternal Observers: (delegates from other churches)

Fraternal observers shall:

- i. be given an opportunity to address the synod;
- ii. be invited to be present at meetings of advisory committees;
- iii. be given the privilege of the floor during the time of their bringing greetings to the synod on behalf of the churches that sent them;
- iv. be given other privileges if synod executive deems that to be of benefit.

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

- 3.8.1 Categories of Ecumenical Relationships (Recommendation 1);
- 3.8.2 Rules for Ecumenical Relationships (Recommendation 2);
- 3.8.3 Revision of Church Order Article 50 (Recommendation 3):

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

3.9 To request the CER:

- 3.9.1 To ensure that rule 6 of our Rules for Ecclesiastical Fellowship is honoured;
- 3.9.2 To demonstrate in its report the consistency of its proposals with Scripture, Confession, and Church Order.

4. Grounds

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

4.2 Re 3.8, 3.9:

4.2.1 Opportunity was not afforded to the members of the committees to fully interact with both the Majority and Minority Reports before they were submitted to GS 2022.

4.2.2 Though much work has been done, there are matters in the report that appear unfinished and could lead to unintended consequences. For example, see letter of Ancaster (8.3.1.1) which indicates that there may be unintentional loss of pulpit

fellowship for foreign churches who had an EF relationship but have been moved to Corresponding Relationship.

- 4.2.3 Adopting a new structure for ecclesiastical relations is very significant for the churches. Though some churches speak of a local urgency, the weightiness of this matter and the significant amount of feedback received from the churches calls for prudence.
- 4.2.4 Re 3.9.1: it was ascertained that the adopted Rules for EF were not fully followed. Rule 6 states “When major changes or additions are being considered to the confessions, church government or liturgy, the churches shall be informed in order that as much consultation can take place as possible before a final decision is taken”.
- 4.2.5 Re 3.9.2: it is important that the churches understand the rationale of any proposed changes.

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

1. Material

- 1.1 Appeal against RSW 2021 Art. 31 from brother and sister T. & C. Kanis (8.6.11.1).

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The appeal was declared admissible.

3. Decision

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To deny the appeal.

4. Grounds

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

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

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

During the making of this decision one of the previously absent synod members joined the meeting.

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

1. Material

- 1.1 Appeals against GS 2019 Art. 142 from the Fergus-Maranatha CanRC (8.6.8.1) and the Calgary CanRC (8.6.8.2) asking GS 2022 to judge that GS 2019 “erred in giving the SCBP the mandate to provide the churches with a list of songs for immediate testing, in the worship services” and to “re-affirm the principle that CO Article 55 limits the use of psalms and hymns in the worship services to those approved by General Synod.”

2. Admissibility

The appeals were declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To deal with the appeals together.
 3.2 To sustain the appeals of the Fergus-Maranatha CanRC and the Calgary CanRC that GS 2019 (Art. 142) erred, because it had approved sight unseen the songs for use in worship.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 Re 3.1: Both appeals request the same judgments.
 4.2 Re 3.2: In CO Art. 55, the churches agreed that “The metrical Psalms adopted by general synods as well as hymns approved by general synod shall be sung in the worship services.” While GS 2010 recognized that CO Art. 55 clearly limits “the churches’ singing to synodically-adopted songs” (Acts GS 2010 Art. 171 Cons. 3.5), it also recognized that a general synod may provisionally approve songs for use in worship in order to test them (Acts GS 2010 Art. 161 Cons. 3.3, Rec. 4). However, in “giving the SCBP the mandate to provide the churches with a list of songs for immediate testing, in the worship services,” GS 2019 exceeded the limits imposed by CO Art. 55 by approving songs for use in the worship services sight unseen.

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

Article 111 – SCBP – Additional Psalms and Hymns

1. Material

- 1.1 Report of the Standing Committee for the Publication of the (*SCBP*):
 1.1.1 Supplement Report 1 – Psalms and Hymns (8.2.2.2);
 1.1.2 Supplement Report 2 – Psalms and Hymns (8.2.2.3).
 1.2 Submissions from the following CanRC and ARC: Dunnville (8.3.2.1), Niagara-South (8.3.2.2), Elora (8.3.2.3), Nooksack Valley (8.3.2.4), St. Albert (8.3.2.5), Fergus-North (8.3.2.6), Burlington Waterdown-Rehoboth (8.3.2.7), Aldergrove (8.3.2.8), Devon (8.3.2.9, 8.3.2.10), Smithville (8.3.2.11), Yarrow (8.3.2.12), Tintern Spring Creek (8.3.2.13), Coaldale (8.3.2.14), Fergus-Maranatha (8.3.2.15), Carman East (8.3.2.16), Flamborough-Redemption (8.3.2.17), Owen Sound (8.3.2.18), Calgary (8.3.2.19), Glanbrook-Trinity (8.3.2.20), Barrhead (8.3.2.21), Willoughby Heights (8.3.2.22), Hamilton-Cornerstone

(8.3.2.23), Winnipeg-Redeemer (8.3.2.24), Grand Valley (8.3.2.25), Ancaster (8.3.2.26, 8.3.2.27, 8.3.2.28, 8.3.2.29), Neerlandia (North) (8.3.2.30), Edmonton-Immanuel (8.3.2.31), Lynden (8.3.2.32), Carman-West (8.3.2.33), Orangeville (8.3.2.34, 8.3.2.35, 8.3.2.36), Hamilton-Providence (8.3.2.37, 8.3.2.38), Burlington-Ebenezer (8.3.2.39), Grand Rapids (8.3.2.40), Toronto-Bethel (8.3.2.41), Lincoln-Vineyard (8.3.2.42), Langley-Refuge (8.3.2.43), Coaldale (8.7.2).

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The report was declared admissible.
- 2.2 Supplement 1 was declared admissible.
- 2.3 Supplement 2 was declared admissible.
- 2.4 The submissions from the churches were declared admissible.
Grounds re Supplement 2 – Psalms and Hymns – late submission
 - 2a The sheer volume of work required to process feedback from the churches was too great a task for the committee to complete six months prior to GS 2022.
 - 2b It is wise to treat proposed additions to the *Book of Praise* as one project, rather than a number of different projects at different stages. The Supplements 1 and 2 are part of the report as a whole.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To provisionally approve the songs as updated and recommended by the SCBP in the Supplements 1 and 2 of the Report for testing in the churches (optional use in the worship services) for final consideration and decision by GS 2025.
 - 3.1.1 Psalms: 4, 5 (Recommendation 1), 8, 11, 13, 19, 22, 23, 32, 39, 41, 46, 51, 57, 59, 64, 69, 84, 90, 95, 98, 100, 103, 104, 106, 110, 111, 112, 113, 117, 120, 130, 149, 150.
 - 3.1.2 Hymns: A Shoot Will Spring, Abide With Me, All Creatures of Our God and King, Amazing Grace, Angels From the Realms of Glory, Before the Throne of God Above, Christians Awake, Come Thou Almighty King, Come O Fount of Every Blessing (with updated language), Come Thou Long Expected Jesus, Come You Faithful Raise the Strain, Crown Him with Many Crowns, For Your Gift of God the Spirit, God Moves in a Mysterious Way, Guide Me O My Great Redeemer, Hark the Herald Angels Sing, How Bright Appears the Morning Star, How Deep the Father's Love for Us, How Great Thou Art, In Christ Alone, Joy to World! The Lord is Come, Let All Things Now Living, Man of Sorrows! What a Name, May the Mind of Christ My Saviour, My Lord I Did Not Choose You, O Christ Our Hope Our Desire, O Come All Ye Faithful, O Sacred Head Now Wounded, Sing and Praise to God Who Reigns Above, Speak O Lord, Take My Life and Let It Be, Threefold Amen, When I Survey the Wondrous Cross, When Peace Like a River, Yet Not I But Through Christ in Me, Your Law O Lord is Our Delight
- 3.2 To approve the recommendations of the SCBP to remove certain psalms and hymns from the original submission, being:
 - 3.2.1 Psalms: 30, 55, 60, 63, 145

-
- 3.2.2 Hymns: A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing, Come Behold the Wondrous Mystery, Hail the Day That Sees Him Rise, How Shall They Hear the Word of God, Praise the Saviour Now and Ever, Worship Christ the Risen King
- 3.2.3 Churches which would like to interact further with the rationale of the SCBP concerning these songs may make these submissions to the SCBP for their further consideration.
- 3.3 To mandate the SCBP re Proposed Psalms and Hymns 2022:
- 3.3.1 To provide the churches with a single file of the updated and recommended songs;
- 3.3.2 To receive for evaluation the above submissions from the churches;
- 3.3.3 To encourage the churches to send responses directly to the committee before March 1, 2024. Individual church members are asked to send their submissions through their consistories or councils;
- 3.3.4 To review the suitability of individual hymns which we already have in our Book of Praise, for possible change, deletion, or improvement;
- 3.3.5 To evaluate additional input from the churches and prepare a report for the churches with recommendations no less than six months prior to the next General Synod.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 Many churches express concerns about the lack of time available for giving feedback. This was made more challenging by the restrictions on public worship as a result of COVID-19.
- 4.2 Waiting for a final decision from GS 2025 provides the churches ample time to give additional feedback, and the committee to take the time to consider further its recommendations.
- 4.3 None of the churches which interacted with specific songs flagged any of them for Scriptural error. Concerns regarding versification, language, and melody can be considered through the testing process.

Article 112 – SCBP – Report Sections 1, 3 and 4

Committee 1 presented draft 1 of a report on Sections 1, 3 and 4 of the Report of the Standing Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise*. The report was discussed. The committee took the report back for refinement.

Article 113 – Closing Devotions

Some announcements were made regarding agenda items and housekeeping matters. Rev. James Slaa had those present sing Ps. 119:26, read Psalm 119:65-72, and led in closing prayer.

Synod adjourned until 9:30 am the next day.

Day 9 — Morning Session
Friday, May 20, 2022

Article 114 – Reopening

Synod reopened in plenary session. The chairman observed all synod members were present. He welcomed everyone, including fraternal delegates. He had those present sing Hymn 41:1,3, read Philippians 3:17-21, and led in opening prayer.

Article 115 – Acts

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

Synod decided by a vote to insert the Advisory Committee 1 Minority Report on the SCBP Supplements as an appendix in the Acts and to note this in [GS 2022 Art. 105](#).

Article 116 – Not Archiving Certain Sensitive Items

Committee 5 presented draft 1 of a report on keeping certain items submitted to GS 2022 out of the synod archives. The report was discussed. The committee took the report back for refinement.

Article 117 – Appeal against RSE 2019 Art. 10 (*Worship Services on Days of Commemoration*)

Committee 4 presented draft 1 of a report on an appeal against RSE 2019 Art. 10. The report was discussed. The committee took the report back for refinement.

Article 118 – Overture RSE 2021 re Shorter Lord’s Supper Forms

Committee 3 presented draft 2 of RSE Overture 2021 for Shorter Lord’s Supper Forms. The report was discussed. The committee took the report back for refinement.

Article 119 – CRTS (Board of Governors) Supplementary Report (*Foreign Students*)

1. Material

- 1.1 CRTS/BoG Supplementary Report to GS 2022 (8.2.4.2); the Supplement proposes that GS 2022 approve a method by which the Canadian Reformed Churches can provide financial support to theological students of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa (FRCSA) studying at CRTS.
- 1.2 CRTS/BoG Report GS 2022: Sub-section South Africa (8.2.4.1).
- 1.3 Letters from the following CanRC: Burlington Waterdown-Rehoboth (8.3.4.1), Willoughby Heights (8.3.4.2), Aldergrove (8.3.4.3), Yarrow (8.3.4.4), Glanbrook-Trinity (8.3.4.5), Langley (8.3.4.6), Toronto-Bethel (8.3.4.7), Grassie-Covenant (8.3.4.9).

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The submissions were declared admissible.

3. Decision

Synod decided:

- 3.1 That financial assistance for theological students of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa (FRCSA) be provided by means of freewill giving to the Foreign Students' Bursary Fund (FSBF).

4. Grounds

- 4.1 Past general synods encouraged Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary (CRTS) to support the FRCSA in providing theological education for their students (GS 2010 Art. 82 Rec.4.3; GS 2013 Art. 132 Rec. 4.2 & 4.3; GS 2016 Art. 47 Rec. 4.3). GS 2007 (Art. 124 Rec. 4.2) and GS 2010 (Art. 82 Rec. 4.2) have also encouraged the churches to prayerfully and financially support FRCSA.
- 4.2 In September 2016, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was approved by the CRTS/BoG (Board of Governors) and the Deputies (Curators) for Theological Training of the FRCSA (MoU; dd. May 2016). The MoU established the broad framework for this relationship. In December 2017, the MoU was broadened to include the provision of financial support for FRCSA students via the Foreign Students' Bursary Fund (FSBF). With respect to having the authority to enter into such an agreement, the College Act 5.11a grants the BoG: "...conduct, management and control of the College and of its property, revenues, expenditures, business and affairs ... and the Board has all powers necessary or convenient to perform its duties and achieve the object and purpose of the College" (as cited in GS 2019 Art. 84 Obs. 2.9.1). In November 2021, the Deputies of the FRCSA appealed to the Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad (CRCA) and to GS 2022 requesting financial assistance now that the number of theological students in their federation is increasing.
- 4.3 The Needy Students' Fund was established according to CO Art. 20 to provide financial support for theological students of the CanRCs. The intention of the FSBF is to provide financial assistance to foreign theological students; therefore, although the FSBF was not originally established with the intention of supporting all the theological students from a particular federation, it is appropriate to use the FSBF for the support of the theological students of the FRCSA.
- 4.4 None of the churches which addressed GS 2022 on this matter, objected to providing financial support to FRCSA theological students; however, objections were raised to meeting this need by way of assessment. In view of the nature of our obligation to the FRCSA students, which is an obligation of love, it would be preferable to meet this need by way of freewill giving to the FSBF. Further, freewill giving, rather than an ecclesiastical assessment, more appropriately meshes with the way that the FSBF operates. Finally, the number of students coming from the FRCSA will fluctuate from year to year, and consequently, so will the need. Again, freewill giving to the FSBF is the most appropriate way of responding to these circumstances.
- 4.5 The CanRC have a sister-church relationship with the FRCSA. Within the framework of that relationship, the FRCSA have decided that the CRTS would function as their federational seminary. Consequently, our relationship with, and obligation to, the theological students of the FRCSA is a unique one. The uniqueness of this relationship

has been formalized by means of a Memorandum of Understanding which has been ratified by the CRTS/BoG and the Deputies of the FRCSA.

Article 120 – SCBP – Report Sections 1, 3 and 4

1. Material

- 1.1 Report of the Standing Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise* (SCBP) (8.2.2.1) – Sections 1, 3 and 4.
- 1.2 Submissions from the following CanRC: Niagara-South (8.3.2.2), Nooksack Valley (8.3.2.4), Aldergrove (8.3.2.8), Devon (8.3.2.9), Flamborough-Redemption (8.3.2.17), Owen Sound (8.3.2.18), Willoughby Heights (8.3.2.22), Grand Valley (8.3.2.25), Neerlandia (North) (8.3.2.30), Lynden (8.3.2.32), Orangeville (8.3.2.35), Burlington-Ebenezer (8.3.2.39), Grand Rapids (8.3.2.40), Coaldale (8.7.2).

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The report was declared admissible.
- 2.2 The submissions were declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To express thanksgiving and joy with the FRCA in the publication of the *Australian Book of Praise*, and to thank the SCBP for their assistance to that end;
- 3.2 To thank the committee for its due diligence and hard work over the past three years. In particular, to express thanks to those committee members whose work on the committee is now completed: Alisha Boeringa, Rev. Rolf den Hollander, Dr. Karen Dieleman, Jeff Jans, John Jager, Dr. Jannes Smith, and Rev. Dick Wynia;
- 3.3 To express gratitude to those brothers and sisters who assisted the SCBP with its work: Dr. William Helder, Rev. George van Popta, Dr. Jason Van Vliet, Margaret Alkema, Marina Rietema and Rita Kuik;
- 3.4 To thank the SCBP for appointing Brian Vanderhout, to validate and submit to the treasurer of the General Fund all expenses submitted for the committee's work;
- 3.5 To thank the SCBP for negotiating a new contract with Premier Printing Ltd. Which is effective for a period of five years, until a new funding formula is presented to GS 2025;
- 3.6 To re-appoint two current members for a three-year term, two new members to replace outgoing members and three additional members for a three-year term due to the sizeable mandate;
- 3.7 To recognize that, for the selection of Psalm renditions, the SCBP created for its own use guidelines which were aligned with the Guidelines for Hymn Selection (GS 2004);
- 3.8 To mandate the SCBP:
 - 3.8.1 To fulfill, as yet, the directive of GS 2019 Art.23 Cons. 3.1 and 3.2. RSE Nov. 2018 makes a valid point that the English language has changed and therefore the use of masculine pronouns in the forms for the Lord's Supper could make them liable to misinterpretation. It would be advisable to ask the committee to study this and propose appropriate changes to the Lord's Supper forms, giving special

- attention to the personal nature of self-examination. In this process the churches would have the opportunity to interact with any proposed changes;
- 3.8.2 To foster an increased awareness of the existence of the *Book of Praise* among others in the English-speaking world;
 - 3.8.3 To continue maintaining its archives (at CRTS) and website:
www.bookofpraise.ca;
 - 3.8.4 To continue the process of reviewing the proposed songs according to the Guidelines for the Selection of Music in the Church, as printed in Appendix 2B of the *Acts* of GS 2004;
 - 3.8.5 To maintain good contact with the Standing Committee for the *Australian Book of Praise*;
 - 3.8.6 To maintain its corporate status for the purpose of protecting the interests of the Canadian Reformed Churches in matters concerning the *Book of Praise*;
 - 3.8.7 To survey the churches to determine the priority/relative importance regarding types of availability (digital, open-source, print), formatting (e.g., four-part harmony), and other publication variables (including copyright) with regard to the *Book of Praise*, as listed in the SCBP report:
 - 3.8.7.1 To review the input of the churches, and on that basis, propose a publishing and funding model to GS 2025;
 - 3.8.8 To receive, scrutinize, and evaluate the content of correspondence from the churches and to report to GS 2025 as to the validity of the suggestions made;
 - 3.8.9 To appoint one of its members to validate and submit to the treasurer of the General Fund all expenses being submitted for committee work;
 - 3.8.10 To submit its report to the churches six months prior to the convening of the next general synod.

Article 121 – CER (Committee on Ecumenical Relations) General Mandate

1. Material

- 1.1 CRCA Report (8.2.1).
- 1.2 CCCNA Report (8.2.11).
- 1.3 CRCA-CCCNA Study Report on the Execution of CO Art. 50 (8.2.12)

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The reports were declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To discharge all members of the Committee for Contact with Churches in North America (CCCNA) and Committee on Relations with Churches Abroad (CRCA) from their present tasks;
- 3.2 To thank the following members of the CCCNA for their years of service to the churches: Rev. Doug Vandeburgt, Henry van Delden, Les Vanderveen and Peter Veenendaal;

- 3.3 To thank the following member of the CRCA for his years of service to the churches:
Rev. Arend Witten;
- 3.4 To appoint twelve members to the Committee on Ecumenical Relations (CER);
- 3.5 To give the CER the following general mandate:
- a) To continue contact with churches with whom we are in ecumenical relations;
 - b) To send an appropriate number of delegates to represent the CanRC churches at the meetings of the International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC) and North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (NAPARC);
 - c) To work in consultation with individual CanRC churches and classes that maintain contact with churches for which the CER also has a mandate;
 - d) Upon request, to advise CanRC churches regarding the identity of other churches and our relationship with them;
 - e) To report on any contact with a church with whom we are not in an ecumenical relationship;
 - f) To appoint one of its members to validate and submit to the treasurer of the General Fund all expenses being submitted for committee work;
 - g) To submit its report to the churches six months prior to the convening of general synod (a supplementary report can be submitted if necessary);
 - h) To facilitate hospitality support for fraternal delegates and observers, in consultation with the convening church, at each general synod.

Article 122 – FRCA (Free Reformed Churches of Australia)

Committee 2 presented draft 1 of a report on the Free Reformed Churches of Australia (FRCA). The report was discussed. The committee took the report back for refinement.

Synod adjourned until 1:15 pm for lunch.

Day 9 — Afternoon Session Friday, May 20, 2022

Article 123 – Reopening

Synod reopened in plenary session. The chairman had the meeting sing Psalm 46:2. He observed that all synod members were present.

Article 124 – IRB (Reformed Churches in Brazil)

1. Material

- 1.1 CRCA Report 3: Brazil (IRB) (8.2.1.3).

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The report was declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To express gratitude for the continued desire of the IRB to grow in knowledge and faithfulness;
- 3.2 To continue Ecclesiastical Fellowship (EF) with the Reformed Churches of Brazil (IRB) under the adopted rules;
- 3.3 To mandate the Committee on Ecumenical Relations (CER):
 - 3.3.1 To use every opportunity to have contact with the IRB and to provide encouragement to this federation of churches;
 - 3.3.2 To visit the IRB at least twice prior to the next synod;
 - 3.3.3 To work in consultation and cooperation with the Aldergrove CanRC and the Hamilton-Cornerstone CanRC given their mission work in Brazil;
 - 3.3.4 To submit its report to the churches six months prior to the convening of the next general synod.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 As far as can be determined, the IRB demonstrate that they remain faithful churches. They abide by the Word of God, as the only rule for faith and life, and adhere to the adopted confessions and church order.
- 4.2 In view of the needs in the IRB, it is important to make every effort to maintain direct contact with the IRB, and to encourage these churches and their leaders.
- 4.3 There is good communication between the IRB and the CanRC, and the CanRC are able to do much work in Brazil through the sending churches.
- 4.4 The sending churches of Aldergrove and Hamilton are to be encouraged in their support of the churches in Brazil, especially in the training of ministers of the Word.

Article 125 – GGRI (Reformed Churches in Indonesia)

1. Material

- 1.1 CRCA Report 4: Indonesia (GGRI, GGRCI, GGRI-Timor) (8.2.1.4).

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The report was declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To continue ecclesiastical fellowship (EF) with the Reformed Churches in Indonesia (GGRI);
- 3.2 To mandate the Committee on Ecumenical Relations (CER):
 - 3.2.1 To try to send a delegation of brothers to Indonesia to represent the CanRC at the next national synod of the GGRI;
 - 3.2.2 To work in consultation and cooperation with the Free Reformed Churches of Australia (FRCA) and United Reformed Churches in North America (URCNA) in encouraging and supporting the churches of the GGRI in their efforts to grow in Reformed doctrine and polity;

- 3.2.3 To work in consultation and cooperation with the Smithville CanRC given their mission work in Timor;
- 3.2.4 As opportunity arises, to be available for discussions with a view to promoting ecclesiastical harmony and unity between faithful reformed churches in Indonesia;
- 3.2.5 To submit its report to the churches six months prior to the convening of the next general synod.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 As far as can be determined, the GGRI demonstrate that they remain faithful churches. They abide by the Word of God as the only rule for faith and life and adhere to adopted confessions and church order.
- 4.2 Given that the FRCA is closer to Indonesia than the CanRC, it is prudent that the CER work in close conjunction with the FRCA. It would therefore be helpful if the respective committees continue to share information on their observations and activities in Indonesia.
- 4.3 Working together, the FRCA and the CanRC will be in a good position to continue to support the GGRI and to encourage church unity among the various groups of Reformed churches in Indonesia.
- 4.4 Since the GGRI now also have a relationship with the URCNA, it is advisable to share information with this federation as well.
- 4.5 Given the mission work of Smithville in Indonesia, which impacts both the GGRI and the Calvinist Reformed Churches in Indonesia (GGRCI), it is important for the CER to share information concerning its findings with Smithville.

Article 126 – GGRCI (Calvinist Reformed Churches in Indonesia)

1. Material

- 1.1 CRCA Report 4: Indonesia (GGRI, GGRCI, GGRI-Timor) (8.2.1.4).

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The report was declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To continue ecclesiastical fellowship (EF) with the Calvinist Reformed Churches in Indonesia (GGRCI);
- 3.2 To mandate the Committee on Ecumenical Relations (CER):
 - 3.2.1 To try to send a delegation of brothers to Indonesia to represent the CanRC at the next national synod of the GGRCI;
 - 3.2.2 To work in consultation and cooperation with the Free Reformed Churches of Australia (FRCA) and United Reformed Churches in North America (URCNA) in encouraging and supporting the churches of the GGRCI in their efforts to grow in Reformed doctrine and polity;
 - 3.2.3 To work in consultation and cooperation with the Smithville CanRC given their mission work in Timor;

- 3.2.4 As opportunity arises, to be available for discussions with a view to promoting ecclesiastical harmony and unity between faithful Reformed churches in Indonesia;
- 3.2.5 To submit its report to the churches six months prior to the convening of the next general synod.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 As far as can be determined, the GGRCI demonstrate that they remain faithful churches. They abide by the Word of God as the only rule for faith and life and adhere to adopted confessions and church order.
- 4.2 Given that the FRCA is closer to Indonesia than the CanRC, it is prudent that the CER work in close conjunction with the FRCA. It would therefore be helpful if the respective committees continue to share information on their observations and activities in Indonesia.
- 4.3 Working together, the FRCA and the CanRC will be in a good position to continue to support the GGRCI and to encourage church unity among the various groups of reformed churches in Indonesia.

Article 127 – GGRI-Timor (Reformed Churches in Indonesia - Timor)

1. Material

- 1.1 CRCA Report 4: Indonesia (GGRI, GGRCI, GGRI-Timor) (8.2.1.4).

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The report was declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To instruct the Committee on Ecumenical Relations (CER):
 - 3.1.1 In conjunction with the Smithville Canadian Reformed Church to provide assistance within the normal ambit of CER work that would be of benefit to the Reformed Churches in Indonesia Timor (GGRI-Timor);
 - 3.1.2 As opportunity arises, to be available for discussions with a view to promoting ecclesiastical harmony and unity between faithful reformed churches in Indonesia;
 - 3.1.3 To submit its report to the churches six months prior to the convening of the next general synod.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 It is important to continue to show willingness to assist the GGRI-Timor. Moreover, opportunities for further interaction may arise in the future.
- 4.2 Given the sensitivities apparent at the assembly of GS-GGRCI 2019 in regard to their history with the mission work of Smithville, the CER would do well to continue to encourage all parties to engage in peaceful, open communication with a view to moving toward the goal of brotherly unity and cooperation according to the Word of God. Furthering the cause of unity between the GGRI, GGRI-Timor, and the GGRCI will only be fruitful if all parties agree to pursue that goal.

Article 128 – KPCK (Kosin Presbyterian Church in Korea)

Committee 2 presented draft 1 of a report on relations with the KPCK. The report was discussed. The committee took the report back for refinement.

Article 129 – IRCK (Independent Reformed Church in Korea)**1. Material**

1.1 CRCA Report 5: Korea (KPCK, IRCK, RCK) (8.2.1.5).

2. Admissibility

2.1 The report was declared admissible.

3. Decision**Synod decided:**

3.1 To end official contact with the Independent Reformed Church of Korea (IRCK).

4. Ground

4.1 The lack of interaction and correspondence indicates that it is prudent to end official contact with the IRCK.

Article 130 – RCK (Reformed Churches in Korea)**1. Material**

1.1 CRCA Report 5: Korea (KPCK, IRCK, RCK) (8.2.1.5)

2. Admissibility

2.1 The report was declared admissible.

3. Decision**Synod decided:**

3.1. To end official contact with the Reformed Churches in Korea (RCK).

4. Ground

4.1 The lack of interaction and correspondence indicates that it is prudent to end official contact with the RCK.

Article 131 – GKv (Reformed Churches in The Netherlands (liberated))**1. Material**

1.1 CRCA Report 6: The Netherlands (GKv, DGK, GKN) (8.2.1.6)

1.2 Letter from the Glanbrook-Trinity CanRC (8.3.1.2) encouraging prayer and a tone of compassion and encouragement regarding the brothers and sisters in the GKv.

2. Admissibility

2.1 The report and letter were declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 That the mandate with respect to the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (GKv) has been completed;
- 3.2 To observe with deep sadness that, in spite of urgent appeals, the GKv continue on a path of disobedience to the Lord;
- 3.3 To give the Committee on Ecumenical Relations (CER) no further mandate specific to the GKv.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 The decisions of GS-GKv 2020 indicate that the GKv is not heeding the warnings of its (now mostly former) sister churches. The decision to allow women to serve in office was maintained, reunification with the Netherlands Reformed Churches (NGK) is to take place soon, and participation in broad ecumenical activities (National Synod and Council of Churches) was approved.

Article 132 – DGK (The Reformed Churches [The Netherlands])

Committee 2 presented draft 2 of a report on relations with the DGK. The report was discussed. The committee took the report back for refinement.

Article 133 – GKN (Reformed Churches The Netherlands)

Committee 2 presented draft 2 of a report on relations with the GKN. The report was discussed. The committee took the report back for refinement.

Article 134 – FCS (Free Church of Scotland)

1. Material

- 1.1 CRCA Report 8: Scotland (FCS, FCC) (8.2.1.8)

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The report was declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To continue Ecclesiastical Fellowship (EF) with the Free Church of Scotland (FCS) under the adopted rules;
- 3.2 To mandate the Committee on Ecumenical Relations (CER):
 - 3.2.1 To continue personal contact with the FCS whenever that is feasible (e.g. at meetings of the International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC) and mutual presence at assemblies of sister churches);
 - 3.2.2 To send a delegation to their assemblies at least once every three years;
 - 3.2.3 To submit its report to the churches six months prior to the convening of next general synod.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 Although communication with the FCS has been minimal in the past three years, as far as can be determined from the Acts of GA-FCS 2019, the FCS demonstrate that they remain faithful churches. They abide by the Word of God as the only rule for faith and life and adhere to the adopted confessions and church order.
- 4.2 With increased globalization, it is good to have interactions with the FCS to learn from their struggles in a similar secularized context.

Article 135 – FCC (Free Church of Scotland (Continuing))

1. Material

- 1.1 CRCA Report 8: Scotland (FCS, FCC) (8.2.1.8)

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The report was declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To continue Ecclesiastical Fellowship (EF) with the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) (FCC) in accordance under the adopted rules;
- 3.2 To mandate the Committee on Ecumenical Relations (CER):
 - 3.2.1 To continue personal contact with the FCC whenever that is feasible (e.g., at meetings of the International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC) and mutual presence at assemblies of sister-churches);
 - 3.2.2 To send a delegation to their assemblies at least once every three years;
 - 3.2.3 To submit its report to the churches six months prior to the convening of next general synod.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 Although communication with the FCC has been minimal in the past three years, as far as can be determined from the Acts of GA-FCC 2019 and GA-FCC 2020, the FCC demonstrate that they remain faithful churches. They abide by the Word of God as the only rule for faith and life, and adhere to the adopted confessions and church order.
- 4.2 With increased globalization, it is good to have interactions with the FCC to learn from their struggles in a similar secularized context.

Article 136 – FRCSA (Free Reformed Churches in South Africa)

Committee 2 presented draft 1 of a report on relations with the FRCSA. The report was discussed. The committee took the report back for refinement.

Article 137 – ICRC (International Conference of Reformed Churches)

Committee 2 presented draft 1 of a report on membership in the ICRC. The report was discussed. The committee took the report back for refinement.

Synod adjourned until 4:00pm for committee work.

Article 138 – Reopening

Synod reopened in plenary session. The chairman observed all synod members were present.

Article 139 – Appeals against RSE 2019 Art. 11 (*Pulpit Access*)

Committee 4 presented draft 1 of a report on several appeals against RSE 2019 Art. 11 (8.6.5). The report was discussed. The committee took the report back for refinement.

Synod adjourned until 7:00pm.

Day 9 — Evening Session

Friday, May 20, 2022

Article 140 – Reopening

Synod reopened in plenary session. The chairman had the meeting sing Psalm 146:1,3. He observed that all synod members were present.

Article 141 – Appeals against RSE 2019 Art. 11 (*Pulpit Access*)

Committee 4 presented draft 2 of a report on several appeals against RSE 2019 Art. 11 (8.6.5). The report was discussed. At the request of Synod members, discussion on this agenda item was halted, to be resumed the next day.

Article 142 – Appeal against RSE 2019 Art. 10 (*Worship Services on Days of Commemoration*)

1. Material

- 1.1 Appeals from the Flamborough-Redemption CanRC and the Toronto-Bethel CanRC (8.6.4)

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The appeal from Flamborough-Redemption was declared admissible
- 2.2 The appeal from Toronto-Bethel was declared admissible.

3. Decision

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To sustain the appeals of Flamborough-Redemption and Toronto-Bethel that RSE 2019 (Art. 10) erred when it judged that “CCO June 14, 2019 erred when it judged that Redemption church, by ‘inviting’ members and visitors to a ‘commemorative service’ (and not calling them to an official worship service) on Good Friday, fulfilled the obligations of articles 52, 53, 55 of the Church Order and the judgment of Classis on September 6-7, 2018, concerning this matter” (Article 10, Recommendation 1).

4. Grounds

- 4.1 RSE 2019, in Consideration 4, is unconvincing in arguing that the churches must read CO Art. 53 in conjunction with CO Art. 52. Distinct articles in the CO are distinct for a reason. If the intent of the CO is to require that the consistory shall call the congregation together for worship on the Lord’s Day and on other days that commemorate events surrounding the life and ministry of Christ, then one article would be sufficient. Nevertheless, there are two articles which are distinct. There are common elements such as a reference to the consistory; however, where the one specifies “shall call,” the other does not. Where the one says “worship”, the other says “commemorate”. Where the one uses the phrase “in the manner decided upon by the consistory”, the other does not.
- 4.2 Since RSE 2019 is unconvincing in arguing that the CO makes no distinction between a ‘worship service’ and a ‘commemorative service,’ they err when they say in Consideration 4 that such an argument is ‘specious’. GS has received no clear evidence that Flamborough-Redemption’s service was anything but a commemorative service/event as they have claimed. (cf. Ground 4.x of Flamborough-Redemption’s appeal to GS 2022; Observation 3 in Classis Central Ontario, June 14, 2019). Further, GS 2022 has not received evidence that Flamborough-Redemption is insisting on this distinction to get around the stipulation of CO Art. 55 as RSE states in Consideration 5. RSE 2019 provides no ground to have GS suspect the veracity of their claim.
- 4.3 Given 4.1 above, RS 2019 errs when it claims in Consideration 6 that any distinction between ‘calling’ and ‘inviting’ is ‘specious’.

The following synod member abstained from voting and asked that this be recorded:
Clarence VanderVelde

Article 143 – Overture RSE 2021 re Place of Preparatory Exams

1. Material

- 1.1 Overture from Regional Synod East (RSE) 2021 recommending that preparatory exams be conducted in a student’s ‘home classis’ (8.4.4.1).
- 1.2 Submissions from the following churches: Carman West (8.5.4.1); Smithers (8.5.4.2); Willoughby Heights (8.5.4.3); Yarrow (8.5.4.4); Cloverdale (8.5.4.5); Coaldale (8.5.4.6); Flamborough-Redemption (8.5.4.7); Fergus-Maranatha (8.5.4.8); Calgary (8.5.4.9); Chatham-Ebenezer (8.5.4.10); Glanbrook-Trinity (8.5.4.11); Neerlandia (North) (8.5.4.12); Edmonton-Immanuel (8.5.4.13); Edmonton-Providence (8.5.4.14).

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The submissions were declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To adopt the overture;
- 3.2 To amend the regulations for the preparatory examination adopted by GS 1958 (Art.188 Part 1) from:

“The preparatory examination will take place in the classis where the student resides.”

to:

“The preparatory examination is to occur in the classis where the church that sent the student’s original attestation to the federational seminary belongs. The preparatory examination for a student not originating within the Canadian & American Reformed Churches is to occur in the classis where he lives.”

- 3.2.1 In circumstances in which a particular student’s connection to his ‘home classis’ is unclear or debated, requests for examination must be processed through the student’s local consistory;
- 3.3 That these revised regulations for the preparatory examination, as well as the existing regulations for the peremptory examination as found in GS 1958 Art. 188, be published in English as an appendix to the Acts of GS 2022 (see [Appendix 23](#));
- 3.4 That CO Art. 4B be amended from:
- “Only those shall be declared eligible for call within the churches who (1) have passed a preparatory examination by the classis in which they live. . .”*

to:

Only those shall be declared eligible for call within the churches who (1) have passed a preparatory examination by classis....

- 3.5 That the above changes to both the regulations of preparatory examinations and the Church Order take effect as of 1 January 2023.
- 3.6 That the cost of return travel for students undergoing a preparatory examination in their home classis be borne by that classis.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 The letters from the churches expressed an overwhelming degree of support for this overture.
- 4.2 Steadily growing enrolment at CRTS has significantly increased the workload for Classis Ontario West (COW). This pressure would be alleviated by sharing the workload among all the classes of the federation.
- 4.3 Doing so would not create insurmountable financial or logistical burdens for those classes.
- 4.4 Preparatory exams determine who can serve as a minister in the federation. The responsibility and privilege of sharing in this determination ought to be federational.
- 4.5 Re 3.2.1: Exceptional circumstances will undoubtedly arise when it comes to identifying a student’s connection to his ‘home classis’. In such circumstances, students would be well-served by guidance from their local consistory.
- 4.6 Though concern was raised regarding logistical complications which might arise, it would be impossible to envision and account for every possible exigent circumstance.
- 4.7 Re 3.5: Given that it will take some time for students, churches, and classes to absorb and adjust to these changes, it would be wise to implement these decisions on 1 January 2023.
- 4.8 Re 3.3: An appended translation of the GS 1958 Art. 188 Part 1 would serve as a useful reference for the reader.

Article 144 – KPCK (Kosin Presbyterian Church in Korea)

1. Material

- 1.1 CRCA Report 5: Korea (KPCK, IRCK, RCK) (8.2.1.5)

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The report was declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To continue Ecclesiastical Fellowship (EF) with the Kosin Presbyterian Church of Korea (KPCK) under the adopted rules;
- 3.2 To mandate the Committee on Ecumenical Relations (CER):
 - 3.2.1 To continue to work cooperatively with sister churches in exercising our relationship with the KPCK in meaningful ways and to take turns visiting the KPCK's General Assembly;
 - 3.2.2 To meet with their delegates at the next International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC);
 - 3.2.3 To submit its report to the churches six months prior to the convening of the next general synod.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 As far as can be determined, the KPCK demonstrate that they remain faithful churches. They abide by the Word of God as the only rule for faith and life and adhere to adopted confessions and church order.
- 4.2 It is good to maintain ecumenical relations with the KPCK since we share the unity of the faith in Jesus Christ.
- 4.3 Practically speaking, mainly due to language and cultural differences, our bond with them is minimal.
- 4.4 EF will be enhanced by the fact that the CanRC now includes two ministers from South Korean background and that the KPCK delegates attended General Synod Guelph 2022.

Article 145 – ICRC (International Conference of Reformed Churches)

1. Material

- 1.1 CRCA Report 10: ICRC (8.2.1.10).

Note: as GS 2019 neglected to make a decision on the ICRC, the CRCA resubmitted to GS 2022 the report it submitted to GS 2019 with additional material.

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The report was declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To continue the membership of the CanRC in the ICRC;

- 3.2 Regarding membership of the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands (Liberated) (GKv) in the ICRC:
- 3.2.1 To propose to the tenth ICRC to be held, the Lord willing, in Windhoek, Namibia during October 2022, that the membership of the GKv be terminated, as its decision on women in office no longer qualifies it for membership in the ICRC;
 - 3.2.2 To express agreement with a similar proposal decided to by the 87th (2021) General Assembly (GA) of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC);
 - 3.2.3 To convey this proposal by means of a letter from General Synod 2022 via the second clerk to the ICRC as soon as possible;
- 3.3 To mandate the Committee on Ecumenical Relations (CER):
- 3.3.1 To ensure appropriate CanRC participation in ICRC activities;
 - 3.3.2 To attend the next ICRC with a delegation of two voting members and two advisory members.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 The CRCA has acted correctly in considering the mandate of GS 2016 as its mandate after GS 2019.
- 4.2 With thankfulness to the Lord, the ICRC continues to be a useful forum to promote harmony and unity among Reformed and Presbyterian churches worldwide.
- 4.3 The CRCA acted properly and appropriately in seconding the proposal of the OPC to suspend the membership on the GKv in the ICRC. The correctness of this action was confirmed by the decision of GS 2019 (Art. 41) to terminate EF with the GKv.
- 4.4 Regarding the membership of the GKv in the ICRC:
- 4.4.1 The CanRC have had very close ties with the GKv and have spent much time and effort in communicating with the GKv about matters of concern and reprimanding them with great intensity for the course they are on. It is appropriate for the CanRC to initiate action that removes the GKv from the ICRC (analogous to Deut. 13:6-11).
 - 4.4.2 Just as the termination of EF with the GKv in 2019 clearly expressed where the CanRC stand with respect to the issues at stake, so will a proposal to terminate the membership of the GKv in the ICRC. This will unequivocally communicate to the ICRC member churches that we are sorely grieved by decisions of the GKv and were in earnest about our past letters and words of admonition (cf. GS 2019 Art. 41 Cons. 3.4).
 - 4.4.3 GS-GKv 2020 (Art. 19 Dec. 3) maintained the decision of GS-GKv 2017 (Art. 18 Dec. 5&6) to allow women to serve in the offices of minister and elder. This puts the GKv at odds with the ICRC Constitution IV.4.
 - 4.4.4 The ICRC Constitution (Art. IV.4) requires that a proposal to terminate membership in the ICRC be made by a decision of the major assembly of a member church.
 - 4.4.5 Given the seriousness of this matter, it would be proper and appropriate for GS 2022 itself to send a letter to the ICRC. GS 2019 (Art. 41 Rec. 4.3, Art. 104) took it upon itself to send a letter to the GKv, rather than instructing the CRCA to do so.
 - 4.4.6 The 87th (2021) GA of the OPC adopted an action to terminate the membership of the GKv in the ICRC. Past synods instructed the CRCA-SRN to work together

with sister churches. It is appropriate for the CanRC to express agreement with the proposal of the OPC.

Article 146 – RCNZ (Reformed Churches in New Zealand)

1. Material

1.1 CRCA Report: New Zealand (RCNZ) (8.2.1.7)

2. Admissibility

2.1 The report was declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To continue the relationship of Ecclesiastical Fellowship (EF) with the Reformed Churches in New Zealand (RCNZ) under the adopted rules;
- 3.2 To mandate the Committee on Ecumenical Relations (CER):
 - 3.2.1 To express appreciation for the ongoing cooperation with the RCNZ in the mission in Papua New Guinea;
 - 3.2.2 To send a delegation to the next RCNZ Synod;
 - 3.2.3 To submit its report to the churches six months prior to the convening of the next general synod;
- 3.3 To take note that the different structures of the RCNZ and the CanRC for the material support of emeritus ministers complicates the transfer of ministers between the CanRC and RCNZ, as it also does between the CanRC and the Free Reformed Churches of South Africa (FRCSA). The material support for emeritus ministers is beyond the jurisdiction of a general synod and thus beyond the scope of the CER.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 As far as can be determined from the Acts of GS-RCNZ 2021, the RCNZ demonstrate that they remain faithful churches. They abide by the Word of God as the only rule for faith and life, and adhere to the adopted confessions and church order.
- 4.2 The relationship between the RCNZ and CanRC has been of mutual benefit in the area of missions and interchurch relations.

Article 147 – FRCSA (Free Reformed Churches in South Africa)

1. Material

1.1 CRCA Report: South Africa (FRCSA) (8.2.1.9.).

2. Admissibility

2.1 The report was declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To continue Ecclesiastical Fellowship (EF) with the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa (FRCSA) under the adopted rules;

- 3.2 To mandate the Committee on Ecumenical Relations (CER):
 - 3.2.1 To send a delegation to the next synod of the FRCSA;
 - 3.2.2 To continue involvement in discussions regarding financial requests from the FRCSA and provide coordination assistance where possible;
 - 3.2.3 To submit its report to the churches six months prior to the convening of the next synod.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 As far as can be determined, the FRCSA demonstrate that they remain faithful churches. They abide by the Word of God as the only rule for faith and life and adhere to adopted confessions and church order.
- 4.2 Our EF with the FRCSA dates back to the first CanRC synods. There continue to be many close ties, ecclesiastical, operational, and personal, between the FRCSA and CanRC.
- 4.3 The CRCA has never had a mandate to financially support other church federations; however, in this situation it may be appropriate to mandate the CER to facilitate assistance for the FRCSA, should further financial assistance be necessary. In collaboration with others involved, the CER could seek out appropriate churches or organizations to responsibly interact with requests for financial assistance.

Article 148 – DGK (The Reformed Churches [The Netherlands])

1. Material

- 1.1 CRCA Report 6: The Netherlands (GKv, DGK, GKN) (8.2.1.6).
- 1.2 Supplementary Report CRCA (8.2.1.6.1) regarding the DGK's relationship with the Liberated Reformed Church at Abbotsford (LRCA).
- 1.3 Letter from the Glanbrook-Trinity CanRC (8.3.1.2) encouraging prayer and a tone of compassion and encouragement regarding the brothers and sisters in the DGK.

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The reports and letter were declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To maintain contact with The Reformed Churches (DGK);
- 3.2 To express gratitude for how the DGK is dealing with the LRCA.
- 3.3 To mandate the Committee on Ecumenical Relations (CER):
 - 3.3.1 To continue to monitor developments within this federation, paying special attention to:
 - 3.3.1.1 The relationship between the DGK and the Reformed Churches The Netherlands (GKN);
 - 3.3.1.2 The relationship between the DGK and the LRCA;
 - 3.3.2 To be available for dialogue with the DGK;
 - 3.3.3 To submit its report to the churches six months prior to the convening of the next general synod.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 The DGK display the marks of the true church of Jesus Christ in their preaching, worship, and governance.
- 4.2 There has been good contact with the DGK-BBK (DGK committee for Relations with Churches Abroad). The DGK have recognized the Reformed character of the Westminster Standards and thus the legitimacy of recognizing Presbyterian churches as churches of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 4.3 Although at their GS 2021-2022 the DGK decided to continue a sister-church relationship with the LRCA, they at the same time called on the LRCA to return unconditionally to the CanRC recognizing the catholicity of the church.
- 4.4 The DGK have recognized the GKN as a true and faithful church of Jesus Christ and are working on merging with the GKN.
- 4.5 When working towards Ecclesiastical Fellowship (EF) with two federations of churches in the same geographical location who are working on merging, it is wisest to wait until the new federation has formed. If EF is deemed necessary prior to the merger, EF should be entered into with both federations at the same time. The situation between the GKN and DGK is structurally similar to one GS 2019 dealt with (cf. GS 2019 Art. 120 Cons. 3.10).

Article 149 – GKN (Reformed Churches The Netherlands)

1. Material

- 1.1 CRCA Report 6: The Netherlands (GKv, DGK, GKN) (8.2.1.6).
- 1.2 Letter from the Glanbrook-Trinity CanRC (8.3.1.2) encouraging prayer and a tone of compassion and encouragement regarding the brothers and sisters in the DGK.

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The report was declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To maintain contact with the Reformed Churches The Netherlands (GKN);
- 3.2 To mandate the Committee on Ecumenical Relations (CER):
 - 3.2.1 To continue to monitor developments within this federation, paying special attention to:
 - 3.2.1.1 The relationship between the GKN and The Reformed Churches (DGK);
 - 3.2.2 To be available for dialogue with the GKN;
 - 3.2.3 To submit its report to the churches six months prior to the convening of the next general synod.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 The GKN display the marks of the true church of Jesus Christ in their preaching, worship, and governance.
- 4.2 The fact that the GKN are seriously working on unification with the DGK is to be noted with gratitude.

- 4.3 When working towards Ecclesiastical Fellowship (EF) with two federations of churches in the same geographical location who are working on merging, it is wisest to wait until the new federation has formed. If EF is deemed necessary prior to the merger, EF should be entered into with both federations at the same time. The situation between the GKN and DGK is structurally similar to one GS 2019 dealt with (cf. GS 2019 Art. 120 Cons. 3.10).

Article 150 – Appeal against GS 1980 and GS 1983 (*Changes to Liturgical Forms*)

1. Material

- 1.1 Appeal of the Burlington-Fellowship CanRC (8.6.10.1).
- 1.1.1 Burlington-Fellowship requests: “that GS 2022 judge that the 1980 and 1983 General Synods erred in the way they made changes to the questions in the Forms for Baptism and for the Public Profession of Faith, and for GS 2022 to reassess the decisions of the 1986, 1989 and 1992 General Synod, where these Synods denied several appeals about these changes.”
- 1.1.2 Burlington Fellowship requests “this Synod to judge that the questions in the forms be changed back to the pre-1980 formulations.”
- 1.1.3 Burlington Fellowship requests that “If the Synod determines that the changes were legitimate because the meaning did not change...you do not ‘bind the conscience’ and that the churches be free to change the questions to the pre-1980 formulations since ‘the meaning is the same’.”

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The appeal was declared admissible.

3. Decision:

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To deny the appeal of the Burlington-Fellowship CanRC against GS 1980 and GS 1983 re changes to liturgical forms for Baptism and Public Profession of Faith;
- 3.2 To deny the request that the churches be free to change the questions to the pre-1980 formulations.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 Re 3.1: Although Burlington-Fellowship (ground 1) is correct in asserting that we “do not pledge allegiance to any human document”, the only synod that mentions “allegiance” (GS 1986 Art. 144 Cons. 2), was simply taking over the same language that was used by the original appellants (cf. GS 1986 Art. 144 Obs. 5), where the appellant’s letter is summarized).
- 4.2 Re 3.1: Burlington-Fellowship is incorrect (ground 2) in stating that GS 1983 brought an internal contradiction into the forms when it asked, “How can a summary of the doctrine be the complete doctrine?”. In the Form for Infant Baptism (the only form in which the phrase “complete doctrine” appears), the question “do you confess that the doctrine of the Old and New Testament, summarized in the confessions and taught here in this Christian church, is the true and complete doctrine of salvation?”, does not ask whether you confess the doctrine of the Old and New Testament as summarized by the

confessions and taught here in this Christian church, but whether you confess that the doctrine of the Old and New Testament is the true and complete doctrine of salvation. The phrase “summarized in the confessions and taught here in this Christian church” makes a declaration about the true and complete doctrine of salvation, namely that it is summarized in the confessions and that it is taught here in this Christian church.

- 4.3 Re 3.1: Burlington-Fellowship is incorrect (ground 3) in asserting that GS 1986 misquoted the forms to say “... as is taught here in this Christian Church...” and that “the forms have never included this wording”. In the 1971 edition of the *Book of Praise*, the fourth question of the Form for Adult Baptism asked “Do you assent to all the articles of the Christian religion, as they are taught here in this Christian church from the Word of God...”.
- 4.4 Re 3.1: While it is true that Synods 1986 and 1989 did not explicitly respond to various references brought forward by the appellants (Bouwman, Ursinus, Synod 1923 GKN, P. Dathenus, R. Schilders, VanderHeyden, Elsevier, National Synod ’sGravenhage 1586, etc.), Burlington-Fellowship (grounds 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14) does not prove that these Synods did not even consider the references when formulating their responses or that a synod must even explicitly respond to every reference brought to its attention.
- 4.5 Re 3.1: Burlington-Fellowship (ground 5) is incorrect in asserting that GS 1986 judged that the questions have always referred to the Reformed confessions. What GS 1986 (Art. 145 Cons. 2) said was that “the questions asked never *excluded* the allegiance to all the confessions which are maintained by the Canadian Reformed Churches” (italics added).
- 4.6 Re 3.1: Burlington-Fellowship (ground 6) is correct that the Acts of Synod 1983 contain a typographical error. In article 145, consideration 2 (page 107) is obviously out of place. Consideration 5 on page 107 follows Consideration 4 on page 100 (starting with 4A, Form for the Baptism of Infants); therefore, GS 1986 was correct in observing that GS 1983 “considered under number 5 (p. 107) that “the use of the word ‘confessions’ instead of ‘creeds’ in the questions of the Forms for Baptism and Public Profession of Faith answers the question posed by brother W. VanderKamp.””. Misplaced numbers are not grounds for overturning previous decisions (especially considering the fact that in the physical cut and paste process for preparing documents for printing at that time, it is quite possible for this type of error to have occurred).
- 4.7 Re 3.1: The changes made by GS 1980 were the result of a general mandate given to the Standing Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise* (SCBP) by GS 1977, which included the mandate to “to re-translate the Liturgical Forms into present-day English” (Art. 60, Rec. 4). Although in dealing with the overture from CCO 5-20 on the questions in the liturgical forms, RSE 2020 (Art. 13 Cons. 7) acknowledged that there were errors made in how the churches have arrived at the current formulation (cf. Burlington-Fellowship, appeal, grounds 12, 13), GS 2019 (Art. 64 Cons. 4.4) also considered that “The fact that the decision of GS 1983 has served in the churches for more than 30 years is also significant. During all that time, the 1983 decision was honoured as settled and binding. Also for this reason, the request of Hamilton-Blessings should come in the form of an overture that follows the ecclesiastical route (see Cons. 4.2 and 4.3), seeking support. In this way, all the churches will have ample time and opportunity to interact with it through this filtering process.”

- 4.8 Re 3.1: Burlington-Fellowship (ground 15) is incorrect in its assertion that “Neither the ‘specific question’ nor the avoided ‘misunderstanding’ have been recorded in the Acts of Synods 1983, 1986, 1989 or 1992”. GS 1983 was responding to a question put forward by Br. W. VanderKamp (Art. 145 Obs. 8). These Synods were not responding to a particular misunderstanding but were seeking to avoid future misunderstandings.
- 4.9 Re 3.1: Burlington-Fellowship (ground 16) is incorrect in using a decision of GS 2019 (Art. 130 Cons. 4.1) to judge the actions of GS 1992, which had been convened 21 years prior. The decision of GS 2019 was based on the decision of GS 2013 (Art. 125 Obs. 4.5) that “All requests concerning other changes to the contents of the *Book of Praise* (e.g. translation of confessions, changes to metrical psalms, rewording and rhyming of psalms and hymns, changes to liturgical forms) need to arise out of the churches in the ecclesiastical way, namely from consistory to classis to regional synod and general synod”.
- 4.10 Re 3.2: The request of Burlington-Fellowship presumes that in denying their appeal, GS 2022 has affirmed “that the changes were legitimate because the meaning did not change”. GS 2022 has made no judgment in this regard, and in doing so, leaves room for a church to overture a future general synod to make the desired change to the liturgical forms.

Article 151 – Closing Devotions

Some announcements were made regarding agenda items and housekeeping matters.

Rev. Carl Van Dam read Mark 9:33-41, led in closing prayer, and had those present sing Hymn 55.

Synod adjourned until 9:00 am the next day.

Day 10 — Morning Session Saturday, May 21, 2022

Article 152 – Reopening

Synod reopened in plenary session. The chairman observed all synod members were present. After welcoming everyone he had those present sing Hymn 44:1,5, read Philippians 4:1-9 and led in opening prayer.

Article 153 – Acts

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

Article 154 – Not Archiving Certain Sensitive Items

1. Material

- 1.1 Agenda item 8.6.2: Appendix 2 in hard copy and digital copy.
- 1.2 Agenda item 8.6.7: Appendix 2 in digital copy.

2. Decision

Synod decided:

- 2.1 To destroy the hard copy of 8.6.2 Appendix 2;
- 2.2 To destroy the digital copy of 8.6.2 and 8.6.7 Appendix 2.

3. Ground

- 3.1 These appendices, which are identical, contain very sensitive material which should not be viewed by any more people. We have the responsibility to uphold the honour and reputation of our brothers and sisters as much as possible.

Article 155 – Appeals against RSE 2019 Art. 11 (*Pulpit Access*)

1. Material

- 1.1 The appeals of the Ottawa-Jubilee CanRC dd. Feb 7, 2022 (8.6.5.1), the Toronto-Bethel CanRC dd. Nov 20, 2021 (8.6.5.2) and the Hamilton-Blessings CanRC dd. March 25, 2022 (8.6.5.3) against the decision of Regional Synod East (RSE) 2019 Art. 11 which judged that “Classis Central Ontario (CCO) of Sept 13/Oct 10, 2019 erred when it did not accept [Burlington Waterdown]-Rehoboth's request to make a judgment against the developing practice of Hamilton-Blessings and Ottawa-Jubilee to allow ministers from non-sister churches to preach on their pulpit.”

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The appeal from the Ottawa-Jubilee CanRC was declared admissible.
- 2.2 The appeal from the Toronto-Bethel CanRC was declared admissible.
- 2.3 The appeal from the Hamilton-Blessings CanRC was declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To consider all three appeals together as they deal with the same decision of RSE 2019;
- 3.2 To deny the appeals of the Ottawa-Jubilee CanRC, the Toronto-Bethel CanRC and the Hamilton-Blessings CanRC against RSE 2019 Art. 11.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 Re 3.2: According to the Church Order, Classis has a role in giving advice concerning requests that have to do with temporary pulpit access. While the appellants consider that anything not expressly governed in the Church Order should be left to the freedom of churches, this consideration ignores the relevant principle of classical involvement in granting access to the pulpit (e.g. CO Art. 4.B.1&2) that can give guidance concerning the matter of giving pastors of non-sister churches temporary access to the pulpit. Furthermore, there are also relevant principles in CO Art. 44 and 76 where the churches agree to honour the decisions of the major assemblies. This includes synodical decisions concerning Rules for Ecclesiastical Fellowship (EF).
- 4.2 Re 3.2: Our current practice that pulpit access has been determined collectively by the churches is based on synodical decisions as expressed in the rules for EF (GS 1992 Art. 50). While Hamilton-Blessings contends that the provisions for EF do not prevent their practice, one cannot ignore that the existence of collectively agreed upon rules for pulpit

fellowship at the federative level also have an impact at the local level. The local church, and the federation it belongs to, are not mutually exclusive.

- 4.3 Re 3.2: The practices of our sister churches in the exercise of their ecclesiastical relationships differ from ours in that they are also accompanied by specific regulations concerning local pulpit access. While Hamilton-Blessings is correct that the practice of sister churches which embrace Dort polity could prove to be a valuable resource of possible application of that same polity in the Canadian Reformed context, they fail to reckon with the fact that the United Reformed Churches in North America (URCNA) have made explicit that local churches have the freedom to engage in occasional pulpit exchanges: “Fraternal activities between congregations which need not be reported to classis may include occasional pulpit exchanges, table fellowship, as well as other means of manifesting unity.” (CO-URC Art. 34 – *Ecumenical Relations on a Church Level*) Likewise, in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC), occasional pulpit fellowship belongs in the province of the local session as it is their task to “oversee all matters concerning the conduct of public worship” (OPC Book of Church Order, Chapter XIII, 7). The OPC explicitly affirms the autonomy of the local church in access to the pulpit; therefore, their rules for EF specify ‘occasional pulpit fellowship (by local option)’.
- 4.4 Re 3.2: Our current church order does not have a specific provision regarding pulpit access for guest ministers from non-sister churches. Toronto-Bethel acknowledges this in Consideration 6, speaking of this as a “gap.” At the same time, it argues in Consideration 7 that the onus for closing that “gap” lies with those who desire to ensure that present practice is codified. The other appellants make similar statements about where the onus lies, while RSE 2019 in turn places the onus on those who wish to change current practices. In line with the practices of our sister-churches (see 4.3 above), the churches could decide to adopt an article or provision in the church order specifically regulating local pulpit access. In this way our practices will explicitly reflect our church order.

The following synod member requested that his abstention from voting be recorded: Clarence VanderVelde.

Article 156 – Overture RSE 2021 re Shorter Lord’s Supper Forms

1. Material

- 1.1 RSE 2021 Overture to GS 2022 to Provisionally Adopt, for Immediate Use and Testing in the Churches, Shorter Liturgical Forms for the Celebration of the Lord’s Supper (8.4.5.1).
- 1.2 Letters from the following CanRC: Carman West (8.5.5.1); Brampton-Grace (8.5.5.2); Niagara South (8.5.5.3); Sardis (8.5.5.4); Lynden (8.5.5.5); Nooksack Valley (8.5.5.6); Winnipeg-Grace (8.5.5.7); Guelph-Emmanuel (8.5.5.8); Willoughby Heights (8.5.5.9); Smithville (8.5.5.10); Owen Sound (8.5.5.11); Vernon (8.5.5.12); Coaldale (8.5.5.13); Carman East (8.5.5.14); Fergus-Maranatha (8.5.5.15); Calgary (8.5.5.16); Glanbrook-Trinity (8.5.5.17); Winnipeg-Redeemer (8.5.5.18); Neerlandia (North) (8.5.5.19);

Edmonton-Immanuel (8.5.5.20); Lincoln-Vineyard (8.5.5.21); Edmonton-Providence (8.5.5.22); Langley-Refuge (8.5.5.23).

2. Admissibility

2.1 The submissions were declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To deny the request in the overture from RSE 2021 for provisional approval for immediate use and testing of shorter forms for the celebration of Lord's Supper;
- 3.2 To accept the request in the overture to mandate a committee to provide shorter forms for the celebration of the Lord's Supper;
- 3.3 To mandate the Standing Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise* (SCBP) to review forms in use by our sister churches, or to draft new forms, and to present GS 2025 with one or more shorter forms for the celebration of the Lord's Supper which are:
(a) of Reformed character; (b) comparable in content to the current forms; (c) shorter than the current Abbreviated Form.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 Re 3.1: Neither the overture nor the Acts of RSE 2021 provides any grounds to show why shorter liturgical forms ought to be provisionally adopted for immediate use and testing in the churches.
- 4.2 Re 3.2: Both the overture and the Acts of RSE 2021 provide compelling grounds which show that having additional shorter liturgical forms would be of benefit to churches desiring to celebrate communion on a more frequent basis.
- 4.3 Re 3.2, 3.3: The majority of churches which favoured adopting the overture were also in favour of establishing a committee to review forms in use by sister churches, or to draft new forms, for recommendation to GS 2025.

Article 157 – CNSF (Committee for the Needy Students' Fund)

1. Material

- 1.1 Report from the Committee for the Needy Students' Fund, the Grassie-Covenant CanRC (8.2.8.1).
- 1.2 Letters from: Willoughby Heights (8.3.8.1); Calgary (8.3.8.2).

2. Admissibility

2.1 The submissions were declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To thank the Grassie-Covenant CanRC for its work as the Committee for the Needy Students' Fund (CNSF);
- 3.2 To discharge the CNSF for the duties completed during the period 1 January 2018 through 31 December 2020;

- 3.3 To reappoint Grassie-Covenant as the CNSF to look after extending financial aid to those students of theology who are in need of it;
 - 3.3.1 If Grassie-Covenant should decide to not take on the charitable activity of the CNSF, to direct Grassie-Covenant to find an alternate church to take on these activities;
- 3.4 To instruct the CNSF to seek advice, to determine what is required to ensure that they remain in compliance with the Income Tax Act (ITA) and the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) (cf. GS 2019 Art. 100 Rec. 4.3);
- 3.5 To instruct the CNSF to determine if in “owning the activity of the CNSF” it remains in compliance with CO Art. 20 & 75 (cf. GS 2019 Art. 100 Cons. 3.6);
- 3.6 To forward the letters from Willoughby Heights and Calgary to the CNSF for its consideration (8.3.8.1 & 8.3.8.2);
- 3.7 To provide GS 2025 with recommendations, supported by clear grounds, for any changes to the bylaws of the CNSF, which must be made in order to be in compliance with the ITA and the CRA, as well as with CO Art. 20 & 75;
- 3.8 Not to adopt either of the optional recommendations made by the CNSF in its report;
- 3.9 To mandate the CNSF:
 - 3.9.1 To assess the churches annually as per the number of communicant members in the current Yearbook based on the anticipated funding for the new year ahead;
 - 3.9.2 To report annually to each church of the federation on its activities, and to report triennially to each general synod on the same and to include appropriate recommendations in its report to General Synod.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 Re 3.4 & 3.5: GS 2022 does not have the legal and accounting competence to judge Grassie-Covenant’s opinion that to be in compliance with the ITA and the CRA, Grassie-Covenant must own the activity of the CNSF.
- 4.2 Re 3.5: CO Art. 20 states that “the churches...[shall] extend financial aid to [students of theology] who are in need of it.” As the churches have decided to do this via the route of general synod, CO Art. 75 becomes relevant. When a general synod passes property of the churches in common into the hands of an individual church serving as a committee to general synod, it [i.e. general synod] still retains “ownership of the activity.” Clarity is needed about whether this causes the CNSF to fall out of compliance with the ITA and the CRA.
- 4.3 Re 3.6: The letters from Willoughby Heights and Calgary raise concerns which ought to be interacted with. Those concerns are best expressed in their own words.
- 4.4 Re 3.7: In order to make decisions about legal matters, a general synod requires clarity.
- 4.5 Re 3.8: GS 2022 was unclear about what was being recommended, and what the purpose of the recommendations was.

Article 158 – CBT (Committee on Bible Translations)

1. Material

- 1.1 Report of the Committee on Bible Translations (CBT) (8.2.6.1).

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The report was declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To thank the committee for its work;
- 3.2 To acknowledge that the Committee on Bible Translations (CBT) fulfilled the mandate given to it by GS 2019;
- 3.3 To thank Rev. Rodney Vermeulen who has completed nine years on the committee and to release him from the CBT;
- 3.4 To appoint two members to the CBT;
- 3.5 To mandate the CBT:
 - 3.5.1 To solicit, receive and evaluate comments from the churches on the ESV;
 - 3.5.2 To submit worthy translation suggestions to the ESV editorial committee;
 - 3.5.3 To serve the churches as a resource for Bible translation matters;
 - 3.5.4 To appoint one of its members to validate and submit to the treasurer of the General Fund all expenses being submitted for committee work;
 - 3.5.5 To prepare and distribute a report to the churches six months in advance of the next general synod.

Article 159 – NAPARC (North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council)

1. Material

- 1.1 Report of the CCCNA (8.2.11.1) on NAPARC.
- 1.2 Submissions from the following churches: Willoughby Heights (8.3.11.2).
 - 1.2.1 Willoughby Heights recommends that Synod encourages the interchurch relations committee(s) to make more information on ecumenical conferences available to the churches via the reports to general synod.

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The report was declared admissible.
- 2.2 The submissions were declared admissible.

3. Decision

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To mandate the Committee on Ecumenical Relations (CER):
 - 3.1.1 To represent the CanRC at the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (NAPARC) and to continue active involvement in it;
 - 3.1.2 To submit its report to the churches six months prior to the convening of the next general synod;
 - 3.1.3 To consider including relevant information about ecumenical conferences in the report to general synod.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 Re 3.1.1:

- 4.1.1 There is benefit of ongoing involvement in NAPARC, both to derive insights from, and to contribute to the Reformed witness it offers on the North American scene. It is an excellent venue to experience the richness we share as Reformed and Presbyterian brothers. As member churches, we live in a North American society that is increasingly secular and hostile. It is good to support one another and maintain a united front on the major challenges we face. Reports from member churches are often relevant to developments in or projects of the CanRC, and it is useful to discuss these matters of shared interest.
- 4.1.2 NAPARC is an excellent, efficient and economical venue for holding meetings with many interchurch relations committees in the same week (ERQ, KPCA (Kosin), OPC, RCUS, RPCNA, HRCNA, FRCNA, ARPC, and the URCNA).
- 4.2 Re 3.1.3: Such relevant material is good for the churches to receive.

Article 160 – ERQ (Reformed Churches in Quebec)

1. Material

- 1.1 Report of the CCCNA (8.2.11.1) on the ERQ.

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The report was declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To continue the relationship of Ecclesiastical Fellowship (EF) with the Reformed Churches in Quebec (ERQ) under the adopted rules;
- 3.2 To encourage the churches to support the ERQ prayerfully and financially in their missionary endeavours and special projects;
- 3.3 To mandate the Committee on Ecumenical Relations (CER):
- 3.3.1 To maintain contact with the ERQ according to the adopted rules;
- 3.3.2 To submit its report to the churches six months prior to the convening of the next general synod.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 Re 3.1: the relationship with the ERQ continues to be mutually encouraging.
- 4.2 Re 3.2: the ERQ appreciates the ongoing contributions from the CanRC both in terms of human as well as financial resources.

Article 161 – FRCNA (Free Reformed Churches of North America)

1. Material

- 1.1 Report of the CCCNA (8.2.11.1) on the FRCNA.
- 1.2 Submissions from the following churches: St. Albert (8.3.11.1), Willoughby Heights (8.3.11.2), London-Pilgrim (8.3.11.3).

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The report was declared admissible.

2.2 The submissions were declared admissible.

3. Decision

Synod decided:

3.1 To mandate the Committee on Ecumenical Relations (CER):

- 3.1.1 To engage in continued dialogue and contact with the Free Reformed Churches of North America (FRCNA);
- 3.1.2 To meet simultaneously with the Heritage Reformed churches in North America (HRCNA) and FRCNA ecumenicity committees;
- 3.1.3 To submit its report to the churches six months prior to the convening of the next general synod.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 Re 3.1.1: The members of CCCNA at GS 2022 spoke very appreciatively of growing dialogue, understanding and mutual appreciation in the last number of years.
- 4.2 Re 3.2.2: The FRCNA and HRCNA are working towards organic unity.

Article 162 – HRCNA (Heritage Reformed Churches in North America)

1. Material

- 1.1 Report of the CCCNA (8.2.11.1) on the HRCNA.
- 1.2 Submissions from the following churches: St Albert (8.3.11.1), Willoughby Heights (8.3.11.2), London-Pilgrim (8.3.11.3).

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The report was declared admissible.
- 2.2 The submissions were declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To accept the Heritage Reformed Churches in North America (HRCNA) Level 2 relationship of “Formal Correspondence”;
- 3.2 To mandate the Committee on Ecumenical Relations (CER):
 - 3.2.1 To continue discussions with the HRCNA in an effort to work towards Ecclesiastical Fellowship (EF);
 - 3.2.2 To meet simultaneously with the HRCNA and Free Reformed Churches of North America (FRCNA) ecumenicity committees;
 - 3.2.3 To submit its report to the churches six months prior to the convening of the next general synod.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 Re 3.1: The offer to advance the relationship is a positive development.
- 4.2 Re 3.2.2: The FRCNA and HRCNA are working towards organic unity.
- 4.3 The HRCNA has expressed appreciation for the individual and institutional collaboration between the Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary (PRTS) and Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary (CRTS).

Article 163 – KPCA-K (Korean Presbyterian Church in America (Kosin))

1. Material

1.1 Report of the CCCNA (8.2.11.1) on the KPCA-K.

2. Admissibility

2.1 The report was declared admissible.

3. Decision

Synod decided:

3.1 To mandate the Committee on Ecumenical Relations (CER):

3.1.1 To continue dialogue with the Korean Presbyterian Church in America (Kosin) (KPCA-K) where feasible, with a view to getting to know the KPCA-K better over time;

3.1.2 To submit its report to the churches six months prior to the convening of the next general synod.

4. Grounds

4.1 Re 3.1.1: There has been no contact the KPCA-K since 2019 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Article 164 – OPC (Orthodox Presbyterian Church)

1. Material

1.1 Report of the CCCNA (8.2.11.1) on the OPC.

2. Admissibility

2.1 The report was declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

3.1 To continue the relationship of Ecclesiastical Fellowship (EF) with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC) under the adopted rules;

3.2 To mandate the Committee on Ecumenical Relations (CER) to submit its report to the churches six months prior to the convening of the next general synod.

4. Grounds

4.1 Re 3.1: Though the COVID-19 pandemic hindered contact since 2019, the relationship with the OPC remains very beneficial.

4.2 There has been good cooperation with the OPC in regards to the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands (GKv).

4.3 The interchurch relations committees were able to make use of the OPC model of interchurch relations in their Study Report (Majority and Minority) to GS 2022.

4.4 The OPC has expressed the need for help in its many mission projects.

Article 165 – RCUS (Reformed Church in the United States)**1. Material**

1.1 Report of the CCCNA (8.2.11.1) on the RCUS.

2. Admissibility

2.1 The report was declared admissible.

3. Decisions**Synod decided:**

- 3.1 To continue Ecclesiastical Fellowship (EF) with the Reformed Church in the United States (RCUS) under the adopted rules;
- 3.2 To mandate the Committee on Ecumenical Relations (CER) to submit its report to the churches six months prior to the convening of the next general synod.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 The relationship with the RCUS continues to be mutually encouraging.
- 4.2 The RCUS very much appreciates the developing relationship with the CanRC. They especially appreciate having fraternal delegates attend major assemblies.
- 4.3 Opportunities exist to work together on foreign mission projects, especially in the Philippines.
- 4.4 The CanRC and the RCUS can effectively assist each other via pulpit exchanges, visiting each other's churches, participating in youth camps/conferences held by the various churches and the exchange of articles in magazines supported by church members.

Article 166 – RPCNA (Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America)**1. Material**

- 1.1 Report of the CCCNA (8.2.11.1) on the RPCNA.
- 1.2 Submissions from the following CanRC: St. Albert (8.3.11.1), Willoughby Heights (8.3.11.2), London-Pilgrim (8.3.11.3).

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The report was declared admissible.
- 2.2 The submissions were declared admissible.

3. Decisions**Synod decided:**

- 3.1 To mandate the Committee on Ecumenical Relations (CER):
 - 3.1.1 To engage in continued dialogue and contact with the Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America (RPCNA), particularly at meetings of the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (NAPARC), and when appropriate, to discuss the matters that hinder Ecclesiastical Fellowship (EF);
 - 3.1.2 To take up dialogue and contact with the new Reformed Presbyterian Church of Canada (RPCC) once it is formed;

3.1.3 To submit its report to the churches six months prior to the convening of the next general synod.

3.2 To not be a sponsoring church for the RPCC if it applies for membership in NAPARC.

4. Grounds

4.1 Re 3.1.1:

4.1.1 While GS 2016 (Art. 90) acknowledged that the RPCNA can be recognized for their faithfulness to the Word of God and their strong Reformed convictions, it also noted that their practice and exegetical defense of ordaining female deacons, as well as GS 2016's reservations about the place and function of *The Testimony*, hinders the establishment of EF.

4.1.2 The RPCNA have congregations or preaching points geographically close to the CanRC churches in Ottawa, Elora, Fergus, Guelph, and Denver, and several of these churches have expressed a desire for progression towards unity.

4.2 Re 3.1.2: The RPCNA confirmed a special resolution presented by six Canadian congregations petitioning to become a distinct Reformed Presbyterian Church denomination in Canada, which is expected to take place in the summer of 2022.

4.3 Re 3.2: Past synods have determined that for the CanRC to sponsor a federation of churches to become members of an organization like the ICRC, that federation must be in EF with the CanRC (GS 1998 Art. 52; GS 2007 Art. 27).

Article 167 – URCNA (United Reformed Churches in North America)

1. Material

1.1 Report of the CCCNA (8.2.11.1) on the URCNA.

2. Admissibility

2.1 The report was declared admissible.

2.2 The submissions were declared admissible.

3. Decision

Synod decided:

3.1 To mandate the Committee on Ecumenical Relations (CER):

3.1.1 To continue Ecclesiastical Fellowship (EF) with the United Reformed Churches in North America (URCNA) according to the adopted rules;

3.1.2 To encourage the churches to continue to foster relationships with local URCNA churches; these activities could include, but are not limited to, pulpit exchanges, joint community and mission projects, and study opportunities;

3.1.3 To submit its report to the churches six months prior to the convening of the next general synod.

4. Grounds

4.1 Re. 3.1.1. and 3.1.2:

- 4.1.1 Geographical and cultural challenges continue to be something of a hindrance as many URCNA churches (especially in the USA) have little contact or familiarity with the CanRC; however, we give thanks that:
- 4.1.1.1 The URCNA Committee for Ecumenical Relations and Church Unity (CERCU) reiterated their commitment to working towards greater unity and expressing that unity in concrete ways;
 - 4.1.1.2 In view of the phase 2 relationship between the URCNA and the CanRC, the CERCU continues to follow its mandate;
 - 4.1.1.3 The “hold” adopted by Synod Wyoming 2016 of the URCNA is not the end of moving forward in federative unity, but during this time (of at least six years) there remains opportunity for one or more of the URCNA churches to suggest ways to move forward in our relationship;
 - 4.1.1.4 The CERCU is sending a survey to their churches seeking a response to concerns (theological, church-political, historical-cultural) they may have regarding unity;
 - 4.1.1.5 At the grassroots level, unity is frequently expressed by marriage among each other’s members and by attendance of students at each other’s schools.

Article 168 – ARPC (Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church)

1. Material

- 1.1 Report of the CCCNA (8.2.11.1) on the ARPC.
- 1.2 Submissions from the following churches: St Albert (8.3.11.1), Willoughby Heights (8.3.11.2), London-Pilgrim (8.3.11.3).

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The report was declared admissible.
- 2.2 The submissions were declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To mandate the Committee on Ecumenical Relations (CER):
 - 3.1.1 To engage in continued dialogue and contact with the ARPC;
 - 3.1.2 To submit its report to the churches six months prior to the convening of the next general synod.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 There is good fraternal dialogue with the ARPC.
- 4.2 There are currently twelve ARPC churches/works in Canada with some ongoing contact with local CanRC congregations.

Article 169 – FRCA (Free Reformed Churches of Australia)

1. Material

- 1.1 Report of the CRCA on the FRCA (8.2.1.2).

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 The report was declared admissible.

3. Decisions

Synod decided:

- 3.1 To continue the relationship of Ecclesiastical Fellowship (EF) with the Free Reformed Churches of Australia (FRCA) under the adopted rules;
- 3.2 To express thankfulness and appreciation for the FRCA's ongoing support for and interest in the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary (CRTS), including financial support;
- 3.3 To encourage the Board of Governors and Senate of the CRTS to continue contact with the deputyship for theological education in the FRCA to explore the feasibility and benefits of delivering theological education in Australia;
- 3.4 To mandate the Committee on Ecumenical Relations (CER):
 - 3.4.1 To maintain close contact with the deputyship of the FRCA in matters of relations with sister-churches abroad and informing the FRCA of changes or developments in third-party relationships;
 - 3.4.2 To invite the various deputyships of the FRCA to seek direct contact with the corresponding CanRC committees (e.g., our Standing Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise*, Committee on Bible Translations) in areas of mutual interest where the CER's mandate does not reach;
 - 3.4.3 To communicate to the FRCA the value of the International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC) and encourage them to consider membership;
 - 3.4.4 To send a delegation to the next FRCA synod in 2024;
 - 3.4.5 To submit its report to the churches six months prior to the convening of the next general synod.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 As far as can be determined from the Acts of GS-FRCA 2021, the FRCA demonstrate that they remain faithful churches. They abide by the Word of God as the only rule for faith and life and adhere to the adopted confessions and church order.
- 4.2 The value of our relationship with the FRCA is evident particularly in the ongoing cooperation in theological education, interchurch relations, the *Book of Praise*, and mission projects.
- 4.3 Through planning, robust discussions and financial commitment, GS-FRCA 2021 demonstrates the vital importance the FRCA place on training for the ministry.
- 4.4 Through the CRTS, the CanRC may be able to assist the FRCA in providing training for the ministry in Australia.
- 4.5 The FRCA demonstrate that they are active in maintaining their current sister-church relationships and seek to establish relationships with other faithful churches.
- 4.6 Membership in the ICRC has been beneficial for the CanRC, and Australia's participation would assist in providing an opportunity to support Christ's church worldwide, and promote unity among faithful churches.

Article 170 – Appointments

This matter was dealt with by Synod in closed session.

1. Material

- 1.1 Submissions from: RSW 2021 (8.1.1), RSE 2021 (8.1.2), the Board of Governors of CRTS (8.2.4.4), the CWeb (8.2.7.2), the CBT (8.2.6.1), the CRCA & CCCNA (8.2.12.3.), the SCBP (8.2.2.4.).
- 1.2 Submission from the Willoughby Heights CanRC (8.1.6).

2. Synod made the following appointments:

- 2.1 Board of Governors (BoG) of the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary (CRTS):
 - 2.1.1 Academic Committee
 - 2.1.1.1 From Eastern Canada: Rev. John Louwerse (2025), Rev. Jeff Temple (2031), Rev. Clarence VanderVelde (2028)
Alternates: Rev. Bill DeJong, Rev. Theo Wierenga (in that order);
 - 2.1.1.2 From Western Canada: Rev. Joe Poppe (2025), Rev. James Slaa (2025), Rev. Julius VanSpronsen (2031)
Alternates: Rev. Doug Vandeburgt, Rev. Dave deBoer (in that order).
 - 2.1.2 Finance and Property Committee
 - 2.1.2.1 Adrian Bartels (2031), Alan Datema (2028), Herman Post (2031), Peter VanderSluis (2025), Kasper VanVeen (2025)
Substitute: Mike Bork; Paul Broekema (in that order).
- 2.2 Committee for Pastoral Training Program Funding (CPTPF):
 - 2.2.1 The Guelph-Emmanuel CanRC.
- 2.3 Committee on Ecumenical Relations (CER):
 - 2.3.1 Gerrit Bos (2025), Otto Bouwman (2025), Rev. Gerrit Brintjes (2034), Harry de Boer (2031), William Gortemaker (2034), Rev. Marc Jagt (2028), Rev. Karlo Janssen (2028) (Convener), Rev. Andrew Pol (2031), Henry Schouten (2028), Rev. Jeff Temple (2028), Rev. Carl Van Dam (2028), Rev. Steve Vandeveld (2028).
- 2.4 Standing Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise* (SCBP):
 - 2.4.1 Rev. Douwe Agema (2031) (Convener), Chris de Boer (2025), Martin Jongmsma (2025), Rev. Ryan Kampen (2031), Brian Vanderhout (2028), Carl Oosterhoff (2025); and to leave the appointment of a last individual to the SCBP (2025).
- 2.5 Committee on Bible Translations (CBT):
 - 2.5.1 Rev. Jeff Poort (2028), Rev. Tyler VanderGaag (2031).
- 2.6 Committee for the Official Website (CWeb):
 - 2.6.1 Al Gortemaker (2031), Rev. Jeff Poort (2031) (Convener), Rosalyn Poort (2031), Jonathan Reinink (2025).
- 2.7 Churches for Days of Prayer ad CO Art. 54:
 - 2.7.1 The Burlington Waterdown-Rehoboth CanRC and the Edmonton-Providence CanRC.

- 2.8 General Fund:
 - 2.8.1 The Carman East CanRC.
- 2.9 Financial Review of the General Fund:
 - 2.9.1 The Carman West CanRC.
- 2.10 Committee for the Needy Students' Fund (CNSF):
 - 2.10.1 The Grassie-Covenant CanRC.
- 2.11 Archive Church:
 - 2.11.1 The Burlington-Ebenezer CanRC.
- 2.12 The Church for inspecting the Archives:
 - 2.12.1 The Burlington Waterdown-Rehoboth CanRC.
- 2.13 Financial Review of GS 2022:
 - 2.13.1 The Guelph-Living Word CanRC.
- 2.14 Address Church:
 - 2.14.1 The Burlington-Ebenezer CanRC.
- 2.15 Committee for Publication of the Acts:
 - 2.15.1 The first and second clerks of GS 2022.
- 2.16 Convening Church for the next General Synod:
 - 2.16.1 The Aldergrove CanRC in British Columbia.

Article 171 – Reporting of the Convening Church and the Review Church

1. Decision

Synod decided:

- 1.1 To mandate the Guelph-Emmanuel CanRC and the Guelph-Living Word CanRC to report to the next General Synod on the finances of GS 2022 six weeks prior to the next General Synod.

Article 172 – Submission of Committee Reports to the Churches and Synod

1. Decision

Synod decided:

- 1.1 That reports to the next general synod are to be sent to the churches in electronic format. Churches are free to make their own arrangements for printing if so desired. There will be no printed edition of the reports;
- 1.2 To express gratitude to Premier Printing for serving the churches for many years by printing reports.

2. Grounds:

- 2.1 Requiring printed copies to be sent six months before the start of the next Synod takes away at least one month for committees to prepare reports, as they need to be sent to the printer at least one month before the deadline.

- 2.2 Many elders read reports electronically. It will be more economical for churches to print only as many copies as needed.

Article 173 – Confidential Acts

This matter was dealt with by Synod in closed session.

The following motion by the first and second clerks of GS 2022 was adopted:

That the following decisions of GS 2022 be declared confidential Acts: Articles 60 (Dunnville and Lincoln appeals – 8.6.2) and 81 (Lincoln Appeal – 8.6.7)

Ground:

Each of these deals with matters involving sensitive personal information that has never been made public and which, in view of the 9th commandment, ought not to be made public.

Article 174 – Concluding Matters

Censure as per CO Art. 34

The chairman stated, with deep thankfulness to the Lord, that censure as per CO Art. 34 was not needed. He gave thanks for the fact that a good spirit of brotherly cooperation was evidenced throughout Synod, even when opinions differed.

Adoption of the Final Articles of the Acts

Members of Synod were requested to review the Acts received and to forward any further corrections to the first clerk. The executive members of Synod will review and adopt the final articles of the Acts.

Publication of the Acts

It was noted that the first and second clerks had been appointed to prepare the Acts of GS 2022 for publication. Synod allowed an official version of the Acts to be made available on the website as soon as available. Two hard copies of the confidential Acts will be sent to each church.

Financial Matters

Synod members were reminded to use the internal synod website to claim reimbursements.

Preparation of next General Synod

The Aldergrove CanRC had already been appointed as convening church for GS 2025 (GS 2022 Art. 170). GS 2025 will be convened in the month of May.

Approval of Press Release

The press release will be prepared by the vice-chairman and approved by the executive members of Synod for publication. (See [Appendix 27](#)).

Article 175 – Chairman’s words

The chairman, Rev. Ludwig, spoke some words in closing. (See [Appendix 22](#) for his speech.)

A gift for the convening church, the Guelph-Emmanuel CanRC, was then presented by the chairman of GS 2022 to the chair of council, Elder Kevin Hutchinson. (*See below*)

Article 176 – Closing

Rev. Ludwig had those present sing Hymn 85:1,3. Rev. Kampen, as vice chairman, spoke some words of gratitude for the chairman’s leadership and presented him with a gift. Rev. Kampen then led in closing prayer.

*Then, as the voice of the LORD was heard in the storm (Psalm 29),
General Synod 2022 was closed,
for the agenda had become acta.*



APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 – Opening Address by Rev. Peter Feenstra

Brother delegates and all who are here in attendance:

On behalf of the convening church of Guelph-Emmanuel, it is my privilege to welcome you to the opening of Synod 2022. Three years ago, Synod was convened in Edmonton-Immanuel. The weather was much the same, sunny and warm! Some of the same people that were there, are here! Much has changed since 2019 however, in the world, in our country and in our churches. Little did we know what the Lord had in store for us. As the wheels were set in motion to prepare for this Synod, there was a great amount of uncertainty as to what this day would look like. I don't have to speak at length about what we experienced in the past two years. I only mention this in order that we together can say: "Thanks!" Thanks be to our God and Father for allowing Synod 2022 to be convened today. The preparations that swung into high gear the last few weeks were done without worrying about COVID-19 restrictions. When we stop and think about the turmoil, oppression, persecution and strife so many faces, what a blessing that another General Synod of the Canadian Reformed churches can be held without any restrictions. Emmanuel! God with us!

The convening of Synod reminds us of the unity we have as a federation of churches. The church gathering work of Christ is much bigger than what we experience in our local congregations. As a federation, we have agreed to work together on the foundation of Scripture, what we confess in the Three Forms of Unity and what we have agreed upon in the adopted Church Order. We do so, recognizing that, just as it is dangerous for individual Christians to cut their own path without involving themselves in a local church, it is for the protection of a local church to be part of a federation of churches. It shouldn't be frustrating, but a joy to work together as brothers and sisters in the Lord, in the family of God, joined together in one federation. The bond we have isn't ethnic or historical, but Scriptural, spiritual, and confessional.

As you work together, keep in mind that general synod is not an entity on its own, a monster of our own making. The decisions of the broader assemblies are not meant to inhibit, stifle, impede or control the churches. You are not here to keep the churches in check, to slow down or speed up change, or to get your way! You don't have to report how you voted or how well you behaved to your local church or classis. You are here, delegated by the churches, to serve the well-being of Christ's church. Your decisions must be motivated by love, the love of Christ for his bride.

It is easy to lose sight of what is the purpose of Synod when you get engrossed in the work. I encourage you to keep your eyes open to see expressions of the unity of the church as you consider the overtures, reports and the responses of the churches on matters regarding liturgy and worship, the catholicity of the church, as you consider the reports coming from committees that have worked with other church denominations and federations, and as you are greeted by fraternal delegates and the ministry of the Word. Also, as you give direction in appointing a new professor at CRTS, deal with the report from the Board of Governors, and as you consider overtures regarding the examination of theological students. See the Lord's care when you deal with appeals from those who seek justice and judgments from this assembly when they believe they have been wronged.

Brothers, many of the churches wrote to this assembly concluding their letters with words similar to this, "May God bless you with wisdom and the guidance of the Holy Spirit in all your

deliberations.” It is easy to overlook those words or skim over them, however, they are the most important part of each letter putting the matters before Synod in the proper perspective. I’d like to read with you a letter that was written, not to a General Synod, but by the apostle Paul to the church at Ephesus. This letter contains a prayer that gives you much to reflect on, personally and together, as you begin your work at General Synod. May the words of this passage be a reality for you as you work together as brothers in Christ at this synod.

Ephesians 3:14-21

“For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.”

Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.”



APPENDIX 2 – Église réformée du Québec (ERQ) – Address by Rev. Paulin Bédard

Esteemed brothers:

Warm greetings in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I would like to pass on to you warm and brotherly greetings from your French-speaking brothers and sisters from the churches of the Église Réformée du Québec.

It is a great joy and privilege to be here with you and to attend this Synod meeting of the Canadian and American Reformed Churches, Synod Guelph 2022. I have been appointed by our Interchurch Relations Committee to represent our churches at your synod. Time flies! Twenty-four years have passed already since I attended for the first time one of your synods, in a town not far from here, Synod Fergus 1998. I checked the Acts, and none of you were there at that time as a delegate. Actually, all the ministers who were delegates at that time have retired since then, except one who moved away to Australia (one of you was there as advisor, Rev. James Slaa). Yes, it was 1998. Nine years later, I had the pleasure of attending Synod Smithers 2007. This time, two of you were delegates in Smithers: Rev. Eric Kampen and Rev. John VanWoudenberg, one as fraternal delegate from the Netherlands, Rev. Karlo Janssen, and one of you was advisor, Rev. Julius VanSpronsen, who warmly welcomed me at his place. I must admit that the scenic view in Smithers was quite spectacular and gorgeous, compared to Guelph and Fergus... But the beautiful panorama is not what sticks the most in my memory. What I keep precious in my heart is the fraternal bonds that we could experience, in the midst of frank and thorough discussions, sometimes with disagreements, but always in a spirit of harmony, love and great consideration for the well-being of the churches. I see the same here today, and I hope and pray that the same sense of harmony will remain and grow even stronger as this synod meeting progresses.

One thing that Fergus 1998 and Guelph 2022 have in common, at least to me, is that the year 1998 was for me a very difficult time, even a time of discouragement. Attending Synod Fergus 1998 was so refreshing, encouraging and upbuilding. It meant a lot to me. A real blessing from the Lord that I keep as a precious memory in my heart! This past year, in fact, these past two years have been quite difficult again, for very different reasons, and not just for me, this time, but for many more in the world, including the churches, and probably including many of you. May the Lord give you the blessing of being refreshed, encouraged and edified together, as you receive together His strength, His joy and His guidance during the time you are spending here together in the service of our Lord and for the well-being of your churches.

In John 17, the Lord Jesus Christ prayed to his Father in this way, when He was praying for His disciples: *“I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.”* Sometimes, there are moments in our lives when we wish the Lord had prayed to take us out of the world and be with him. But no, he specifically said to his Father, *“I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one.”* Why? Because we have a task to accomplish in this world. *“As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.”* Christ has entrusted His apostles, and then His church, with a very important task to do

in His name in the world, with His Word, which is truth, and with the promise of His protection and good care. Pandemic, sanitary restrictions due to COVID-19, lockdowns and even vaccine mandates have shaken and weakened the churches. Through these things, the evil one was busy and is still busy creating tensions and divisions among God's people. *"Keep them from the evil one."* *"Sanctify them in the truth."* *"I have sent them into the world"*, says the Lord. Our Mediator and Great Priest daily intercedes for us, who are weak men and poor sinners. We desperately need His intercession and His protection!

Our five tiny churches in Quebec have been shaken and weakened indeed. In most of our churches, thankfully not really in the congregation that I serve – the "outer circle" of members, so to speak, who were already less connected to the body, distanced themselves more, some sheep went away, sometimes to the point of disappearing completely, leaving the under-shepherds the very difficult task of reaching out and of giving them the pastoral care they need, but that could not really, or efficiently, give them that care since we were required to stay at home in front of our screens. Distance and isolation are certainly not the best way to gather the church of Christ and to take care of His flock. The vaccine mandate imposed by the Quebec government on the churches on December 16th, 2021, and which lasted for ten weeks, was certainly the worst. I will never forget the burden on my shoulders, in my heart, on the shoulders and in the hearts of the other consistory members of our church. Most other church leaders in our province experienced similar struggles. In our church, we came to the conclusion that we could not impose the vaccine mandate on the congregation. We could not, in good conscience before the Lord, start checking the QR code of everyone and refuse the unvaccinated at the door. This decision was severely criticized, not by the majority of the members, but by some esteemed brothers. Each church of our federation had to struggle one way or another through these very difficult times. Some consistories have been deeply divided on this issue. In one sense, this story is over, but the effect is still there. We need to heal what has been hurt, and to rebuild and strengthen what has been shaken and weakened and sometimes broken. I don't know how to do that. I don't have an easy recipe, but our Lord Jesus Christ has prayed and continues to pray daily for us: *"Keep them from the evil one; sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth. I have sent them into the world."*

We must not look at the situation with our own eyes, but we need to look at the world and at the church with the eyes of faith. When we look with the eyes of faith, we don't see only a crisis, we also see, and we primarily see, the Lord who is busy working in this world and for his church. As we confess: *"I believe that the Son of God, out of the whole human race, from the beginning of the world to its end, gathers, defends, and preserves for himself, by His Spirit and Word, in the unity of the true faith, a church chosen to everlasting life"* (Q&A 54 of the Heidelberg Catechism). There is not one period of time since the beginning of the world that the Lord has not, and is not, and will not be gathering, defending, and preserving His church. This includes the gift of having faith, and the gift of living together *"in the unity of the true faith"*, a gift that comes from the Holy Spirit who works in us by His Word. And this will remain true to the end of the world. The Lord is faithful, doing diligently His work. This is what He is doing among you, this is what He is doing in Quebec, this is what He is doing elsewhere in the world.

Just one small example. Since the middle of the pandemic, I meet with a person "through the screen" on a weekly basis to explain to that person the Gospel and to teach her the beautiful truths of our catechism. It is beautiful and very encouraging to see her new-born faith grow. Another example: We now can reach out to several more people because our sermons and other

podcasts are now made available on our website, or on our YouTube channel. No, it's not like being in person of course, but the word of God is not locked down. The powerful word of God spreads out and reaches out to people far away. The website Ressources chrétiennes, that I have the privilege of developing, is now visited 14 times more often than two years ago. We are now reaching one thousand visits per day, from France, Congo, Ivory Coast, Haiti, Canada, Cameroon, and many other countries of the world where French is spoken. We are tiny and weak, but the Lord in His providence, has placed us in a strategic place at a strategic time. Many other challenges, struggles, and even persecutions from the world will be coming, even in our country. But we must be steadfast, courageous and strong!

Yes, if the Lord has not taken us out of the world, it is because we still have a task to do in His name in the world. In our small churches, we need more ministers of the Word, we need more elders, we need more deacons, and we need other faithful servants prepared to serve. There is diversity in our churches, among the members from different origins, as well as among the servant leaders. One of our ministers comes from Cameroon, another one is an American who originally comes from Congo, another one immigrated from France. One church is now vacant and has two older elders. The church that I serve with my colleague has two older ministers. We need some renewal and new blood. One young man who accompanies me here, comes from Switzerland and France, and is a candidate for the ministry doing an internship in our church. We will see where the Lord guides him. Two other men, in two other congregations, are preparing for the ministry or are considering the ministry, but are not sure yet. May the Lord guide them, may He give His church faithful servants who will preach faithfully His Word and take good care of His flock. The sheep need to be taken care of; the youth need to be educated in the faith in front of the huge challenges of the world; the weak, the sick and the needy need to be encouraged and comforted; the weary need to be admonished. May the Lord give us all that we need for the task He has given us. May He also give us missionaries and other workers to help us in this tremendous task. Please, keep praying for our churches. The French speaking planet is very poor and weak in terms of Reformed faith and Reformed churches. We covet your prayers and we are so grateful for the help and encouragement you faithfully and generously keep providing.

I briefly looked at the documents and subjects on your agenda. You have lots of work to do during the following days! I pray that Synod Guelph 2022 will be a blessing to all of you and to all the churches that you serve. May your deliberations continue to be done in good harmony. May your decisions contribute to healing, to strengthen and to edify. Remain faithful to His Word, receive from the Lord what you need, to be sanctified and to do the task He has given you in the world. May the Almighty God use you, and your diligent service, by His grace and power for the gathering, the defence and the preservation of the church of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.



APPENDIX 3 – United Reformed Churches in North America (URCNA) – Address by Rev. Steve Swets

Dear Fathers and Brothers:

Greetings in the name of the Lord of the church, Jesus Christ.

It is a privilege to address you today on behalf of the United Reformed Churches. I am the pastor of Rehoboth URC in Ancaster and I am here with Rev. Joel Dykstra from Wellandport URC.

Know that we have been keeping this meeting in our prayers, and we pray for the Lord's wisdom to you brothers, as you carefully deliberate and work through the agenda before you.

There is not much to report from our churches since we last addressed you. Our nation has been humbled by COVID-19 and the restrictions that have gone with that. We have grieved the cancellation of worship services, conferences, meetings and our own General Synod meeting twice. In some places the COVID-19 situation has unified congregations together. However, in other congregations, it has been a cause of division, disagreement, and hurt. Thankfully, in God's mercy, we are moving past that, as I am sure your churches are as well.

We are happy to report that it looks like our synod will move forward as it is scheduled to take place in Buffalo, NY, October 17-21, 2022. Ordinarily, we have synod every two years. We have not had one since 2018. It will be good to be together once again. In our federation, each congregation sends two delegates, so that is a large gathering of over 200 men. Probably the most pressing item on our agenda deals with the work of mission works. There is discussion whether we think they should be overseen from a more local/classical model, or more from a federational approach. At this point, I don't believe there is going to be anything on the agenda that directly impacts our relationship with the CanRC. We would be honoured to have a delegation from the CanRC present at our Synod.

Regarding our relationship, it has been blessed by the Lord. As we have reported in the past, the organic, grassroots relationship continues to grow. There are joint efforts in schooling, pulpit exchanges, mission works, conferences, etc. There is also a growing relationship in the day-to-day activities of fellowship, business, etc. We are thankful for the expressions of Christian love and fellowship.

From a federational level, we have been at a 6-year holding pattern regarding moving forward in an official manner with the CanRC. Thank you for your patience with us. As CERCU, our church unity committee, we sent out a survey in the past year to all of the churches. The goal of the survey was to gauge where the churches were at. As a committee, we have the privilege to meet with your representatives at NAPARC annually, and that is always a time of sweet fellowship. However, we need to determine as a federation what areas of concern still exist in our churches. If we know what hurdles still remain, we can work through them together. We have received the feedback from our churches. This will be helpful for our committee to discuss and then propose ways forward. We will be sharing our thoughts with your Unity Committee when we meet with them next.

To be frank, our pursuit of unity with your churches has not gone as many of us would have hoped. Many positive events have taken place. Many barriers to fellowship have been broken down, however, at this point, there is still hesitation from many of our churches. The region of

greatest hesitancy is from our American churches. Since two thirds of our churches are in the US, this is significant.

Our ecumenical relations are divided into three phases. All of the churches of NAPARC are part of at least Phase 1. We recognize them as faithful and true churches. Phase 2 is ecclesiastical fellowship. This is the phase we are in with the CanRC. After this, there is a Phase 3, which is entered upon when union is imminent and a plan to merge has to take place. Our committee is not proposing to our Synod 2022 to change the phase of our relationship with the Canadian Reformed.

This might be discouraging to you. We assure you that we are committed to working with your churches. We are grateful and optimistic about the unity we presently share. We have a unique opportunity, because our churches often overlap with yours geographically. Nevertheless, the possibility of merger seems to still be years away, unless something dramatically changes. Some of the greatest hurdles still seems to relate to church polity and church order issues. We trust that there is a way forward. We are cautiously optimistic as we look ahead.

As our nations and much of Western Christianity seems to be on a downward fall from orthodoxy, faithful Reformed churches will need each other more and more. Please pray for us, be patient with us, and continue to place before us, the call and privilege of unity in Jesus Christ.

As for your agenda, a couple of matters we would like to encourage you on:

1. We thank God for the service of Dr. A. de Visser at the seminary, and we pray his replacement might be equipped for this important work.
2. As we see you report on and discuss songs for worship, we are thankful to see that your committee has used the Trinity Psalter Hymnal as a starting point in choosing new songs. Though we would have preferred to see you adopt the TPH in entirety, we think singing the same songs can help draw our churches closer.
3. As your churches work through the question of authority and oversight of worship and the pulpit, we see a movement in some Canadian Reformed congregations to want to move closer to URC polity where the question of the order of worship, the songs sung, and permission to lead worship is directed by the consistory. When we have ecumenical contact with churches that are not part of NAPARC, our practice is to inform classis after the fact. At that point, concerns can be raised. Wisdom to you as you work through these matters.

We see in your churches a movement taking place. It doesn't have a name and it is gradual. There is a movement to be more mission focused and outreach oriented. This is encouraging. We can see the fruit of God's blessing upon this activity. At the same time, we remind you, in love, to beware of compromise. There is always a danger to adopt the methods of the world, to assimilate culturally with the society around us and to move away from the heritage of our churches. It happened in the denomination we left in the 1990's and there is a danger it could happen to you. Many things were symptomatic of a greater problem. Preaching was minimized, exposition of scripture was traded for entertaining anecdotes and stories to fill the sermon time. Confessional preaching started to slide. The Church Order became a wax nose that was easily manipulated and bent to fit one's own agenda. In moving away, what was viewed as old fashioned, stuffy, stoic Calvinism, came a liberalizing trend which, at the end of the day, undermined the authority of Scripture. Stay steadfast brothers.

Thank you for the opportunity to be among you during your General Synod. Thank you for the opportunity to address you today. We thank the Lord for our unity together and we pray for the Lord's richest blessing to each one of you. May God bless the Canadian Reformed Churches. Let me close with these words from I Corinthians 15:58, *"Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labour is not in vain."*

In Christ's love, and on behalf of the United Reformed Churches in North America,
Revs. Steve Swets and Joel Dykstra



APPENDIX 4 – Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC) – Address by Mr. Mark Bube

Guelph, Ontario, May 10, 2022

Mr. Moderator, Fathers and Brothers, Dearly Beloved in the Lord:

It is my sincere pleasure to bring you greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ from your brothers and sisters in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC). We are thankful for the more than two decades that we have shared a firm commitment to the whole counsel of the Word of God, as summarized in our mutually held Reformed standards. It has been a delight to link arms with many of your men in the cause of Christ, having worked with Dr. Arjan de Visser in the ICRC Missions Committee for the past nine years, Drs. James Visscher and Karlo Janssen in the ICRC, and a host of you all at NAPARC. I also have fond memories of bringing greetings on behalf of the OPC some years back to your General Synod Dunnville 2016. Like you, we grieve over developments in the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (GKv), and we very much appreciate your standing with us in the ICRC. Together we have tried to speak the truth in love to our GKv brothers, pleading that they would turn back from the course upon which their last two Synods have embarked, and find, in Christ, the joy of obedience in taking the narrow road that pleases Him.

In the past couple of years, many of us have seen great upheavals in the rhythms and patterns of our lives that have changed routines that we had long taken for granted. Some of us have lost precious loved ones to the pandemic; others of us have been taken ill, and perhaps come perilously close to succumbing ourselves; and almost all of us have seen the circumstances of our public worship, when we gather together with dear brothers and sisters in Christ on the Lord's Day, change significantly, at least for a season. Yet, no matter what challenges have crossed our paths, Christ has never failed us. His arms have never been too short. Time and again, Christ has proven to be our help in times of trouble, and it's to Him that we flee in faith to seek refuge and strength. Thank you for your prayers on our behalf, even as we have kept you in our thoughts and prayers.

While we in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church have had our own share of challenges, we continue to rejoice in God's blessings upon us. At the end of 2021, our total membership grew by almost two percent, to just over 32,250, and the total number of our congregations, all of which are located in the United States, Canada, or Puerto Rico, reached 334 (296 organized congregations and 38 unorganized mission works) in 17 presbyteries.

Our Committee on Foreign Missions presently sends missionaries to Ethiopia, Haiti, Quebec, Uganda, Ukraine, and Uruguay—and is pursuing various avenues to continue its work in China. Over the past few years, we have also enjoyed the privilege of rubbing shoulders with missionaries from more than a dozen Reformed churches (including the ARPC, CanRC, FRCAus, FRCNA, HRC, IPB, IRCK, KAPC, PCA, RCSA, RCNZ, RCUS, RPCNA, and URCNA) on the foreign fields. The Mobile Theological Mentoring Corps is now regularly helping to train church leaders in Austria/Switzerland, Colombia, Hungary, India, and South Sudan, and we are working to develop opportunities in Peru, Turkey and other lands as well. And we continue to wait upon the Lord for an opportunity to resume our labours in Eritrea, where around 1,700 of our Christian brothers and sisters currently languish in prison for the sake

of Christ. In January 2020, fifteen men attending one of the Eritrean church's Bible studies were arrested, imprisoned, and subjected to "harsh military punishment" (i.e., torture) to try to force them to renounce their faith in Christ. This past December, as his health broke from the abuse, one of the brothers was denied medical treatment unless he would deny Christ. By God's grace, our brother chose to obey God rather than man, even unto death; he was thirty-five years old and leaves behind a wife and four children, approximately ages three through thirteen. The other fourteen remain in prison today. Please pray for them and join with us in praying: that our merciful Lord would comfort his widow and children and the entire congregation in their grief over both the brother's death, and the manner in which it was brought about; that our Lord's name would be much glorified by the grace He ministered to our brother during his darkest hours, to enable him to stand firm in his faith; and that the Lord might use this example of a brother's faithfulness to foster in each of us a greater boldness to testify to the hope that is in us, regardless of the circumstances in which we find ourselves.

Please also join with us in beseeching the Lord of the harvest to raise up more labourers for the mission fields, for the harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few. In the opening months of 2019, we lost five foreign missionary families from the field: two families having to leave due to the crackdown on churches in China that intensified at the end of the previous year, a third for life-threatening health reasons (and the last family in China had to leave in early 2021); a fourth family deciding not to return to the field at the completion of their furlough; and a fifth family due to serious sin, which resulted in the missionary's immediate removal from the field and termination, his subsequent deposition from the ministry soon thereafter by his presbytery, and earlier this year, his felony conviction in a U.S. Federal District Court. Perhaps one of the chief lessons we can learn from episodes like the latter, is the hideous awfulness of sin. Our own sin should disgust and revolt us. We cannot play with sin; whenever we encounter sin in our own lives, or a temptation to it, we need to flee from it to Christ as fast as we can. (And also in 2019, a sixth family had to be evacuated twice by helicopter during periods of massive rioting and civil unrest in Haiti, but, by God's grace, each time were able to resume their labours in the field after things had quieted down in the field.) We are currently seeking missionary evangelists to join with us in sowing the seed of God's Word, in gathering in the harvest and making disciples, and in planting churches in places like Uganda, Haiti, Uruguay, Europe, and Ethiopia.

Presently, the OPC has ecclesiastical fellowship with twenty churches, including you, and corresponding relations with twelve churches. The OPC is actively involved as one of the thirteen member churches of the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (NAPARC) and as one of the thirty-four member churches of the International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC). We are continually on the lookout for opportunities to join in ministry with our NAPARC and ICRC brothers. We have been particularly thankful to be able to sing out of the new *Trinity Psalter Hymnal*, a joint venture with our URCNA brothers, which contains all 150 Psalms.

In 2020 for the first time in our history, we postponed our general assembly for a year, due to the pandemic. At our 87th (2021) General Assembly, which met ten months ago, even as we had to work through (what I think was) a record thirteen judicial appeals and complaints, we were able to join in praise to the Lord for the sweet fellowship among brothers with which He was pleased to bless us.

We give thanks to our Lord for all the good things we have learned from you over these many years. We love you. We pray for you. Let me close with these words from our Lord that are inscribed on the tombstone of one of our missionaries who was martyred in Eritrea in 1974: *“Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”* Rev. 2:10.

Thank you and may God’s peace be with you.

Mr. Mark Bube,

Administrator of the Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations,
General Secretary of the Committee on Foreign Missions



APPENDIX 5 – Reformed Church in the United States (RCUS) – Letter from Rev. Ron Potter

Dear Brethren:

On behalf of the Interchurch Relations Committee of the Synod of the Reformed Church in the United States, please accept our sincere thanks for your gracious invitation to send a delegation to your General Synod meeting in May of 2022. It would be our desire to have a delegation present among you except for the present uncertainty of border crossing requirements caused by the pandemic. It seemed the better part of wisdom that we stand down at this time and anticipate a time down the road when we can once again join with you in person.

These are indeed chaotic times, motivated in large measure by the politics of fear. Times which are proving to be challenges to the Church, but our Lord assures us that even the gates of hell cannot prevail against the Church He builds, and that we are more than conquerors through Him that loves us.

We do desire for you, our Lord's richest blessings on your General Synod deliberations and will pray to that end, and also that our Lord Jesus Christ will continue to be glorified through your labours in His name.

Our Synod meets in Kansas City, MO at approximately the same time as yours so we would covet your prayers for us as well.

May our gracious and merciful Triune God be glorified through our mutual labours as we faithfully serve Him.

Respectfully,



Rev. Ron Potter, for the IRC of the RCUS



APPENDIX 6 – Reformed Churches in Indonesia (GGRI) – Letter from Rev. Sarius Ismail



**GEREJA-GEREJA REFORMASI DI INDONESIA
(KALIMANTAN BARAT)**

Terdaftar di Depag RI No. 1 Tanggal 8 Januari 1991

HUGGRI-KALIMANTAN BARAT

Alamat: Sentagi Dalam, RT.03/Rw.1, Desa Bani Amas, Kec. Bengkayang
Kab. Bengkayang, Kode Pos 79282, Prov. Kalimantan Barat-INDONESIA
e-mail: gatotfransiskus@gmail.com Telp/HP.: -/085750933606

Number : 018/GGRI-KB/S/V/2022 Bengkayang, may 5th, 2022
Attachment : -
subject : Invitation letter reply

Dear:
Rev. Dr. R.C. (Karlo) Janssen
Convener & Secretary
In-

CANADA

Dear brothers and sisters in our Lord Jesus Christ,

Greetings in the name of our precious Lord and Savior!

First of all, we would like to thank you very much for the invitation addressed to our church to attend the Synod session at CanRC CRCA Canada which will be held on May 10, 2022. It is with great sadness that we convey to our brothers and sisters in the faith in the CanRC FRCA church that based on the decision of the meeting, we have not been able to fulfill the invitation for several reasons, namely since January we have not decided on the envoy who will depart due to doubts related to the COVID-19 pandemic, besides that, we are also experiencing difficulties in financing because this year we will be holding a National Synod.

Our brothers and sisters in our Lord Jesus Christ, we sincerely apologize for not being able to fulfill the invitation and we hope that you can send delegates to attend the GGRI National Synod trial which will be held this year in September.

We wish you a happy joining the synod trial and would like to convey our greetings to our brothers and sisters in the faith here. May the Lord our God bless the brothers and whatever is decided in the Synode is solely for the glory of God and for the expansion of His gospel throughout the world.

Thus this letter was written and delivered. we say thank you very much and may God bless us all!

MANAGEMENT

THE RELATIONSHIP OF REFORM CHURCHES IN INDONESIA
WEST KALIMANTAN

CHAIRMAN



REV. SARIUS ISMAIL



SECRETARY,



GATOT FRANSISKUS, S.Th

APPENDIX 7 – Reformed Churches The Netherlands (GKN) – Letter received from Mr. Ad Scheele

Dear brothers in the Lord:

We would like to thank you for the invitation to attend your Synod of May 10, 2022 in Guelph, Ontario, Canada, and also for the hospitality you offer us when it comes to transportation and accommodation. We appreciate it all the more as one pays attention to the contact that there was in the past between your churches and the Netherlands.

We rejoice that you want to be in contact with us to share and experience the unity in Christ.

We would like to draw attention, once again, to the fact that we would greatly appreciate a sister-church relationship with the CanRC. We look forward to our Saviour's Church being connected worldwide in Spirit and Truth, to be hand and foot to each other. That is why we have also started discussions with the ICRC to be allowed to join this umbrella organization.

We already have a sister-church relationship with the SERK in Germany (*Selbständig Evangelisch-Reformierten Kirche*). We also help to support their theological education, RTS in Heidelberg.

Given our small number, however, we cannot make use of your invitation, which we are very sorry about. We dedicate your church association and your Synod to the LORD, our faithful Covenant God.

We wish you His indispensable blessing for all the work that may and must be done in His kingdom. If possible, we would like to get a link to follow the Synod live or later via the internet.

United in Christ,

On behalf of deputies "Foreign Churches" GKN,

Ad Scheele, Secretary

Dutch original:

Geliefde broeders in de HERE,

We willen u hartelijk danken voor de uitnodiging om uw synode van 10 mei '22 te Guelph, Ontario, Canada, bij te wonen.

Ook voor de gastvrijheid die u ons aanbiedt als het gaat over vervoer en onderdak.

We waarderen het des te meer als men let op het contact wat er in het verleden tussen uw kerken en Nederland was.

We verheugen ons dat u contact met ons wilt om de eenheid in Christus te delen en te beleven.

We willen graag nogmaals onder de aandacht brengen dat we een zusterkerkrelatie met de CanRC zeer op prijs zouden stellen. We kijken er naar uit dat de kerk van onze Heiland wereldwijd verbonden is in Geest en Waarheid om zo elkaar tot een hand en een voet te zijn.

Daarom zijn we ook gestart met gesprekken met de ICRC om toe te mogen treden tot deze overkoepelende organisatie.

Met de SERK in Duitsland (Selbständig Evangelisch-Reformierten Kirche) hebben we reeds een zusterkerkrelatie. Ook helpen we om hun theologische opleiding, RTS in Heidelberg, te ondersteunen.

Gezien ons kleine aantal kunnen we echter geen gebruik maken van uw uitnodiging, iets wat ons zeer spijt.

We dragen uw kerkverband en uw synode op aan de HERE, onze trouwe Verbondsgod.

We wensen u Zijn onmisbare zegen toe voor al het werk dat mag en moet gebeuren in Zijn Koninkrijk. Indien mogelijkheid bestaat zouden we een link willen krijgen om live of later de synode te volgen via het internet.

*Verbonden in Christus,
Namens deputaten “Buitenlandse Kerken” GKN,
Ad Scheele, secr.*

APPENDIX 8 – The Reformed Churches [in The Netherlands] (DGK) – Letter from Rev. C. Koster

May 10, 2022

Synod of Canadian Reformed Churches
c/o Rev. R.C. Janssen

Dear and Esteemed Brothers in Jesus Christ:

With thankfulness, we received your invitation for the upcoming Synod of the Canadian Reformed Churches. We appreciate this invitation and consider it a fine gesture of your involvement in our churches, and of seeking closer ties with us. More than in the past, we are also looking forward to having closer ties with you. We wish to increase our involvement in developments in your churches and to witness how our Lord Jesus Christ is gathering, protecting and maintaining His church in your country as well.

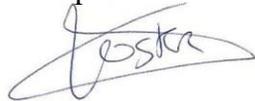
Unfortunately, we have no opportunity to attend your Synod physically, so we'd like to convey our kindest brotherly regards. May God, our heavenly Father, bless you and give you wisdom. We may be certain that He will give us all we need in our prayers. Together, with you, we'll ask for the Lord's blessing on your Synod's work. May He guide you in your decision making for the well-being of the Canadian churches and the greater honour and glory of His holy name.

Last Saturday, May 7, 2022, our Synod convened in one of its final meetings. They asked us to convey our Synod's brotherly greetings and good wishes to your Synod, which we are happy to do herewith.

We are looking forward to a future, in which our ways may join more in the service of our great Lord. As you know some months ago, we already informed your deputies of our Synod's decision to admonish the LRCA to return to the CanRC. May the Lord provide that these decisions may be helpful in further building up our relationship. Together with you, we are looking forward to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in His glory.

With cordial brotherly greetings,

for deputies



C. Koster (secretary)

Deputies contact Churches Abroad of De Gereformeerde Kerken (DGK)
dsckoster@gmail.com

APPENDIX 9 – Kosin Presbyterian Church in Korea (KPCK) – Address by Rev. HyungTae Kim

My dear brothers and sisters in the Canadian Reformed Church:

Grace and peace to you through our one and shared Triune God.

We thank you for welcoming our delegates to your synod. I feel a great affinity for the Canadian Reformed Church, as I studied reformed theology under Professor N.H Gootjes at the Kosin Theological Seminary for three years in the early 1990s.

It is our hope that God may give us all the strength to worship and spread the word of God despite the hardships brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. And although we aren't in frequent correspondence, the knowledge that we are all united in our faith in God's Word, gives us great comfort.

We have a few updates from the Kosin Presbyterian Church that we would like to share with you:

First, our membership has decreased slightly with 401,500 members as of January 2021. On the other hand, we've been able to plant new churches and now have about 2,110 in total. As the church attendance numbers decreased during the pandemic, our member's spiritual health has taken a huge hit. Thankfully, all restrictions and social distancing rules for churches were lifted the day after Easter. We imagine the church can be revived now that our members can freely meet and share fellowship with one another, including meals.

Second, we held 70 days of midnight service (from February 7th to April 17th) to commemorate the Kosin Church's 70th anniversary. Churches received teaching material as they prayed for their individual church, the Korean church, as well as for Korean society. Furthermore, churches will be split according to the region and hold evangelism seminars from May to June.

Third, enrollment for our seminary has been decreasing. We expected 105 new students for Spring 2022 but could only receive 73 of them. We fear for the future of the ministry. We ask that you pray for us.

Fourth, we plan to update the Westminster Standard's Korean translation during our October general assembly, as well as revise some parts of our Church Order.

Fifth, the Kosin Presbyterian Mission has sent about 500 missionaries to 54 different countries. We've established 1,200 churches (including home churches), about 20 seminaries, and 3 hospitals so far. We've also been providing medical supplies and essentials for the Ukrainian people.

Secularization has become a bigger and more scary threat to the church than the pandemic. We are now facing what your country has been facing. The ruling party has been pushing for legislation to make it a crime to say that homosexuality is a sin. They also plan to make a law to give gay couples more legal rights under the name of "various forms of family." Most major media outlets support that homosexuality is okay. Kosin has teamed up with other denominations to campaign against this bill. Thankfully, our newest President, Yoon SukYeol is against calling homosexuality a legitimate form of family. Please pray so that we may be able to respond effectively.

We are sorry the Reformed Churches in Netherland-Liberated took a different interpretation of the Bible and allowed women in church leadership. We hoped they might change their position, but it seems like we may have to readjust our relationship with them. We discussed cutting our sister relations with the RCN at our last assembly in 2021; details of this decision will be applied in the next constitutional revision.

Through this situation, we’ve come to realize how our seminaries should cooperate with one another in regard to theological ideas. Although there is a language barrier, we hope we can maintain a relationship as close as possible. We hope that members of our churches can personally visit one another.

We ask that you send delegates to our General Assembly from September 20th to the 23rd, 2022. We hope that the Holy Spirit gives wisdom to your General Synod to make decisions to further God’s kingdom. We hope the Canadian Reformed Church will faithfully rely on God's Word and the Holy Spirit to worship God and be used to expand His kingdom.

On behalf of the Kosin Presbyterial Church in Korea,



Rev. Kim and Rev. Shin



Elder Sim and Rev. Park





APPENDIX 10 – Free Reformed Churches of North America (FRCNA) – Address by Rev. Rob VanDoodewaard

May 11, 2022, at Guelph, ON

Brothers, we are thankful for the invitation to be at this General Synod. We have counted it a blessing to observe your proceedings and fellowship with you. We have witnessed, as 1 Peter 2:5 says, that “...you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”

We are here to bring brotherly greetings from Free Reformed Churches of North America. We do consider it a privilege to do that formally today. Though our denominations may have had somewhat different histories and some different emphases, we also see that we seem to have more and more in common.

There is a growing interaction between Canadian Reformed and Free Reformed members on the grassroots level. In some regions, in particular, we share the same communities and spaces. Many of our congregations are located near each other. Many of our members, and even some of our ministers, live alongside each other. Organizations such as NAPARC have brought us face-to-face. As we sit as witnesses to your Synod, we have also noticed that we face many of the same challenges. We also struggle with the balances of faithful orthodoxy and orthopraxy, striving to cling to the truth, yet walk in love. Friendships and relationships do seem to be growing. We have seen increasing cooperation in mission works, other organizations, and ministries.

On a more personal note, as a pastor of a Free Reformed Church in Northern Ontario, many Canadian Reformed members come to worship with us while on their vacations. Some come year after year, and we have been encouraged by their faithfulness in attending morning and evening services, their fellowship with us, and their care for us. Through your churches, we have been strengthened. We certainly welcome you all to worship with our local congregation if you vacation in the area.

In conversations with many of you, it is clear that there is a growing level of contact between our churches on the grassroots level, but perhaps there is another reason that some are sensing some more nearness. We live in nations, a culture, and a civilization that seems bent on turning away from the Lord. Where a couple of generations ago, there were prayers in public schools and an awareness of God’s law; there is now a growing trend toward secularism and the removal of faith from the public square. Many seem to be making a conscious choice to follow their lusts, rather than seeking the Lord. We see communities that, according to the pattern warned about in Romans 1, seem to be given over to vile passions and debased minds.

In comparison, as we look across the street and see your denomination, we see a contrast with that darkness. We see those that are of the same mind as us. We see those that are also strangers and pilgrims on this earth. This does not mean that we are identical twin-pilgrims. In Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*, pilgrims of different characters walk together. There is a blessing to accountability and mutual encouragement. When crossing the river of death, it is “Hopeful” who upholds and strengthens “Christian” as he struggles in faith. It is our hope and prayer that if we

face trials in the future, that the Canadian Reformed and the Free Reformed will be there for one another, upholding one another in prayer and fellowship.

As we think of the challenging times churches have recently gone through, and the difficulties that may lie ahead, our prayer for you, from 1 Peter 5:10-11 is: “...*may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.*”

Again, we are thankful for your invitation, hospitality, and fellowship. May the Lord bless your continuing deliberations.

On behalf of the Interchurch Relations Committee of the Synod of the FRCNA,
Pastor Rob VanDoodewaard, Powassan, Ontario FRC
with Pastor David VanBrugge, Brantford, Ontario FRC



APPENDIX 11 – Free Reformed Church of Australia (FRCA) – Address by Rev. Axel Hagg

Esteemed brothers:

On behalf of your brothers and sisters in the Free Reformed Churches of Australia I pass on heartfelt brotherly greetings to you. It is our sincere prayer that this synod here in Guelph will be a true blessing to you as sister churches. Although your delegates were unable to visit our 2021 Synod in Albany in person, we were delighted in receiving Rev A. Witten's address to us by means of a recorded video message. Due to travel restrictions, we initially prepared to address you in the same manner, however, the Lord has granted us the opportunity to travel abroad again. It is a privilege to attend your synod meeting here in this beautiful church building in Guelph in person, to express our best wishes for your calling as churches. We are thankful for the invitation and for the hospitality shown to us.

The global COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the war in the Ukraine, show us how circumstances can suddenly change. We thank the Lord for the freedom and safety we both, as sister churches, may enjoy. I can only echo Rev A. Witten's comment in his address, that for decades, our cooperation has been wonderfully close and truly appreciated. Our assemblies have consistently demonstrated the value that we place on this relationship.

We would like to update you on the following matters of mutual concern:

Theological education: Faith comes through hearing the Word, so it is fitting that we place a priority not only on preaching, but also preparing men to fulfil this vital calling. Our appreciation for the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary (CRTS) is strong, and our churches continue to gladly contribute toward its support. But, as you are aware, our previous synod recognized the interest in establishing an Australian theological seminary in the medium to long term future. Since 2015, deputies have been busy investigating the possibility of establishing a seminary in Australia, and they will continue to do so in the coming years. While it is a massive undertaking, both the urgency and the possibilities of an Australian seminary have been underlined in the last couple of years by travel restrictions and the rapid adoption of online learning. Synod Albany mandated its Deputies Training for the Ministry (DTM) to continue discussions with CRTS to explore the feasibility of a CRTS Australian affiliate.

Assuming a positive outcome, DTM hope to develop a plan and report to Synod Darling Downs in 2024 with recommendations towards implementation. Discussions will need to include (but are not limited to) working towards agreements regarding a responsible timeline, governance, financing, infrastructure, and faculty, all within the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) regulatory framework. This process will be communicated with our sister churches, and other churches in Australia and the Asia Pacific region with whom local FRC's have contact, regarding the potential benefits of a CRTS Australian affiliate to serve the wider Reformed community. In relation to CRTS, our deputies will continue to promote and support the work of the seminary in a variety of ways, most importantly through personal and congregational prayer.

In relation to our current and future students at CRTS, the churches continue to support them financially. Connected to this, Synod Albany adopted new and clearer guidelines for the support

of needy students. The deputies were also tasked to develop guidelines for a vicariate (ministry internship) model of training. The vicariate model would see recent FRCA graduates from the seminary be given the opportunity to spend a full year working in a congregation under the guidance of a seasoned pastor in Australia. The first student has expressed the desire to start with this vicariate program in one of our congregations upon completing his 4th year at seminary.

Australian Book of Praise: Since Synod Albany, we have been blessed by receiving the first shipment of copies of our own Australian Book of Praise from Premier Printing of Manitoba, Canada. This is a significant moment in the history of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia. Our Standing Committee for the Australian Book of Praise had arranged with Premier Printing to print the new book which includes the FRCA Church order. Our standing committee will continue to review the Book of Praise by processing feedback from the churches. They will also maintain contact with your Standing Committee for the Publication of the Book of Praise.

Mutual Assistance: The connections between the Canadian and American Reformed Churches and the FRCA are strong and deep. This was also evident around the table of Synod Albany, where a significant number of delegates, including the chairman, were either Canadian or had lived in Canada for extended periods of time.

We, as your ‘Down Under’ sister, are always ready to assist you as you seek to remain faithful to Scripture as summarized in our Reformed confessions. This pertains, for example, to the ongoing discussions within the CanRC regarding church polity and liturgy changes, as well as sister-church relations in North America. We are aware of the decisions of classis Ontario North to enter into a relationship with other federations and having the freedom to use the URCNA Psalter without consent from the General Synod. We are aware that this could result in a certain level of concern amongst members in both federations. Thus, we commend our brothers and sisters in Canada to the care of the Lord in dealing with these matters.

Interchurch relations: It was decided at Synod Albany 2021 to continue sister relations with the FRCSA, RCNZ, GGRI, KOSIN and FERC. We have also decided to continue supporting the training for the ministry as structured in the FRCSA. We will also engage with your deputies to seek optimal coordination of this support.

Regarding our relationship with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC), some of our members are familiar with this confessionally Reformed federation. Synod Albany has mandated deputies to intensify efforts to gather more information about aspects of church polity and practice in the OPC. In addition, our Synod mandated Deputies for Interchurch Relations to develop guidelines for interchurch relations and this will have implications for any future decisions about a relationship with the OPC.

Regarding our relationship with one of your closest local ‘sisters’, the United Reformed Churches of North America (URCNA), our Synod decided to continue liaising with the Committee for Ecumenical Contact with Churches Abroad (CECCA) of the URCNA with a view to determining whether to establish a sister-church relationship. In this regard, we are curious to see how your mutual relationship will develop, especially since the six-year moratorium on discussions concerning federal unity will end this year. It was again a delight to receive written greetings from Br. G Swets of the URCNA at our last synod. The activity of getting acquainted with this federation will continue in the future with a view to possibly developing a sister-church relationship.

Mission: Our churches continue to support the spreading of the gospel and planting of churches through mission work in Northeast Papua New Guinea. The sending church has transitioned from FRC Armadale to FRC Southern River. Renewed cooperation has been established between the Australian, New Zealand and Toronto mission boards regarding church plants in Port Moresby (Southeast PNG). FRC Southern River has agreed to the Toronto mission board’s request to call and support a new missionary to support the existing church plants in the Port Moresby area.

The FRC Kelmscott and CanRC’s Langley and Cloverdale continue to do mission work together in an Asian country. (All three churches are supported by several local FRCA and CanRC congregations.) The work, which commenced in 2005, has been richly blessed. Eleven churches are instituted as Reformed churches after adopting the Three Forms of Unity and the Church Order of Dort. Two Classes have been formed. Other congregations are working towards institution. The work also includes theological training, advice to the Classes, supporting congregations with teaching and advice, and the translation of books, sermons and lectures. The Book of Praise has been completely translated for use in the churches. The Genevan tunes for all Psalms have been retained.

These mission projects have contributed to the strong bond between the Canadian and Australian churches. We pray that the Lord will continue to bless this wonderful work.

Closing: We value our bond with the Canadian Reformed Churches and the personal contact at the synodical level, when possible, which reinforces our contact with you.

We live in a downward spiralling secular society like yours in Canada. Even though our country’s Prime Minister identifies himself as an active Christian, we experience a general increase in animosity towards Christian values and standards in the public sphere and towards private Christian schools. Also, Voluntary Assisted Dying (VAD) laws have been passed in five of Australia’s six States which is quite concerning. “Voluntary Assisted Dying” laws have commenced operation in two states, while they will commence in three other states towards the end of 2022 and the beginning of 2023. There is also legislation in some states which criminalizes biblical counselling for individuals who are struggling with their gender identity. For the first time we must face the possibility that the pastoral care that office bearers offer to members is a criminal act. As Reformed believers we feel the pressure of living and working in this context. However, we know that the Lord is our refuge who will protect His church until His return on the clouds.

We are thankful for our mutual support as churches in the call to be faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ as Head of the Church, and to submit to His Word as summarized in the confessions. May God grant you, as Synod delegates, wisdom as you meet and make decisions for the benefit of the churches in Canada and North America.

Rev. Axel Hagg with Rev. Stephen ’tHart



APPENDIX 12 – Free Reformed Churches in South Africa (FRCSA) - Address by Rev. Pieter Boon

Dear brothers:

On behalf of your sister on the southern shores of Africa, I may greet you in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who reigns from north to south, from east to west. What a privilege it is for me to be here with you, and although we live our everyday lives on very different continents, to enjoy the unity in faith. And what a privilege to enjoy the hospitality of the members of this congregation in Guelph. Thank you so much!

I am here not only for the sake of representing the FRCSA, but also to learn from you. Many matters on the agenda are as relevant and debated in South Africa as they are in Canada. May we edify one another in seeking what is most pleasing in these matters to our eternal God and Saviour.

The Free Reformed Churches in South Africa have a history very similar to yours. The first church was instituted in the same year as yours, in 1950. In 2020, we celebrated our 70th anniversary with thanksgiving to the LORD. Our federation looks totally different, compared to 70 years ago. In a country full of social divisions, we may illustrate that unity in Christ is possible. This is a miracle we receive from Him! Despite differences in language, culture, wealth, and the like, the unity in Christ may continue.

As for our relationship with the Canadian Reformed Churches, for many years we knew about one another, although mutual contacts were limited; however, the last years things have changed for the better. The last decade the Free Reformed Churches have been looking for new opportunities to train their students. For many years we had a close relationship with the Theological University in Kampen, Netherlands. As churches, we owe so much to Kampen and we thank God for that; however, as you know, things have changed because of liberal tendencies. We had no choice than to find new training opportunities. We experienced God's providential guidance in the fact that a Memorandum of Cooperation could be signed with CRTS in 2016. Since then, the contacts have intensified year after year. Currently, one of our students is studying at CRTS, although it is on-line due to COVID-19 and visa issues. At the beginning of this year, another student returned to South Africa after having followed a dedicated program for half a year in Hamilton. God willing, in September of this year, three more students will start in Hamilton. May the Lord make CRTS a blessing for our churches and for South Africa in the future. Of course, these developments also pose challenges, as you can read in the supplement report sent by the CRTS Board of Governors. We pray that the Lord will guide us to a solution in this regard. Brothers, we are deeply thankful for the cooperation in theological training, for the financial assistance in this regard, be even more for the sound Reformed theology.

Since your previous Synod in 2019, the Lord has been gracious to our churches. Just to clarify, we are used to speaking about "our" churches, but I hope that you do not misunderstand me. It is an easy way to speak, but let it be clear that these churches belong only to our Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the church, who is the sole One gathering His flock also in South Africa; but what I wanted to say is that the churches in South Africa have been blessed indeed. Since your previous Synod, a mission church was instituted, the now self-governing church of Wesbank near Cape Town. At this moment, two other mission churches have come close to institution, two churches

in the city of Soshanguve near Pretoria. One of them has already requested classis for a special visitation in view of installing the offices.

Indeed, South Africa remains a mission field. The fields are ready to be harvested. In this respect, the African continent is perhaps compared to Western countries to enjoy the fruits of the Gospel still lingering on in their culture, yet Africa is still finding its feet after ages and ages of paganism. I have been a missionary for many years, and perhaps the most important thing I have learned during those years, is to be attentive to where the LORD opens doors. If a door remains closed, you can go on knocking endlessly, but when the LORD opens a door, we should not miss the opportunity. I can tell you, full of amazement, that the Lord is still opening doors; yes, many doors to the Gospel in South Africa. Too many for us. Therefore, I want to plead with you to become involved in ‘our’ mission work. Again, of course, not ‘ours’, but the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Free Reformed Churches have a long tradition of mission work. The last seven decades we have cooperated closely with our sister churches in the Netherlands; however, due to reasons not unknown to you, this cooperation is being scaled down. Brothers, we need new partners in the mission. We call on local churches to seriously consider our request. We pray that the Lord will grant us new partners. We know there are obstacles, like secular governments making it more and more difficult to support religious activities abroad; however, let us ask God to remove these obstacles or find a way around them.

Our last Synod Belhar 2021 has decided to not yet terminate our sister-church relationship with the Reformed Churches Liberated in the Netherlands. This does not mean that we have sympathy with a more liberal or subjective view of the authority of God’s Word. We decided to await any last possible appeals by local congregations to their synod’s fundamental decision on “women in office”, but appears that the course is already set. Our synod has also decided, would the planned amalgamation with the Netherlands Reformed Churches continue in 2023, that this will automatically end our sister-church relationship with the RCNL (=GKv).

As is the case here in North America, we are also involved in deliberations with other federations locally. Regarding the Reformed Churches in South Africa (the so-called Dopperchurches), there is rapprochement between local congregations, for which we are thankful. Unfortunately, a federation-wide cooperation seems unlikely, since a number of RCSA congregations have taken the liberal route; however, the cooperation with local churches staying faithful to God’s Word, is very dear to us.

Since 2020, COVID-19 has also wreaked havoc in South Africa. Our churches were not spared, although those who passed away because of the pandemic were rather few. Nevertheless, worship services and church life in general were affected. Also, in our churches there were debates about COVID restrictions imposed by the government, yet by God’s grace, these discussions did not lead to lasting divisions. We thank the Lord for present-day technology. Internet applications such as Zoom, WhatsApp and the like became part and parcel of church life, and they are there to stay. We have indeed entered a new normal, although what is so beautiful is to see that the basics of Reformed doctrine and worship still stay the same and continue to thrive also in this new normal. Christ is an eternal King who will never be without subjects (BC Art. 27).

Everyday life in Africa is not always easy. We are called to be Christ’s church in a society crippled by poverty, criminality, corruption and self-centred politicians. These realities cause many South Africans to leave the country to build up a life elsewhere. Probably every one of you

will know a South African who has settled down somewhere in Canada, as is the case in many other countries. We talk about a brain-drain, and this is also affecting our churches. What the future will bring for our country, we don't know. We do know that it is in God's hands. We love our country and pray that the Lord's mercies will continue to be with us. As we see the devastations of a senseless war in Ukraine at this very moment, we even more thank the Lord that He has averted such a war in our country. We also know, as Jesus said, not to be afraid of those who can kill the body (Matthew 10:28). Although we realize that other countries like Canada may offer a safer and wealthier life, nevertheless as you know so well, the spiritual battle is not less intense here. More and more the very foundations of Western civilization are about to be tested, in fact being shaken already. Our prayer is that you, as churches, may continue to hold unto the LORD and His Word as these secular storms rage all around you. May you, as churches, continue to focus on your Head and Husband, our exalted Lord, not being distracted to please the world, but to please Him in everything.

May the LORD bless your synod and make it a blessing to the churches. To Him be the glory now and forevermore. Stay safe and joyful in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

PG Boon

May 2022



APPENDIX 13 – Reformed Churches of New Zealand (RCNZ) – Address by Rev. David Stares

Tena koutou, tena koutou, tena koutou katoa. Greetings, greetings, greetings to you all.

Thank you for the opportunity to address your assembly.

I bring you greetings from your sister churches, and your brothers and sisters in Christ in the Reformed Churches of New Zealand. As brother Karlo mentioned, my name is David Stares, and I am the pastor of the Reformed Church of Masterton. Although I have been in New Zealand for several years, I was born and raised in St. Catharine's, and spent most of my youth at Trinity URC. I hope you won't hold that against me.

In fact, I remember fondly that we would regularly have professors from the CanRef seminary in Hamilton, and I have burned into my memory the time that the booming voice of Dr. Visscher blew out our church sound system.

More recently, I wanted to pass along that in the past few weeks, I had members of my congregation visiting Southern Ontario and heard preaching from Dr. VanVliet, which they said was 'brilliant.' Reports like this are encouraging, and not surprising. I would like to thank the Rev. Arend Witten and Brother Henry Schouten for their virtual attendance of our Synod.

Now, I recognize that many of you won't be directly familiar with the RCNZ. We are not a large denomination, 21 churches and a couple of church plants in a nation of 5 million. And while this proportion is quite good as Reformed denominations go, the work of spreading the gospel is never finished, and there are unreached regions which we are always keen to seek out.

We subscribe to the Three Forms of Unity and the Westminster Confession of Faith. And often our churches are very diverse when it comes to church background. As you well know, in Ontario and across Canada there are often Reformed churches and confessional churches to suit preference and upbringing. Here in New Zealand, we are the only reformed denomination, and I believe the largest strictly confessional denomination. This means that though our membership may come from different Reformed backgrounds, and from other denominations which may be slowly losing their way without the aid of clear confessions, in all this we need to learn to get along with one another, and in large part we thank God that he has allowed us to do that since our founding in 1953.

Many of the challenges that we face have arisen because of the world situation with COVID-19. For example, beginning in August of last year, and extending until April this year (over 6 months) we were limited to how many could gather at once. In order to submit to these limits, many churches had to divide into smaller groups. Our church took to gathering in groups of 50 and groups of 25 in several homes at the same time. Many enjoyed this and found it a unique opportunity for communing. Other churches added additional services or found other options that suited their contexts. It was different, but all in all God's work wasn't thwarted and he blessed these unusual circumstances.

We also wrestled with the use of vaccine passes in relation to worship, and are thankful that this discussion is now past us. In all this we believe God was working, sanctifying us teaching us to love one another even when we disagree, and while this was not always easy, I continue to be thankful for the ways that the fruit of the Spirit was shown in God's people.

These restrictions also meant that our synod had to be conducted online, something which we might have thought was impossible, and while it was certainly less-than-ideal, it turned out to be an acceptable alternative.

One of the greatest challenges has been for our vacant congregations (of which we have had around 5 or so). The limitation of travel has meant that calling a man from overseas has been impossible. It has also put a damper on men training at the Reformed Theological College in Australia. We are thankful that their studies can resume as normal, and are thankful that there are a number of men currently in training.

Of course, the direction of our nation also presents us with challenges. The advance of abortion and euthanasia rights also lay on us the burden of presenting hope to the hopeless wherever we can. The continuing application of LGBTQ ideology in many areas of life presents the need to be ready to train our parents and talk to our young people about uncomfortable topics. The government's ban on conversion therapy, which in name only seems unobjectionable, includes even prayer for same sex attracted or transgender people could be considered conversion therapy, with a possible punishment of 3 years in prison. It remains to be seen whether this is simply a threat or whether it will be used.

Sadly, at our most recent synod, we had to finally cut ties with the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands over the ordination of women office-bearers, something which I understand you brothers have done as well.

We know that you brothers face similar challenges to us, and we are thankful to have sister churches on the other side of the globe who are continuing to contend for the faith, we are also thankful for our shared labour in Papua New Guinea.

At this time, we do have a number of men retiring from the ministry, we would be thankful if your Emeritus ministers would keep us in mind. Should they ever want an extended vacation, our vacant congregations will always welcome a stretch of consistent preaching.

Related to the issue of emeritus ministers, I note page 65 of your CRCA report states, "the material support for emeritus ministers is beyond the jurisdiction of a general synod," and I have no desire to call that into question, simply to broach the topic which we both see as a concern. This issue was also mentioned by Rev. Witten to our Synod, and has been mentioned from our end is how the emeritus provisions make it difficult for our churches to call one another's ministers without the minister losing their retirement. Perhaps this warrants further conversation.

We desire that our relationship would continue to grow, and our hope would certainly be to connect with your delegates at the ICRC at the end of this year, should they attend. We would also love to see Canadian Reformed delegates at our synod in 2024. In any case, we will continue to pray for you, and we ask that you do the same for us as we strive for the cause of the Great Commission.

In times such as these, the abiding reminder we all need is that the bond of the church is not sameness, uniformity, or sharing the same opinion on everything, it is love. Colossians 3:12-15, *"as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful."*

It is our prayer in the RCNZ that your synod would reflect this love, that your churches would reflect this love, and that our relationship as churches would maintain this love for many years to come.

Nga mihi nui, thank you very much.

APPENDIX 14 – Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (ARPC) – Address by Rev. Jeff Kingswood

Transcript from Rev Jeff Kingswood (ARPC in Woodstock) who spoke extemporaneously on the evening of May 12, 2022

Brothers, it's a privilege to be here to become acquainted with you and renew acquaintances with some of you. It's a pleasure to observe your Synod and to take part in some of the committee meetings and learn more about our brothers in the Canadian Reformed Church.

The ARPC is celebrating, observing, (I really like to think about ecclesiastical convocations), our 208th General Synod this year. We missed a few during the World Wars and the Spanish flu period, so the synod number doesn't quite tally how old we are, but 208. And so, each Synod has a theme that the moderator sets. The moderator this year has chosen Philippians 3:14, "*I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus*". (Repeat) "*I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus*". I think he was afraid, in 208 years, that we might be getting tired in our synods, and so he was urging us to keep pressing on.

We're thankful for the work of reformation in the ARPC. We are one of the few denominations, I think historically, that drifted into liberalism, and by God's grace, saw that drift halted and reversed. In the 70's, we were flirting with new orthodoxy and issues of women's ordination and there was an element in the church by men who graduated from Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson who said, "No. This is wrong" and began to work for reformation in the denomination, starting with the seminary. Working to see men dismissed, replaced, working through the courts of the church, to affect Reformation and that, while not as quick as some of us would like, is an ongoing process, and this year our Synod is addressing a number of issues that are a continuation of that Reformation; we are restructuring. Some of you may be familiar with the debate between Thornwell and Hodge, in the 19th century about committees and boards and how those affect church structures. We're restructuring. We're looking at that and saying, yes, having some of these standing boards as opposed to committees of the church has been a detriment to the work of reformation, and so we are eliminating some of these boards and replacing them with synodical committees. So, many of us, most of us, believe that's a step in the right direction.

Another thing we are doing is that in our history at some point, we allowed for the ordination of women deacons. Deacons don't have a ruling function in ARPC, they only have a service function. They don't sit on the consistory as they do in the Dutch church order. They don't have a vote on issues of governments, however, it's still an issue of contention and so this year, we have received a first draft of a report that would reverse that issue in our polity and disallow women to function as deacons. It goes back to Scotland and the office of the deaconess and you

can look at that historically and look at it as a ministry of mercy but we understand the issues of biblical interpretation there and wish to be consistent and so there's a move in that direction that hopefully will be finalized next synod. It's a two-year process to change those sorts of things in our church order. We have synods annually.

The other thing that we're working on as a synod which may seem self evident to you but in a Southern American context, it's quite challenging. That is the role of secret societies, specifically Freemasonry and its compatibility or incompatibility with a Christian confession. In the Southern churches, Freemasonry is fairly common, especially in some of the smaller communities and so this issue has been raised and again, the denomination has said no. Membership in any secret society, but especially with the Freemasons, is inconsistent with a Christian profession, and needs to be dealt with, either by discipline or education or whatever it requires. And so that's another step we're taking in our move toward reformation, increasing reformation and pressing on to the goal.

We covet your prayers in those things. There's going to be a little bit of pushback on some of them but the vast majority of the denomination is excited to be moving in this direction and we're thankful. And we're thankful for the fellowship of our sister churches in NAPARC, that are an encouragement to us in these matters and we're able to point to some of your synodical decisions or deliberations and say, "Look at this. Here are things we can be learning from and directed by."

It's been a pleasure to be here today. We have enjoyed your fellowship and thank you for your time and we will be praying for blessings on the remainder of your deliberations here.

Thank you.



APPENDIX 15 – Calvinist Reformed Churches in Indonesia (GGRCI) – Address by Rev. Yonson Dethan

Esteemed Brothers:

It is a great joy for me to address you at this Synod on behalf of the Calvinist Reformed Churches in Indonesia (GGRC). Through this golden opportunity, on behalf of our federation, I would like to glorify our Triune God for His love and protection, that I may be here in your midst, even if it is through an online connection.

Secondly, I would like to pass on Christian greetings from all the brothers and sisters in our federation (GGRC), the Calvinist Reformed Churches in Indonesia.

Thirdly, we would like to thank you all for our relationship as sister churches. We thank the Lord that a few years ago, in the month of August, you sent Rev. Dr. Karlo Janssen, who on behalf of your CRCA, came to visit and met our deputies, as well as our leaders, both in Rote and Timor Islands, as well as attended both of our Classis in Rote Island and our Classis of Kupang and Sabu.

Not only that, you also sent Rev. Dr. A.J. Pol and Br. Otto Bouwman to come to attend our recent Synod in Rote Island in which we had such a great time together as brothers in the Lord. Dr. Pol not only attended our Synod, but he also gave some teaching to all of our leaders that came to our recent Synod in Rote.

We all were so happy to see him at our recent Synod and enjoyed our fellowship together. The feeling and the spirit of togetherness were so great since most of the pastors at our federation were the former theological students of Dr. Pol, while some of the elders remembered that he was often giving seminars to our church leaders when he was still a missionary in Indonesia.

Soon, in this coming month of August, on the 29-30th, 2022, we hope to hold our Synod where our local church, Ebenhaezer Church, will be the calling church for our Synod. Through this golden opportunity, we would like to invite you to please send your delegates to come to our Synod in Noelbaki Kupang. We would be so happy to have your delegates with us. We did send our letter of invitation to your deputies of CRCA.

Indonesia is the largest Muslim country in the world, with 282 million people. There are less than twenty thousand Reformed people who hold the Three Forms of Unity as their church confessions. Even though we are so small, we still like to reach out to our country as much as possible. We believe that nothing is impossible with God. We hope that through our sister-church relationship, we can continue to work together and have cooperation together for God's Kingdom.

As a Reformed federation, we are still keeping busy without reach work in the mission field, preach the Word of God in worship services both on Sunday as well as on other days of the week. We also are still preaching the Heidelberg Catechism to our church members. As living and active churches, our local churches love to keep doing the mission work in our country. Now besides doing mission work on the island of Timor, Sabu and Rote, we are also doing some mission our reach on the island of Java, Madura and Celebes.

The island of Java has a very high Muslim population. Java Island is known as the largest Muslim populated island in the world. There are close to 150 million people living on this island. Ninety percent of the population are Muslim. Thank the Lord that since the year 2022, our

federation was able to reach a new mission church on this island in Madura, East Java. Madura is known as an isolated island. Ninety-nine percent of the population are Muslims, both moderate, as well as radical ones. Recently we heard that even between their Muslim groups, there was fighting and killing of each other. There are two groups of Muslims that seem to fight each other. One called Sunni, while the other is called Shia. Thank the Lord that were able to have some connection with some of the highest leaders there, and that we could show the love of our Lord Jesus Christ. As far as we know, there were some missionaries that have had bad experiences while trying to reach out to the Maduris. Some of them got persecuted badly, some of them were sent to jail and some of them were kicked out of the country and were even deported by immigration. Please pray for the Maduris and please pray for our work there as well. Not only to the Maduris, we are also trying to reach out to the people in Middle Celebes where there are so many radical Muslims. You can easily open the website and you can easily read the struggles and tensions and fighting that are going on there in Middle Celebes.

We do not have a lot of funds. Our federation is poor economically but that does not become a stumbling block for us to keep reaching out. Since the year 2014, we have been able to visit and do some training and preaching in Banggai Island. Last year we were able to reach out to the people in Palu and Kulawi of idle Celebes (where recently six people were burned alive), as well as in Manado, North Celebes.

Our federation is far smaller compared to yours, but we don't see the size, we realize that the task of mission outreach is a very important calling of each of our local churches. We thank God for giving us the spirit and eagerness to keep reaching out to Muslims and other unbelievers in Indonesia.

It is our prayer that the Lord, our Covenant-keeping God, bless you and grant you His strength and wisdom, so that you may have a productive Synod for the upbuilding of God's Kingdom. May He also bless our relationship and use it for His name's sake. To Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Thank you for your wonderful welcome and hospitality. Thank you and be assured that we will continue to pray for you. May God richly bless you and the churches you serve. May He grant you all wisdom and strength in this pivotal and esteemed Synod.

May the Triune God bless you and keep you as churches, and may He keep us united in a sound church relationship to the glory of His name.

Let me close this speech with a Psalm in Indonesian. Psalm 1.

BAHAGIALAH YANG DI JALANNYA
TAK IKUT ORANG FASIK DUNIA
TIDAK BERDIRI BERTEMAN PENDOSA
DAN TIDAK DUDUK DI TENGAH PENGOLOK
TETAPI SIANG MALAM PUN GEMAR
KAN TAURAT TUHAN YANG KEKAL BENAR

Humbly submitted,

Pastor Y.G. Dethan

On behalf of the Deputy for Relations with Churches Abroad of
Calvinist Reformed Churches in Indonesia (GGRCI).

APPENDIX 16 – Heritage Reformed Church in North America (HRCNA) – Address by Rev. Pieter van der Hoek

Norwich, May 7, 2022

Dear fathers and brothers of the Canadian Reformed Synod:

I bring you greetings in the matchless name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and on behalf of the Heritage Reformed churches of North America. For those who are not so familiar with our denomination we are a fairly young denomination, established in 1993, and just like you, we hold to the Three forms of unity. Since last year we have 10 churches in both the United States and Canada and have a total of a little over 2000 members.

When we compare that with your 70 congregations and your little over 19,000 members, and your history since 1950, you will quickly realize that we are small and young and that you are bigger and older than us. As we all know, comparisons in the kingdom of God are not so helpful, although we all realize there are differences in denominations, with different denominational histories.

Still, comparisons and differences can only tell us so much. One day, when Jesus Christ returns on the clouds of heaven, all those differences will fall away altogether, and how glorious it will be when there are many from the Canadian Reformed churches, and many from our comparatively small denomination who are included in the 144,000, that complete number of those who are sealed to forever glorify the Lord Jesus, the One and only King of the Church. There will be one spotless bride, and she will come from all different churches from all over the world! And there is only one Lord Jesus, in which we find our unity, while we realize here how we have our differences.

I had to smile a little, because just before I wrote this fraternal address, in preparation for my visit to your Synod, I providentially happened to work on the correspondence of pre-marital counseling sessions. And guess what? She is a member from the Canadian Reformed churches and he is a member in our federation. That tells me that among our young people there is a recognition of that fundamental unity that we have in the Lord Jesus Christ. And I think there have been more couples in the past with a similar denominational diversity. We regularly rub shoulders with our Canadian Reformed brothers and sisters thru various avenues. One of the most notable is probably ARPA. But that is certainly not where it ends. I know that there are also ties between our seminaries and seminary presidents in various ways. One connection I have benefitted from is your website www.heidelberg-catechism.com, on which I also gained access to sermons from our Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary president, Dr. Joel Beeke. And I think I could multiply examples where we as churches connect, and we are thankful for that.

We are thankful for the work the Canadian Reformed churches do in the Kingdom of God. We are thankful for your dedication to the Scriptures. We realize that this even meant for you, to break ties with your mother denomination in the Netherland in 2017. What a painful step that was for your federation, but we as Heritage Reformed churches are thankful for your firmness not to give way to a cultural hermeneutic. What unites us is Christ, and what unites us is faithfulness to the Scriptures.

And yet we realize that we, as two different denominations, have our differences. Let's say we speak the same language with different accents...I think the most important difference is-what we

would call our emphasis on experiential preaching, while (correct me if I am wrong) your preaching would be more characterized by a covenantal and objective focus. While we also fully affirm our God to be the One and Only covenant-keeping Lord and find our comfort in the expressions of God's covenant faithfulness as a covenant community. Our experiential emphasis also stresses the biblical fact that not all those who are outwardly in the covenant are assumed to be God's children. In our preaching we stress the vital importance of knowing that one has been born again and knowing that even children born in the covenant need to be born again. We firmly believe that our knowledge of God must deeply transform and influence our actions and that God's grace must be experienced in the heart of the believer. In our preaching we aim for a deeply transformative heart connection to God. In 2018, Dr. Beeke published his book *Experiential Preaching Proclaiming God's Word from the Heart of the Preacher to the Heart of His People* with Crossway to make Christians more aware of this biblical emphasis from both our seminary and in our denomination.

We are thankful for your invitation to your Synod. Since we are so small, we only have a yearly Synod. This year it will be held from June 6-8 in Grand Rapids, Michigan, Lord willing. During this Synod the Church Correspondence Committee is proposing a new system for our ecclesiastical fellowship/correspondence, to align it with our sister denomination of the Free Reformed churches of North America (not Australia, as I trust you are aware of the difference). Our existing system had 5 levels, and our new system will have 4 levels. Basically, this means that the first two levels have been collapsed into one new level. If this system is going to be approved, as well as the proposed levels of correspondence, it will mean that instead of our level 2, our relationship with the Canadian Reformed church would be classified as level A.

Let me quote to you what this means practically:

A. Formal Correspondence (Level One) includes:

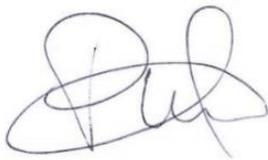
1. This level begins with formal approval by the Synod that the committee continue its informal work with the denomination/congregation;
2. It includes periodically inviting those at this level to attend and address our broadest assembly and anticipate them to do the same;
3. Copies of the official minutes, without confidential material, are sent to the other denomination/congregation's representatives with the understanding they in turn send us their minutes as well;
4. Cooperation is encouraged in areas such as: para-church mission and world relief organizations, and Christian education;
5. Representatives from each other's interchurch relations committees or other delegates meet to seek confirmation of the unreserved commitment to, and agreement with:
 - (1) the infallibility and inerrancy of Scriptures as the Word of God and
 - (2) the validity and relevance of our Confessions.
 - a. develop an appreciation of each other's history;
 - b. discuss what we have in common, and where we differ;
 - c. gauge the degree of doctrinal and spiritual affinity.

Let me be clear, if this is going to be approved, the name of the level has changed, but our relationship has not. We still look forward to strengthen our ties with the Canadian Reformed churches, and to work together where we can.

Again, we are thankful for your invitation to our Synod, and wish and pray that each of the delegates of your Synod would be blessed with God's Wisdom and Spirit to make the important decisions that need to be made for the remaining time that the Synod will last.

Let me conclude with these Words from Scripture. 1 Cor 15:58 *"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."*

With Christian greetings, on behalf of the Church Correspondence committee of the Heritage Reformed Congregations,



Pastor Pieter van der Hoek



APPENDIX 17 – Address to GS 2022 by Dr. Reuben Bredenhof

Dear Brothers of Synod Guelph:

Mr. Chairman, brothers and sisters, good evening and good morning. It is from a very long distance that I greet you, here on the far side—and the underside—of the world. Yet it is a joy to stand together with you in Christ, who is Lord over all, and who faithfully gathers his church from so many places. In the blessing of our unity in him, I am thankful for the opportunity today to respond to Synod’s decision to appoint me as Professor of Ministry & Mission. You will appreciate that this position and all that it entails is something that my wife Rebecca and I have been living with in our thoughts for some time now. And now that it has finally become official, we are most grateful, if not a little daunted. We are grateful to God for Synod’s decision last week Tuesday, and prior to that, grateful for the Board’s recommendation. It is most humbling to receive this expression of trust from your side, humbling to be granted the beautiful opportunity and privilege to train young men who are getting ready for a life of ministry and mission at CRTS.

I am thankful to accept this appointment and I eagerly look forward to beginning the task. We are so grateful too, that we could travel through this process over the last year or more with the confidence that God was directing it for the honour of his name, and for the benefit of his people. Not to us, but to God be all the glory because of his love and faithfulness! Today I get to address you, the body who by its decision has opened quite a new future path for me, and my wife and children. So, I would like to look back for a moment or two on how God has led us here. One critical piece of this has been the further studies which have occupied me through a large portion of these past years.

When I started the ministry back in 2004, I was keen to keep studying, and God gave both the opportunity and the ability. While ministering to the saints of St. Albert (Alberta) for five years, I slowly plugged away at a Master of Theology degree. My focus was in the area of New Testament. And in God’s wise providence, my final thesis was on Paul’s model of pastoral ministry in 2 Corinthians, a topic that I have returned to a few times in the past years. After moving on to serve in London, Ontario, I continued with a PhD at St Mary’s University, in the ‘other’ London. Another five years of reading, researching, and writing culminated in a thesis on the Parable of Lazarus and the Rich Man. You will observe—and you will of course already know—that my first area of study has been New Testament. Now I am being called up onto teach in the department of ministry and mission. I am slightly daunted by this task, I said, daunted, but also hopeful. I am hopeful, because in his goodness, God has been equipping me by experience to teach some of the practical subjects of pastoral ministry. Maybe it’s worth pointing out that just nineteen years ago, I did a summer internship with Rev John vanWoudenberg in the very church now convening this synod, the congregation of Guelph-Emmanuel. Back then I was a young man with a few basic skills and so much to learn about ministry. Now I am a middle-aged man with skills that are slightly more refined, and with still so much to learn.

For quite apart from my years of experience here in Australia and in Canada, I am mindful of how wide and broad is the department of theology that I am being asked to teach. It is sobering to again be a novice, in some sense. I will be finding my way, asking a lot of questions, collecting book recommendations from many. But surely that is always the nature of being a theologian, or a pastor, or a child of God: opening the Scriptures and realizing that you stand at

the edge of something incredibly vast, more than you can know—the unsearchable riches of Christ, the measureless love of God, and the works of the LORD which are past all telling. I am very grateful to God for how the work of ministry has always brought me great joy.

So, in coming years, I look forward to sharing lessons about these labours with young men who are getting ready for the work of ministry and the task of mission. Thinking about my weaknesses and the gaps in my knowledge, I have been encouraged by the prayer in Hebrews 13:21. It's the prayer that God would "equip[us]with everything good for doing his will, working in[us]that which is pleasing in his sight." With that promise and encouragement, I will strive to look to God to equip me and supply me with all that is needed. On this occasion, I'd also like to express my gratitude to a few very important people in my life. First of all, many thanks to my dear wife Rebecca. She has been my loving and thoughtful and energetic and cheerful and wise companion for many years. She has been a great gift from God in my life, and such a blessing to my ministry. I am also most appreciative of the warm support that our parents have always given to us. Dad and Mom Bredenhof, Dad and Mom Hekert—they have always been such good examples of devoted service in the church: they are hard-working, generous, and kind. Their words and their deeds have put an enduring stamp on me and Rebecca, and on our girls. Being appointed means that my congregation in Mount Nasura will lose their pastor at some point. I know that they will greet this occasion with sadness, because God has really blessed our relationship over this past seven years. But I know that they will also meet this occasion with prayer and gratitude, and with every best wish. Because that's the kind of congregation they are: supportive, encouraging, and also keen to see the work of the Lord progress, not only in their own city, but in Christ's kingdom throughout this world. It has been a great joy for our family to live and to serve among our brothers and sisters in Mount Nasura. Finally, I would like to gratefully acknowledge the work of Dr. Arjan de Visser, whose position I will be filling in the coming year. It has been so long since I attended CRTS that Dr. De Visser was only just starting his work when I was leaving as a seminary graduate, back in 2004! I never had the privilege of attending his lectures, but so many of my colleagues have spoken with a deep appreciation for his work and for his lasting impact on their ministries. I thank the Lord for my brother's wise and faithful contributions. In time to come, I look forward to many conversations with Dr. De Visser and to carrying on his excellent work in this department. Let me conclude by giving praise to God for his grace and mercy, who has given us his gospel, and who has entrusted weak men with the privilege of preaching this glorious gospel. In dependence on God, I do ask for your prayers as I prepare to begin this task.

Thank you, Rev Dr. Reuben Bredenhof



APPENDIX 18 – Address to GS 2022 by Dr. Jason VanVliet

Dear brothers delegated to General Synod, fraternal delegates, brothers and sisters in our Lord Jesus Christ, and also, of course, to you, Dr. Bredenhof,

Let me begin with reading a short passage of God’s Word that has been close to us at CRTS in the past couple of years. It is Philippians 1:3-5.

I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all, making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.

In these verses the apostle Paul speaks with godly enthusiasm about prayer, joyful thankfulness, and partnership in the gospel. Each one of these blessings is in focus this evening.

First of all, on behalf of our Board of Governors, our Senate, our staff, and our students, yes, on behalf of everyone at CRTS, congratulations, to you, Dr. Bredenhof, on your appointment as our upcoming Professor of Ministry and Mission! As this big, new chapter opens up in your life, we give joyful thankfulness to the LORD, along with you, with your wife, Rebecca, and with your family. Thinking of the words of the apostle Paul, we have been praying earnestly that the Lord would provide us with a new professor. This evening we may say, “we now *thank* our God... also as we *remember* you and your family and how our Lord has led you to this appointment and your decision to accept it.” You will have big shoes to fill, as Dr. De Visser has served our seminary both faithfully and capably. Yet we also trust that the Holy Spirit will equip you with all you need.

We are truly excited to have you join us in Hamilton. In this way we can *continue our partnership in the gospel*, only now in a different way. I say that intentionally: we *continue* in our partnership in the gospel because even though, right now, we are living on opposite sides of the globe, we are already partners in the gospel in so many ways. By God’s grace we share the same faith, the same conviction of serving Christ in the midst of his church, the same confidence in God’s inspired Word, the same confessions, and the same goal of having the gospel faithfully proclaimed both near and far. Soon you will make a move, the Lord willing, and join us in the building here in Hamilton, but at the same time, we *continue* working together for the same Saviour and the same church, proclaiming and teaching to proclaim the very same gospel.

At this point I would also like to say a special word to your wife Rebecca, and your children, and to your most immediate church family, the congregation of Mt. Nasura. Preparing to leave a congregation is hard. There is really no other to describe it. We know that Canada is not unfamiliar to you. But still, leaving Australia will be challenging. Your family has been there for about seven years. That is more than enough time to build up strong bonds. You have friends there. You have warm relationships of Christian love and fellowship. Also, the congregation of Mt. Nasura will find it difficult to see you go, even though they understand it is for a good reason. But perhaps we can look at it this way. Yes, in due time, you will say your farewells, but we can also focus on what *continues*: all of us are still partners in the gospel, in various roles, various ways, and various locations. In our experience, as a family, having moved back and forth across the country a couple of times, we know that the bonds you have made will still be a joyful blessing to you and your family for years to come. May the LORD give you everything you need as you make this transition.

I would also like to thank this General Synod, and by way of these delegates I would like to thank our federation of churches, the Canadian and American Reformed Churches, for your faithful *partnership* in the work of our seminary. I immediately include with this, the Free Reformed Churches of Australia who have been such faithful partners in the work of CRTS from the first day until now, as the apostle mentions. Your support, not only financial, but even more importantly your prayerful support is deeply appreciated. Likewise, this understanding and conviction that we are working on this *together* as churches and as seminary is such a reason for *joyful thanksgiving*. More broadly, in the world of seminaries today, such close cooperation between churches and seminaries is not necessarily common. From time to time, I speak with presidents or principals of other seminaries, and they often express deep appreciation for what it means to be a seminary *of the churches for the churches*, even if that is not the context in which they themselves are working.

Please be assured that regularly and frequently, in our classroom devotions and in our faculty devotions, we “*thank our God in all our remembrance of you, making our prayers with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.*”

Also, as someone recently remarked, one of the exciting things about a General Synod is that you can experience the catholicity of Christ’s church in such a concrete and visible way. Here at this Synod, you have heard fraternal addresses from like-minded and sister churches, some of them also sending students to CRTS. Yet, what delegates to Synod experience for a couple of weeks every three years, we at CRTS are privileged—and we also see it as a privilege—to experience week after week each year again. Through the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit, partnership in the gospel definitely has a global aspect to it. We thank our God always that we may serve, in some small way, his people throughout his world.

We have so much to be thankful for: a new professor, an ongoing partnership, and a glorious gospel that cannot be bound. In closing, let us return to Philippians 1, this time to verse 6. We go forward with the same confidence as the apostle Paul: *And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.*



APPENDIX 19 – Address to GS 2022 by Dr. Arjan deVisser

Beloved brothers (and sisters):

Let me first address the brothers around the table here, and in you I address the churches that have delegated you to this assembly: I would like to express my appreciation and thanks for your decision to have Dr. Reuben Bredenhof appointed as professor of Ministry & Mission. Various people have asked me whether I have mixed feelings at this time. My answer is: No, I feel great and I'm happy with this development. It is wonderful to know that the department of Ministry and Mission will be in a safe pair of hands.

To Dr. Reuben Bredenhof: congratulations, and as I indicated already to you in a personal email, I am thankful that you have accepted the appointment. You are well-qualified; your credentials are impressive. I pray that the Lord will bless you and your family in the coming year, during the time of transition. For you and your wife it will be something of a homecoming. For your children it will be different. May the Lord bless you all. I will do my best to help you get off to a good start as a professor of Ministry & Mission. I look forward to having conversations with you in the coming year, and I will share with you whatever material and advice might be helpful to you. 18 years ago, when I started at CRTS, my predecessor Dr. Jack deJong was no longer able to help me, although I did benefit a lot from reading his lecture notes. I hope that things will be different this time around.

Your most important source of support will be the Lord himself. I do not want to sound like I'm retiring already, but I do want to say here that the Lord has been very good to me during the 18 years that He has allowed me to serve at CRTS. He has surrounded me with his Fatherly care throughout these years. I have been able to do my work based on the promise that my shortcomings, mistakes and sins have been covered by the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ. And He blessed me with the presence and the wisdom of his Spirit. Among the most important gifts the Lord has given me through the years, are first of all my wife, second, my colleagues, and third the students. It would be impossible for me to explain how important my wife is in my functioning as a professor at the seminary. If you think I have been any good as a professor, you can go and thank my wife. The Lord has also been gracious in blessing us with harmonious relationships among the professors. Seminary professors are all a bit quirky as you know, but from day one (2004) till today we have always had good brotherly collegial fellowship. No real tensions. No jealousies. No big doctrinal disagreements (just small ones). It has been a blessing to work alongside these brothers at the seminary.

One of the blessings of my position is also that you get to work with some wonderful young men. As professor of Ministry and Mission you have a great responsibility as you are intimately involved with the formation of preachers of the gospel. Especially in the beginning years, I felt inadequate for the task, and sometimes I'm still wondering what am I doing here. At the same time, the Lord has been gracious and He has been pleased to use our efforts. It has been beautiful to see young men develop their gifts and come to the point that they are ready to enter the ministry. It is always a heartwarming experience for me to sit in a church pew on a Sunday morning and hear a young man preach the gospel and do it effectively.

Recently, at the end of the Spring semester, I spoke to the students and seminary community on 1 Cor. 15:58, and I want to give this as a concluding word to Dr. Reuben Bredenhof, and to all

you brothers here at Synod as well: *“Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labour is not in vain.”*

APPENDIX 20 – Speech by FRCA on Ecumenical Relations

Brother Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to address Synod regarding the Reports about Ecumenical Relationships.

In 1983, Synod Cloverdale dealt with the question of how to regulate relationships with other churches. This synod observed in Article 110 that the Free Reformed Churches of Australia were moving in the direction of formulating rules for temporary contact with churches that do not belong as yet as sister churches. Your synod of 1983 appears to have been concerned about this, as well as other developments, and recommended that one uniform set of rules be established for all the sister churches.

Further, Synod Cloverdale instructed their deputies “to urge the sister churches to maintain correspondence according to the adopted rules as the only form of permanent ecclesiastical relationship.” We listened to you and we agreed. That was forty years ago. Today, the ecclesiastical context in which we live has changed, and both you in Canada, and we in Australia, are revisiting the question of how to establish and maintain relationships with other churches, in accordance with our respective Church Orders.

What disappoints us, however, is that contrary to your (and our) Rules for Ecclesiastical Fellowship, your Committee for Relations with Churches Abroad, failed to advise us of the work they were doing in what is presented in the Majority and Minority Reports with the title “Ecumenical Relationships: Why and How.” We’ve received no letters of correspondence about this from your committee, and this report regarding Ecumenical Relations has taken us by surprise. Brother chairman, we remind you and Synod of your own Rules for Ecclesiastical Fellowship.

- Article 1.** “The churches shall assist each other in the maintenance, defence and promotion of the reformed faith in doctrine, church polity, discipline, and liturgy, and be watchful for deviations.”
- Article 3.** “The churches shall consult each other when entering into relations with third parties.”
- Article 6.** “When major changes or additions are being considered to the confessions, church government or liturgy, the churches shall be informed in order that as much consultation can take place as possible before a final decision is taken.”

For the past 64 years the Canadian Reformed and the Free Reformed Churches of Australia have assisted and consulted with one another as sister churches, and we have been blessed by this. We know that we are as loved by you as you are by us, and your Synod decisions have consistently demonstrated this with both words of gratitude and ensuring that we have ready access to your various committees and deputyships where we do things in common. Our relationship together is both strong and intimate. We therefore consider it to be out of character, and a mere oversight of your CRCA, that they failed to advise or consult with us regarding these proposed changes to ecumenical relationships, to the rules governing these relationships, and the accompanying proposal to change your church order. We recognise that circumstances surrounding the COVID-

19 pandemic, and the fact that we have not met in person in the inter-synodical period, may have been a factor in this. We will not hold this against you and we will be quick to forgive and to move on.

The reason we bring this to your attention is because of the implications that this matter has for us and the maintenance of our relationship with you. We cannot provide you with an exhaustive list of questions, concerns and suggestions that the Australian Deputies for Interchurch relations might have, but restricting ourselves to the Majority Report. Allow me to give you three examples:

1. **Rules for the Exercise of Ecumenical Relationships** or to use the “old language”, “Rules for Ecclesiastical Fellowship.” The Majority Report (as well as the Minority) recommends a complete overhaul of these rules, making use of the rules made by the OPC. These will be the new rules that you will also use to govern your relationship with us, the Free Reformed Churches of Australia. Brother Chairman, we need the time and the opportunity to carefully review these new rules. We struggle with the idea that Synod Guelph could unilaterally adopt these new rules without first consulting with us. We also note that to do that would be in contradiction to your own decision of Synod Cloverdale 1986, article 110.
2. **How Ecumenical Relationships are to be regulated.** As with us, your Church Order article 50 currently states that interchurch relations “shall be regulated by general synod.” The Majority Report recommends that the word “regulated” be dropped and that “Category Two” relationships be able to be formed at a local level. To quote from that report, “Such a relationship can be maintained at a federative level with another federation of churches or at a local level with another individual church. When such relations materialize locally, churches ought to give account to classis in accordance with classis protocols.” Our question to you is how we as Deputies for Interchurch Relations are to deal with this. Our rules, and your current rules, state that we are to consult and give account to one another regarding relations we enter with “third parties.” With whom, then, would we as Australian deputies, consult? The local Canadian or American Reformed Church that established a Category Two relationship? That church’s Classis? Brother Chairman, that will not work. The norm is that we work together at a synodical level. Changing your Church Order article 50, therefore, so that relations with other churches is no longer regulated by General Synod will leave us confused as to how to maintain our relationship with you.
3. **Questions surrounding Pulpit and Table Fellowship.** Or, to use the confessional language that we use in the FRCA: the administration of the Means of Grace. Synod Albany 2021 of the FRCA mandated us to monitor developments in the Canadian Reformed Churches that include receiving guests at the Lord’s Supper Table and whether or not only ministers of sister churches may be permitted to preach on CanRC pulpits. Both you and we recognise that these matters firmly fall within the scope of our present rules for Ecclesiastical Fellowship (although not as firmly in the proposed rules.) In our discussions with you, a question we might ask is how the proposals put forward in the Majority Report will affect your interpretation of article 61 in the CanRC Church Order.

Article 61 says, “The consistory shall admit to the Lord’s Supper only those who have made public profession of the Reformed faith and lead a godly life. Members of sister churches shall be admitted on the ground of a good attestation concerning their doctrine and conduct.”

Like you, the Free Reformed Churches accept that there are different ways to regulate admission to the Lord’s Supper. We know that some of our sister churches, such as those in Singapore, Korea and New Zealand regulate the admission to the Lord’s Table differently to us, however, with respect to the Canadian Reformed Churches, we assume that you are committed to regulating admittance to the Lord’s Table in accordance with your own Church Order. Further, Synod Burlington-Waterdown, 1986 recorded in article 132,

“The practice in the Canadian Reformed Churches with respect to the admission to the Lord’s Supper is clearly regulated in Article 61 of the Church Order.” and, “Although guests are not specifically mentioned in Article 61, Church Order, [this] . . . cannot mean that Article 61, C.O., has no bearing on the admission of guests to the Lord’s Supper. Synod considers that Article 61, C.O., is the rule which governs the admission of all those who seek to partake in the Lord’s Supper.”

Brother chairman, these are the words of your own Synod, and to the best of our knowledge, these words have not been reviewed or rescinded. In Australia, we see and observe that some Canadian Reformed Churches appear to ignoring not just the letter but also the spirit of the church order. We refer, for example to the public Tyrannus Hall Podcast released in January 2022 in which three of your ministers have a discussion which promotes the Lord’s table being opened to those who do not confess the Reformed faith. We will be interested to see how your assemblies will deal with this and similar matters when it comes to your attention. Our question to you at this time, however, is how you expect article 61 of your church order to function in the context of what is proposed in the Majority Report. The “Summary Overview” of the Majority Report states that “some conditions/restrictions” will apply to so-called Table Fellowship as well as Pulpit Fellowship, but we wonder what that might mean. Will Article 61 of your Church Order need to be revised also, and if so, what can we expect?

Brother Chairman, may I stress by way of conclusion that we do not mean to question the orthodoxy or the integrity of the CRCA or the CCNA. I personally know many of the committee members. They are my friends and co-workers in the gospel. I trust them and remain convinced that we are united, that we are all trying to row in the same direction. We also recognise the need that led to this review regarding ecumenical relationships. Independently of you, we in Australia have also begun a review of how our church relationships are to be maintained. We also recognise both the complexities and also the opportunities and the blessings that come with having so many confessionally Reformed and Presbyterian churches with whom you may have contact and fellowship in North America—a circumstance that is very different to our experience in Australia. We commend you and your synodical committees for wrestling with these things in an effort to find the best way forward that is true to Scripture. We will pray for a good outcome on these deliberations, for the glory of God and the unity and the well-being of his Church.

Thank you.

APPENDIX 21 – Speech by FRCSA on Ecumenical Relations

Thank you for giving the floor to us, finding it important to consulting with your sister churches on this matter.

I sense that this a delicate matter in the CanRC and at this synod. I also notice that different people are taking different positions in this matter. I also notice that there are some tensions in the Canadian churches in this regard, with perhaps one or more local churches trying to push boundaries. It is not my intention to take sides, or to express my opinion whether this process should go slower or not. I only want to give feedback how we deal with this matter in South Africa. I plead that you will strive to reach a responsible middle ground together on this matter.

Now in the first place, pulpit exchange is a fruit of Ecclesiastical Fellowship (EF). F.e. last Sunday I preached in a Canadian Reformed congregation where I have never been before. They didn't know me, I didn't know them. Nevertheless, I was received with full trust and offered the pulpit. This clearly is a fruit of EF.

As federations we have agreed upon rules regarding EF. However, rules and agreements on paper have to be applied in practice. Reality is often more complicated, or if you may, not black-white but grey. For example, with consent of my consistory, I preached recently in Holland in the GKN, although we don't have an official EF. Our synod though has expressed the wish to grow closer to each other, and mandated our deputies to continue discussions with them. Pulpit exchange can be a step in that direction. Another example: although we have EF with the Reformed Churches (liberated) in the Netherlands, nevertheless our synod has decided to curtail some of the rules for EF. There is EF, but not fully anymore. This is typically a grey area, where at the moment reality is complicated and we decided to adapt to that. I remember you as CanRC have done the same with the RCNL some years ago.

An example in this regard. We had a minister who served a congregation in South Africa. He moved to the Netherlands in 2004 and became a minister in the Reformed Churches (liberated). About 10 years later he seceded from these churches and became a minister in the GKN. A couple of years ago he visited South Africa again. After a conversation with him, we as consistory allowed him to our pulpit to preach. His doctrines did not change since the time he served our churches in South Africa. Our synod has expressed the wish to grow closer to the GKN in future, although at present we do not have an EF yet. However, when we would apply the rules of EF rigorously, he should not have been allowed access to the pulpit. To be honest, in that case – that is my conviction – we would have become slaves to the letter of the rule. In that case we would have given him the cold shoulder, and that after a traumatic time, because as a pastor to secede from one federation and seek admission in another federation, is a traumatic time to go through. Following the letter of the rules for EF, would mean to giving him the cold shoulder, which is not brotherly – that is my conviction. We acted according to the spirit of the rules. This example illustrates that pulpit exchange is not only a fruit of EF, but can in certain cases also function as a step towards full EF.

I am convinced that this was in line with the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ, when he said to the Pharisees in Matthew 12: "... the Pharisees ... said to him, "Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath." He said to them, "Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, and those who were with him: how he entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him to eat nor for those who were with him,

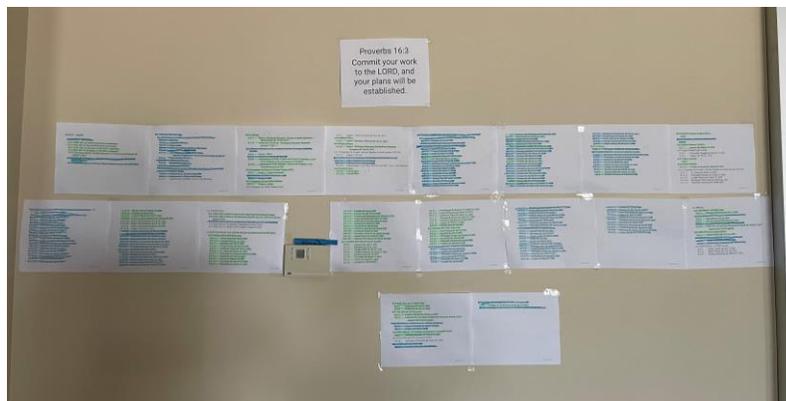
but only for the priests? ... if you had known what this means, ‘I desire mercy, and not sacrifice, you would not have condemned’ (Matt 12:2-8)

We do not only need rules, we also need wisdom to apply the rules to often complex realities. Leaving the main burden of applying these rules on the shoulders of the local consistory, is proper according to Reformed polity, of course as much as possible in line with federational agreements. This is the conclusion we came to during a conference we held in 2019, a conference dealing with “The essentials of a Church Federation.” During this conference we were assisted a lot by CRTS professor for church polity, Dr. Ted Van Raalte.

One more thing I would like to mention, and that is that mistakes sometimes happen. There should be willingness to talk about it, for example, on broader assemblies, by all sides, in a loving way. There should be willingness to listen to motivations, willing to admit when something did not really go as it should have, and willingness to forgive. But not let mistakes, whether deliberate or not, cause us to become blind to the spirit of the rules. Let us not merely find our safety in the letter of the rules.

As for the FRC in SA, we have EF only with three other federations – you, the FRCA and (for the time being) with the Reformed Churches (liberated) in the Netherlands. Simply because of practical reasons – lack of manpower – we don’t have EF with more churches. Yet we are member of the ICRC, and we acknowledge those churches. Whenever their pastors would visit South Africa, they are allowed to the pulpit, and this is communicated as much as possible to the broader assemblies. Not that the ICRC dictates our sister-church relationships. There are exceptions. For example, as for the “Dopper” Churches this does not apply, with good reasons. We do not have EF with the “Dopper” Churches. Though we do have pulpit exchange with some local “Dopper” Churches, who want to remain orthodox. However, this does not happen outside the concrete strive to work towards federational unity in future. Pulpit exchange with pastors from denominations with which (for doctrinal reasons, for example) it is clear that EF will not be possible, is not acceptable.

Again, it is not my intention to take sides, or to give my opinion on whether this process go slower or not. There may be good reasons. I pray that you will ultimately seek the unity and peace within your federation, as well as the brotherhood here in North America currently not in full unity with you.



Marking progress as the agenda become acta

APPENDIX 22 – Closing Address by Rev. John Ludwig

Brothers,

GS 2022 is almost over, and so it's fitting that I close with some words of appreciation and gratitude. We are thankful, first of all, to our heavenly Father who blessed us with health and strength so that we could work our way through reports, overtures, appeals, and letters that amounted to over 2000 pages. God gave us the energy, the wisdom, and endurance to finish the work the churches placed on our agenda. The proper framework for doing our work was set by Rev. Douwe Agema at the prayer service. He exhorted us from a portion of Psalm 119 to "rightly handle the word of truth," and to apply God's Word in dealing with the submissions from committees, churches, and members. I believe that, albeit with shortcomings, we dealt with the material prayerfully, openly, and constructively, seeking the benefit and wellbeing of the churches in our decisions, and the glory of Him who is the Head of the church.



For 9.5 days we've been intensely involved in the process of discussing, deliberating, and deciding. Although we adopted a new format for the Acts of this synod, which had our synodical wheels spinning for the first little while, we soon adjusted and were able to work with it. Together we sought to serve the Lord, each with his own talents and gifts. I have admiration and appreciation for each of you personally, and for the brotherly spirit and cooperation that prevailed even when discussions were a bit animated, and unanimous decisions could not be reached. We had very rewarding times of fellowship during breakfast, lunch, and supper. We came as brothers, and we may depart as brothers with even greater appreciation for one another than before. That kind of harmony is a gift from our exalted Saviour.

Thank you, brothers, for the support you gave the executive. If, as chairman, I ruled too strictly or too leniently at times, please forgive me. I can assure you that I did not intend to make anything personal. From my fellow officers beside me here, I received all the assistance and advice I could expect, perhaps sometimes more than I expected - wink-wink, Rev. Janssen.

Brothers, we made decisions on many ecclesiastical matters, but we will not judge our work. It is the task of the churches to judge what we have done. Of course, it is ultimately the Lord who will judge, who will approve or disapprove. May He be merciful to us, and bless our humble and frail efforts to strengthen his churches and promote His kingdom.

An important decision which deserves special mention is that we could direct the Board of Governors to appoint Dr. Reuben Bredenhof as professor of Ministry and Mission at CRTS, to replace Dr. Arjen Devisser next year. It was a joyful moment when Dr. R. Bredenhof informed synod via Zoom that he accepted the appointment. What an illustration of the Lord's faithfulness as he provides for the churches also in this way! And what a blessing to be able to have the Senate and staff here to share in that wonderful event.

We enjoyed the presence of fraternal delegates from the four corners of the earth, and experienced what we confess in Article 28 of the B.C that Christ's church is "not limited to one particular time or certain persons, but is spread and dispersed through the entire world. Yet it is joined and united with heart and will in one and the same Spirit, by the power of faith."

A word of gratitude is in order for the hosting church here in Guelph. The preparations for convening Synod were superb. We felt very much at home in this building. Your hospitality was second to none. The meals were delicious, and having a fridge and a table filled with drinks and snacks around the clock was appreciated, though many of us will be leaving with wider girths than when we arrived.

The many hours of work and service that kitchen staff put in to serve us will always be gratefully remembered. We can't list all the women (and men) who kept us well fed during our time here, but perhaps an exception can be made for Melanie Vanderveen and Rebecca Knot who organized all the meals and refreshments for us.

We thank Laura VanLeeuwen for her administrative work, and Jackie DeVries for assisting the first clerk with all kinds of secretarial duties, as well as Anthony, our IT man. Greatly appreciated. As a token of our appreciation, we would like to present you with this print of a photo of Riverside Park here in Guelph – a framed canvas will be ready in about a week together with an engraved plaque expressing our gratitude for hosting GS 2022.

Now the agenda's done, and we're ready to return home to our loved ones, and our respective congregations. May you all have a safe trip home under God's protecting hand. May the peace of God which surpasses all understanding guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus!



APPENDIX 23 – Regulation Ecclesiastical Exams.

Sources: GS 1958 Art. 188, GS 2022 Art. 143

I. Preparatory Examination

- I.1 To be eligible for call in one of the churches, one must have successfully sustained the preparatory examination.
 The preparatory examination will take place in the classis where the church that sent the student's original attestation to the federational seminary belongs. The preparatory examination for a student not originating within the Canadian & American Reformed Churches is to occur in the classis where the student resides.
- I.2 At the preparatory examination the following documents must be presented:
- I.2.a Proof that the student has successfully completed the required course of study as referred to in the decisions of Homewood-Carman 1958 (Acts, Art.151).
- I.2.b An attestation from the church or churches to which the students has belonged for the last three years.
- I.3 The preparatory examination will inquire into the student's
- I.3.a capacity to preach; to this end the student is assigned a text, no more than three weeks before the examination, on which he will prepare a sermon-proposal to be read at classis; this proposal will then be discussed.
- I.3.b ability to exegete the Holy Scriptures for the congregation according to the original texts; to this end the student will be assigned, at least two weeks prior to the examination, one chapter from the Old Testament and one chapter from the New Testament.
- I.3.c knowledge of the doctrine of the church.
- I.4 Upon sustaining the preparatory examination the candidate must promise, when speaking edifyingly to the congregation, not to teach anything that is not in accordance with the reformed confession. He will then be declared eligible for call as a candidate and receive a written copy of this declaration.
- I.5 The preparatory examination will be held at no cost if it coincides with a regularly scheduled classis.

Note: Synod is of the opinion that the so-called "inquiry into the motives for seeking the Ministry" should not be treated as a separate matter, but should take place during and through the manner of examining as described under 4.

II. Peremptory Examination

- II.1 This examination is conducted by the classis to which the calling church belongs, with the co-operation of at least two of the deputies appointed for this purpose by Regional Synod.
- II.2 Before the examination can take place classis must be provided with:
- II.2.a the letter of call and the letter of acceptance.
- II.2.b proof of successfully sustaining the preparatory examination by which the candidate was declared eligible for call in the churches.
- II.2.c an attestation from the church or churches to which he has belonged since his preparatory examination.

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- II.3 The peremptory examination is to last at least three hours and shall cover the following subjects:
- II.3.a a sermon-proposal on a text chosen by the candidate himself, followed by a discussion of this sermon-proposal.
 - II.3.b exegesis of Holy Scripture according to the original text; to this end the candidate will be assigned, at least three weeks in advance, two chapters from the Old Testament and two chapters from the New Testament.
 - II.3.c knowledge of the content of Holy Scripture, which comprises not only knowledge of the Biblical history as such with related theological “subjects”, but also knowledge of the main contents of all the books of the Bible, so that it becomes evident that the candidate is sufficiently familiar with Holy Scripture.
 - II.3.d knowledge of the doctrine of the church, as well as its history, its defence and its explanation.
 - II.3.e knowledge of the history of the church.
 - II.3.f Knowledge of the commandments of the LORD with respect to their significance for the Christian life.
 - II.3.g knowledge of the Church Order.
 - II.3.h knowledge of the requirements for exercising the various duties of the offices.
- Note: It is the responsibility of classis to divide the exam-time over the different subjects.*
- II.4 After successfully sustaining the examination the candidate must sign the Form of Subscription, established in 1619 for ministers of the Word.
- II.5 In case of a conflict between classis and the deputies of Regional Synod regarding the result of the examination, the matter is to be decided by Regional Synod.
- II.6 The peremptory examination will be held at no cost if it coincides with a regularly scheduled classis.

APPENDIX 24 – Minority Advisory Committee Report on RS overtures re GS 2004 Art. 115 (*Hymn Cap*)

The following report was not voted on by GS 2022. See GS 2022 [Art. 105](#) and [Art. 115](#) regarding its status and inclusion as an appendix in these Synod Acts.

1. Material

- 1.1 Overture: RSE 2020 to Remove the Current Hymn Cap for the *Book of Praise* (8.4.1).
- 1.2 Overture: RSW 2021 to Rescind the decision of GS 2004 art. 115 re Hymn Cap (8.4.3).
- 1.3 Submissions from the following churches:
 Toronto-Bethel (8.3.2.41), Owen Sound (8.5.1.1), Carman-West (8.5.1.2), Brampton-Grace (8.5.1.3), Niagara-South (8.5.1.4), Nooksack Valley (8.5.1.5), St. Albert (8.5.1.6), Willoughby Heights (8.5.1.7), Smithville (8.5.1.8), Yarrow (8.5.1.9), Cloverdale (8.5.1.10), Attercliffe (8.5.1.11), Coaldale (8.5.1.12), Carman-East (8.5.1.13), Flamborough-Redemption (8.5.1.14), Fergus-Maranatha (8.5.1.15), Glanbrook-Trinity (8.5.1.16), Barrhead (8.5.1.17), Neerlandia (North) (8.5.1.18), Edmonton-Immanuel (8.5.1.19), Lynden (8.5.1.20), Burlington-Ebenezer (8.5.1.21), Grand Rapids (8.5.1.22), Edmonton-Providence (8.5.1.23), Owen Sound (8.5.3.1), Ancaster (8.5.3.2), Willoughby Heights (8.5.3.3), Neerlandia (North) (8.5.3.4), Edmonton-Immanuel (8.5.3.5), Langley (8.5.3.6).

2. Admissibility

- 2.1 Overture RSE 2020 to Remove the Current Hymn Cap for the *Book of Praise* was declared admissible.
- 2.2 Overture RSW 2021 to Rescind the Decision of GS 2004 art. 115 re Hymn Cap was declared admissible.
- 2.3 The submissions from the churches were declared admissible.
 Ground
 Both overtures are applying the decision of GS 2019 (Art. 64, Cons. 4.4) and CO Art. 33.

3. Decisions

- 3.1 To work with both overtures together.
- 3.2 To adopt the recommendation of both overtures to remove the cap of 100 hymns regarding the *Book of Praise*.

4. Grounds

- 4.1 Re 3.1:
 - 4.1.1 Both overtures seek the removal of the cap of 100 hymns regarding the *Book of Praise*, although providing different considerations.
 - 4.1.2 Most churches interacted with both overtures in one submission to GS 2022.
- 4.2 Re 3.2:
 - 4.2.1 RSE 2020, along with many churches, correctly note that the Psalms must retain a predominant place in the liturgy of the Reformed churches. That was also the SCBP's rationale for setting a limit of 100 hymns. In its report to General Synod

- Chatham 2004, the SCBP references as confirmation of this position the preface to the *Book of Praise* (p. v). There we find a brief history of congregational singing in the context of Reformed churches which includes the following statement:
“Although in Reformed liturgy the Psalms have a predominant place, our churches have not excluded the use of scriptural hymns. They, too, constitute a thank offering of praise when we sing of the facts of redemption by God in Jesus Christ our Lord.”
- 4.2.2 The churches have received the 150 psalms from the hand of the LORD, and we should value them as a treasure. However, having a hymn cap will not guarantee such valuing to continue. The predominance of psalm-singing is a matter of principle, not a matter of song availability. Realistically, the predominance of psalm-singing in the worship services will only be maintained by the oversight of the consistory in approving the liturgy as presented for worship each week. That decision is rooted in the exercise of sound Reformed liturgical principle, not by a stringently limited hymn section.
- 4.2.3 The current measure of limiting the number of hymns to 100 gives the perception that singing hymns is less desirable than singing psalms. However, it is clear from the preface of the *Book of Praise* that hymns are not less desirable.
- 4.2.4 Though some churches are concerned that removing the hymn cap will be to the detriment of psalm-singing, the possibility still exists that churches sing more hymns than psalms or even hymns exclusively within the context of a 100-hymn cap. On the other hand, churches can still value the psalms as a treasure and sing them within the context of no hymn cap.
- 4.2.5 Although some churches see the capping of hymns as helpful in ensuring that only doctrinally sound hymns are added to the *Book of Praise*, CO Art. 55 ensures the cooperation of the churches regarding the hymns sung in worship and prevents the singing of hymns in worship which have not been agreed to by the churches. This regulation will continue to function without the hymn cap.
- 4.2.6 The current measure of limiting the number of hymns has the unfortunate effect that we deprive ourselves of many good hymns. So long as good hymns exist, and new ones are written, the churches will constantly wrestle with the difficulty of having to remove good hymns to make room for other excellent hymns.
- 4.2.7 Although some churches suggest that a limit of 100 hymns allows for enough hymns aligning with the seasons of the Christian calendar, the reality is that there is very little room to approve additional hymns for specific occasions. There should be room for additional suitable hymns.
- 4.2.8 Several churches caution Synod 2022 about the historical development and alleged consequences of additional hymns. However, there remain many faithful churches today with a larger collection of hymns, including those with which we have ecclesiastical fellowship.
- 4.2.9 Increasing the selection of hymns available for use in the churches does not mean the churches will be less selective regarding quality. Hymns will still need to be approved by a general synod (CO Art. 55).
- 4.2.10 Although there is a concern that the pressure for more hymns appears to be a direct influence of evangelical worship in our culture and surroundings, this is an unproven assertion.

4.2.11 Although some churches express concern about the number of songs in a new *Book of Praise* and the ability to truly know the content of the book, these are subjective concerns which do not present a barrier to removing the hymn cap.

APPENDIX 25 – Report of the Edmonton-Immanuel CanRC regarding the finances of GS 2019

Income:	
Regional Synod East	\$16,665.16
Regional Synod West	\$16,665.16
Total Receipts	\$33,330.32
Expenses	
Travel	\$11,728.10
Synod Gifts	\$ 650.00
Assistant Clerk	\$ 1,968.08
Office Supplies & Miscellaneous	\$ 6,894.63
Other Local Transportation	\$ 292.79
Actual Rental Housing Costs	\$ 8,820.00
Actual Food Costs	\$ 2,856.39
Bank Service Charges	\$ 120.33
Total :	\$33,330.32

APPENDIX 26 – General Fund Report***Canadian Reformed Church at Carman East****Box 164, Carman, MB R0G 0J0**e-mail: carmaneastclerk@gmail.com*

April 25, 2022

General Synod 2022, Guelph, ON

RE Financial Report for General Fund from February 4, 2019 to December 31, 2021

Esteemed Brothers:

The church of Carman-East was appointed by Synod Edmonton (2019), Article 45 to administer the General Fund and to collect funds as required from the churches. An email address (generalfundcarmaneast@gmail.com) is used for requests for reimbursement to the treasurer, Hilly Kooiker, and mail should be addressed to Carman-East church address at Box 164, Carman, MB R0G 0J0.

To administer this fund the churches were assessed \$2 per communicant member for 2019, \$2 for 2020, and \$1 for 2021. The reduction in annual assessment was made since expenses decreased. Further detail has been provided below:

Opening Balance February 4, 2019	\$11,422.30
<u>Income:</u>	
Assessment from the churches	\$57,391.27
Total Income	\$68,813.57
<u>Expenses:</u>	
Book of Praise Committee	-
Committee for Contact with Churches Abroad	8,414.72
Committee for Contact with Churches of North America	\$20,553.21
Committee for Ecclesiastical Unity	\$49.00
Website Committee	\$2,840.98
Premier Printing (reports for General Synod)	\$1,021.96
Office Supplies	\$100.47
Bank Charges	\$182.90
Total Expenses	\$33,163.24
Closing Balance December 31, 2021	\$35,650.33



Kelvin Vanderveen - Chairman



Harwin Bouwman - Clerk

APPENDIX 27 – Press Release General Synod 2022

On May 10, 2022, the twenty-third General Synod of the Canadian Reformed Churches was convened by the Emmanuel Canadian Reformed Church in Guelph. It was a Synod that began by listening to God’s voice as revealed in his Word, and it was concluded by hearing God’s voice in creation.

God’s voice as revealed in his Word

As is customary, on the evening preceding the convening of Synod, a Prayer Service was held. This was led by Rev. Douwe Agema, who was chairman of the previous Synod, held in Edmonton in 2019. He preached on Psalm 119:57-64 under the theme, “The Spirit teaches us to handle rightly the Word of Truth.” He impressed on the delegates that they had been tasked by the churches to serve the churches in total submission to the Word of God. He added that it was the prayer that the Spirit would give the strength and wisdom to handle the Word rightly so that all glory would go to our Lord and King, Jesus Christ.

On May 10, Rev. Peter Feenstra, emeritus minister of the Emmanuel Church, guided the process to come to the constitution of Synod. The delegates elected Rev. John Ludwig as chairman, Rev. Eric Kampen as vice-chairman, Rev. Karlo Janssen as clerk, and Rev. Carl VanDam as second clerk. The agenda items were divided over five committees. As each Synod is free to decide on the format of the Acts, it was decided to work with a different format than used by previous Synods, in the hope that the Acts would be more reader friendly.

The first week of Synod saw the delegates immersing themselves in the agenda items assigned to them, seeking to work in humble submission to God’s Word. To serve the members of the churches, this review will touch on the matters dealt with in a topical manner.

Interchurch Relationships

A major item on the agenda of every Synod is interchurch relationships. For many years, the relationships were dealt with by two committees, one maintaining contact with various churches in North America and another maintaining contact with churches throughout the world. Synod decided to make this one committee, as there is overlap in meeting with churches in ecclesiastical fellowship at various international gatherings. A proposal about developing various categories for exercising ecumenical relations, rather than our current way of only having one category was referred back to the committee for refinement, with the instruction to reflect on the feedback provided by the churches.

Synods also are occasions where visits are made by representatives of churches with which we have ecclesiastical fellowship. Guests were present in person from all over the globe, including South Africa, Australia, and Korea. These guests were given the opportunity to address Synod, passing on greetings. Some of those who had been invited, but were not able to attend, delivered greetings via video links. Others sent letters of greetings. These interactions with delegates from various churches throughout the world gave visible expression of the catholicity of the church. It was striking that a number of

presentations concluded with Paul’s words from 1 Cor. 15:58, “Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labour is not in vain.”

In reviewing the reports of the committees looking after interchurch relationships, and hearing the presentations of the guests, Synod was made aware of the struggles and joys of these various churches throughout the world. A general theme was that, while COVID-19 had been hard on the churches, God had graciously preserved his churches through this time.

Standing Committee for the Book of Praise (SCBP)

The previous Synod had mandated the SCBP to suggest some more hymns, as well as Psalm versions with different melodies, for testing in the churches. The Committee put in a herculean effort over the past three years to fulfill this mandate, soliciting song suggestions, coming up with a suggested list of hymns and Psalms, receiving and considering feedback, and then preparing a report for this Synod. The whole process of testing these songs was greatly hindered by the inability to gather for worship because of the COVID-19 outbreak. When all the factors were considered, Synod considered it best to provisionally approve the Psalms and Hymns, deleting a few as suggested by the SCBP, for use in the worship services. The Committee was mandated to serve Synod 2025 with final recommendations based on further review of feedback received.

Synod also had to deal with overtures to eliminate the Hymn cap of one hundred hymns, set by Synod Chatham 2004. The overtures argued that removing this cap need not jeopardize the priority of the use of the Psalms in worship. Synod was not persuaded and decided to retain the hymn cap. Retaining this cap, however, will not affect the testing of hymns during the worship service for the next three years.

Under the heading of the SCBP, mention can be made of suggestions regarding forms for the celebration of the Lord's Supper. It was decided to remove the qualifier "For the second service" from the abbreviated form. That qualifier was put in place in a time when churches would have a celebration of the Lord's Supper in both services on a Sunday. It now enables the churches to use this as an alternate form. There was also an overture to adopt some shorter forms for the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Synod decided to mandate the SCBP to present the next General Synod with more possible forms, perhaps using some of the forms of our sister churches.

Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary (CRTS)

A highlight of this Synod was the appointment of Dr. Reuben Bredenhof, Minister of the Free Reformed Church of Mt. Nasura, Western Australia, as Professor of Ministry and Mission. His appointment was necessitated by the upcoming retirement of Dr. A. DeVisser at the end of the Academic Year 2022/23, at which time he will have served the churches at CRTS for 19 years. On Monday evening, May 16, Dr. Bredenhof addressed the members of Synod and guests via video link. He indicated that it was most humbling to receive this expression of trust, and to be granted the beautiful opportunity and privilege to train young men who are getting ready for a life of ministry and mission at CRTS. He thankfully accepted the appointment and was eagerly looking forward to beginning his task. Dr. DeVisser also spoke to the Synod and guests, expressing gratitude to the Lord for the opportunity to serve the churches for 18 years in his task at the seminary.

Synod dealt with many other matters related to the Seminary and preparation for the ministry. It received the general report on the operations of the Seminary over the past number of years, as well as reports about funding for the pastoral training program and the fund for needy students.

With much thankfulness it could be noted that the Seminary is able to continue to do its work of teaching men for the ministry of the gospel.

Related to the work of the training for the ministry of the gospel, Synod dealt with an overture which recommended that preparatory examination of students, when they are declared eligible for call, should be conducted in the classis of their home church before they went to the Seminary. For many years, the bulk of that responsibility fell on Classis Ontario West, as the students were members of churches in that classis. Synod adopted this overture, effective January 2023. This will greatly alleviate the workload of Classis Ontario West.

Other matters

Synod dealt with many other matters, such as reports from Committees looking after the Federation Website (canrc.org), Bible Translation, Archives, and Days of Prayer. It also had to deal with a number of appeals. Synod appointed the Church at Aldergrove to convene the next General Synod in 2025.

God's voice as heard in creation

It may not be apparent from this brief review, but the delegates spent an intense ten days discussing, reflecting, considering, and debating. Each day was opened and closed with reading God's Word and asking for his blessing. There was the desire to deal in a just and righteous manner with all the matters on the agenda, so that the Christ, the king of the church, would be glorified and his people served.

In his concluding remarks, the chairman, Rev. John Ludwig, expressed his thankfulness that Synod could be conducted in a brotherly manner, even when there were differences of opinion. He also acknowledged how so many members of the Guelph-Emmanuel Church willingly gave of their time and talents to help Synod function well. The delegates enjoyed many excellent meals and benefitted from the skilled IT and secretarial help. As a token of appreciation, the church was presented with a picture of a Guelph landmark, with a plaque expressing gratitude for hosting Synod. The chairman was given a ceremonial aluminum gavel with the date of the Synod inscribed. Thanksgiving prayer was then offered to our gracious God for his blessing over the Synod, but just before the "Amen" could be said, we heard the voice of God as described in Psalm 29. The powerful voice of the LORD thundered, the waters poured from the heavens, and the power went out and remained out for more than 24 hours! We enjoyed a final meal in dimmed lighting, said our farewells, and the homeward journeys began.

Rev. Eric Kampen

(Vice-chairman during General Synod 2022)

APPENDIX 28 – Guidelines for General Synods²

I Convening and Constitution of Synod

A. The convening Church³ shall set the date on which Synod shall meet (cf. CO Art. 49). The convening church shall publish the date along with the rule:

All material for Synod should be received by the convening church in paper or digital format (searchable text PDF as much as feasible) no later than six weeks prior to the convocation date of general synod. Those submitting material shall ensure that one signed copy is available for the archives of General Synod.⁴ Material received after this date shall ordinarily not be added to the agenda unless Synod is satisfied that the reasons given for later arrival are reasonable.⁵

The convening church is free to undertake whatever measures are needed to improve the operations of a synod. Such measures include, but are not limited to, standardizing file formats to text PDF; standardizing file names to include the agenda item number, the topic, the source, and the date; verifying the authenticity of submissions.⁶

B. Correspondence from the convening church, including the notice of convocation, agendas, reports, and proposals may be sent to the churches and/or delegates as digital files. However, in order to maintain the confidentiality of potentially sensitive material, personal appeals as well as other documents which contain personal information (e.g., letters of appointment) must be sent from the convening church as password-protected digital files.⁷

C. The convening Church shall send the first Provisional Agenda to all the Churches at least six months prior to convocation.

D. All material submitted to the convening Church together with a copy of the current Guidelines for General Synods shall be sent to all delegates and the first alternates.⁸ All material submitted to Synod, including Reports, Appeals, Overtures which quote any foreign language source must provide in the text of the submission a full English translation and in a footnote the citation in the original language.⁹

E. All material for Synod should be received by the convening church in paper or digital format (searchable text PDF as much as feasible) no later than six weeks prior to the convocation date of general synod. Those submitting material shall ensure that one signed copy is available for the archives of General Synod.¹⁰ Material received after this date shall ordinarily

² GS 1983 Art. 45.

³ GS 2022 adopted a further set of Guidelines for the Convening Church. See GS 2022 Appendix 29.

⁴ GS 2019 Art. 122, among others replacing a change made by GS 2013 Art. 176.

⁵ GS 1995 Art. 111; GS 2004 Art. 118.

⁶ GS 2019 Art. 122.

⁷ GS 2013 Art. 176.

⁸ GS 1986 Art. 76; GS 1995 Art. 111.

⁹ GS 1989 Art. 131.

¹⁰ GS 2019 Art. 122, among others replacing a change made by GS 2013 Art. 176.

not be added to the agenda unless Synod is satisfied that the reasons given for later arrival are reasonable.¹¹

- F. Since matters on the agenda of general synod involve the churches in common, regional synods shall distribute copies of adopted overtures to all the churches in the federation no later than five months prior to the convening of a general synod.¹²
- G. The minister of the convening Church or its counselor shall act as chairman until Synod has been constituted.
1. He shall call the meeting to order in an ecclesiastical manner (cf. Art. 34, CO);
 2. He shall have the credentials examined as to whether General Synod can be constituted.
- H. Officers of Synod shall be chosen by ballot in this order: chairman, vice-chairman, first clerk, and second clerk. Election to office is to be by majority of valid votes cast.
- I. Although advice can be requested in particular matters, advisory members shall not be appointed.¹³
- J. The convening church shall arrange to have people present during Synod to assist the clerks in preparing the Acts and to do other paper work.¹⁴

II Duties of the Officers

A. The Chairman

1. The chairman shall see to it that business is transacted in the proper order and is expedited as much as possible, and that members observe the rules of order and decorum (cf. CO 34, 35).
2. He shall call the meeting to order at the appointed time, call the roll and shall see to it that each session is properly opened and closed.
3. He shall welcome fraternal delegates or other guests and respond to greetings received or appoint other members for this purpose.
4. He shall place before Synod every motion that is made and seconded, in accord with the accepted order; and he shall clearly state every question before a vote is taken, so that every member may know on what he is voting.
5. If the chairman feels the need to speak on a pending question, he shall relinquish the chair to the vice-chairman for that period of time. While holding the chair, he may speak to state matters of fact or to inform Synod regarding points of order.
6. He shall have, and duly exercise, the prerogative of declaring a motion or a person out of order. If his ruling is challenged, it shall be submitted to Synod for decision by majority vote.
7. The chairman shall retain his right to vote on any question.

¹¹ GS 1986 Art. 162; GS 1995 Art. 110.

¹² GS 2010 Art. 35, 174.

¹³ GS 2007, Art. 147.

¹⁴ GS 2010, Art. 174.

8. In case of a point of order, the chairman must make a ruling at once. This ruling may be reversed by a majority of Synod, if any member is dissatisfied with the ruling of the chair and appeals to the floor.
9. The chairman shall close the Synod with appropriate remarks and prayer (CO 34).

B. The Vice-Chairman

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

C. The First Clerk

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

D. The Second Clerk

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

III Synodical Committees

A. Advisory Committees of Synod

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

express remarks related to the issue in question. In the second or following parts, members may react to the discussion or the issue in question.

8. The discussion may be extended by discretion of the chairman or by a decision of Synod.
9. If anyone has been requested to advise Synod on any matter, he shall address synod on this point only when asked to do so by the chair.

B. Synodical Committees

1. All committees appointed by Synod shall see to it that they send a copy of their report in digital format to each of the local churches.¹⁵

IV Rules of Order

A. Closed Sessions of Synod

1. A closed session shall ordinarily mean a session where members of Synod and office-bearers may be present. This shall be used in delicate or unusual situations.
2. A closed-restricted session shall, as a rule, mean a session where members of Synod only may be present. This shall only take place when Synod judges that such a course is dictated by due regard for personal honour or the welfare of the Churches in extremely delicate situations.

B. Main Motions

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

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

C. A Motion to Amend

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

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

D. Call for a Division of the Question

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

E. Objection to Consideration of a Question

¹⁵ GS 1995 Art. 110; GS 2013 Art. 176.

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

F. Right of Protest

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

G. Motion to Bring Matters Once Decided Again Before Synod

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

H. Discussion

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

I. Voting

1. It is in the freedom of the chair to determine how the vote is to be taken: by calling the roll (in any order) or by show of hands.¹⁶
2. Voting about persons shall be by ballot.
3. Voting about delicate matters and other matters of a critical nature shall also be by ballot.

J. Revision

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

¹⁶ GS 2010 Art. 174.

APPENDIX 29 – Guidelines for the Convening Church of a General Synod Regarding Synod Expenses

1. **Funding:** The convening church shall set up a General Synod Account and appoint a treasurer. The treasurer shall contact the treasurers of the Regional Synods for funding to cover all expenses pertaining to the General Synod. Expenses will be shared between the two Regional Synods on a 50/50 basis. (See Yearbook for treasurers of each Regional Synod).
2. **Operational Expenses:** Operational expenses incurred as a direct result of hosting the General Synod which do not have a net benefit post-synod to the convening church will be reimbursed at cost. This includes but is not limited to IT, facilities, and correspondence.
3. **Travel for fraternal delegates and invited observers as invited by the interchurch relations committee(s):**
 - a. **Travel to Synod:** Cost for travel is the responsibility of the delegating body.
 - b. **Transportation during Synod:** The convening church will arrange transportation to and from the airport, train station, or bus depot and provide transportation to General Synod and incidental travel during the Synod. Submission for costs incurred in providing transportation in connection with General Synod are to be reimbursed at the CRA rate.
4. **Accommodations:** For delegates, fraternal delegates and invited observers as invited by the interchurch relation committee(s):
 - a. Accommodations are arranged by the convening church via rental and/or billeting. Accommodations can include support for the spouse of a delegate;
 - b. Submissions for reimbursement of the rentals are administered via the General Synod budget administered by the convening church.
5. **Meals:**
 - a. Meals are exclusively for the members of General Synod and invited guests via the venue of the General Synod or arranged by the convening church via billeting;
 - b. Reimbursements for meal expenses are administered via the General Synod budget administered by the convening church.
6. At the conclusion of Synod, the books will be reviewed by the church appointed for that purpose. A financial report is to be submitted to the next Synod.

APPENDIX 30 – EF: Rules for Ecclesiastical Fellowship¹⁷

1. The churches shall assist each other in the maintenance, defence and promotion of the Reformed faith in doctrine, church polity, discipline, and liturgy, and be watchful for deviations.
2. The churches shall inform each other of the decisions taken by their broadest assemblies, if possible by sending each other their Acts or Minutes and otherwise, at least by sending the decisions relevant to the respective churches (if possible, in translation).
3. The churches shall consult each other when entering into relations with third parties.
4. The churches shall accept one another's attestations or certificates of good standing, which also means admitting members of the respective churches to the sacraments upon presentation of that attestation or certificate.
5. The churches shall in principle open their pulpits for each other's ministers in agreement with the rules adopted in the respective churches.

In exercising these relations, the churches shall strive to implement also the following:

6. When major changes or additions are being considered to the confessions, church government or liturgy, the churches shall be informed in order that as much consultation can take place as possible before a final decision is taken.
7. The churches shall receive each other's delegates at their broadest assemblies and invite them to participate as much as local regulations permit.



¹⁷ GS 1992 Art. 50.

Church Order of the Canadian Reformed Churches

As last revised by GS 2022

I. Introduction

ARTICLE 1: Purpose and Division

For the maintenance of good order in the church of Christ it is necessary that there be offices and supervision of doctrine; assemblies; worship, sacraments, and ceremonies; and discipline.

II. Offices and Supervision of Doctrine

ARTICLE 2: The Offices

The offices are those of the minister of the Word, of the elder, and of the deacon.

ARTICLE 3: The Calling to Office

No one shall take any office upon himself without having been lawfully called thereto.

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

The election to any office shall take place with the cooperation of the congregation, after preceding prayers, and according to the regulations adopted for that purpose by the consistory with the deacons.

The consistory with the deacons shall be free to give the congregation the opportunity beforehand to draw the attention of the consistory to brothers deemed fit for the respective offices.

The consistory with the deacons shall present to the congregation either as many candidates as there are vacancies to be filled, or at the most twice as many, from which number the congregation shall choose as many as are needed.

Those elected shall be appointed by the consistory with the deacons in accordance with the adopted regulations.

Prior to the ordination or installation the names of the appointed brothers shall be publicly announced to the congregation for its approbation on at least two consecutive Sundays.

The ordination or installation shall take place with the use of the relevant forms.

ARTICLE 4: Eligibility for the Ministry

A. Eligibility

Only those shall be called to the office of minister of the Word who

1. have been declared eligible for call by the churches;
2. are already serving in that capacity in one of the churches; or
3. have been declared eligible in, or are serving in, one of the churches with which the Canadian Reformed Churches maintain a sister-church relationship.

B. Declared Eligible

Only those shall be declared eligible for call within the churches who

1. have passed a preparatory examination by classis,¹⁸ which examination shall not take place unless those presenting themselves for it submit the documents necessary to prove that they are

¹⁸ GS 2022 (Art. 143 Dec. 3.4) amended the words “by the classis in which they live” to “by classis”.

members in good standing of one of the churches and have successfully completed a course of study as required by the churches;

2. have served in churches with which the Canadian Reformed Churches do not maintain a sister-church relationship, and have been well tested for a reasonable period of time and examined by the classis in which they live, with due observance of the general ecclesiastical regulations adopted for that purpose; or

3. have been examined according to the rule described in Article 8.

C. Calling Twice

The approval of classis shall be required for a second call to the same minister regarding the same vacancy.

D. Counsellor

When a vacant church extends a call, the advice of the counsellor shall be sought.

ARTICLE 5: Ordination and Installation of Ministers of the Word

A. Regarding those who have not served in the ministry before, the following shall be observed:

1. They shall be ordained only after classis has approved the call. Classis shall approve the call

a. upon satisfactory testimony concerning the soundness of doctrine and conduct of the candidate, signed by the consistory of the church to which he belongs;

b. upon a peremptory examination of the candidate by classis with satisfactory results. This examination shall take place with the cooperation and concurring advice of deputies of the regional synod.

2. For the ordination they shall show also to the consistory good testimonials concerning their doctrine and conduct from the church(es) to which they have belonged since their preparatory examination.

B. Regarding those who are serving in the ministry the following shall be observed:

1. They shall be installed after classis has approved the call.

For this approbation as well as for the installation the minister shall show good testimonials concerning his doctrine and conduct, together with a declaration from the consistory with the deacons and from classis that he has been honourably discharged from his service in that church and classis, or from the church only, in case he remains within the same classis.

2. For the approbation by classis of a call to those who are serving in one of the churches with which the Canadian Reformed Churches maintain a sister-church relationship a colloquium shall be required which will deal especially with the doctrine and polity of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

C. Further, for the approbation by classis of a call, the calling church shall submit a declaration that the proper announcements have been made and that the congregation has given its approval to the call.

ARTICLE 6: Bound to a Church

No one shall serve in the ministry unless he is bound to a -certain church, either to be stationed in a certain place, or to be sent out for the gathering of the church from among the heathen or from

among those who have become estranged from the gospel, or to be charged with some other special ministerial task.

ARTICLE 7: Recent Converts

No one who has recently come to the confession of the Reformed religion shall be declared eligible for call within the churches unless he has been well tested for a reasonable period of time and has been carefully examined by classis with the cooperation of the deputies of the regional synod.

ARTICLE 8: Exceptional Gifts

Persons who have not pursued the regular course of study shall not be admitted to the ministry unless there is assurance of their exceptional gifts of godliness, humility, modesty, good intellect, and discretion, as well as the gift of public speech.

When such persons present themselves for the ministry, classis, after the approval of regional synod, shall examine them in a preparatory examination and allow them to speak an edifying word in the churches of the classis; and further deal with them as it shall deem edifying, with observance of the general ecclesiastical regulations adopted for this purpose.

ARTICLE 9: From One Church to Another

A minister, once lawfully called, shall not leave the church to which he is bound to take up the ministry elsewhere without the consent of the consistory with the deacons and the approval of classis.

On the other hand, no church shall receive him unless he has presented a proper certificate of release from the church and the classis where he served, or of the church only, if he remains within the same classis.

ARTICLE 10: Proper Support

The consistory with the deacons, as representing the congregation, shall be bound to provide for the proper support of its minister(s).

ARTICLE 11: Dismissal

If a minister of the Word is judged unfit and incapable of -serving the congregation fruitfully and to its edification, without there being any reason for church discipline, the consistory with the deacons shall not dismiss him from his service within the congregation without the approbation of classis and the concurring advice of the deputies of regional synod, and not without proper arrangements regarding the support of the minister and his family for a reasonable period of time.

If no call is forthcoming in three years, he shall be declared released from his ministerial status by the classis in which he served last.

ARTICLE 12: Bound for Life

Inasmuch as a minister of the Word, once lawfully called, is bound to the service of the church for life, he is not allowed to enter upon another vocation unless it be for exceptional and substantial reasons, of which the consistory with the deacons shall judge, and which shall receive the approval of classis with the concurring advice of deputies of regional synod.

ARTICLE 13: Retirement of Ministers

If a minister of the Word retires because of age, or because he is rendered incapable of performing the duties of his office on account of illness or physical or mental disability, he shall retain the honour and title of minister of the Word. He shall also retain his official bond with the church which he served last, and this church shall provide honourably for his support. The same obligation exists towards a minister's widow and/or dependents.

Retirement of a minister shall take place with the approval of the consistory with the deacons and with the concurring advice of classis and of deputies of regional synod.

ARTICLE 14: Temporary Release

If a minister, because of illness or for other substantial reasons, requests a temporary release from his service to the congregation, he can receive the same only with the approval of the consistory with the deacons and shall at all times be and remain subject to the call of the congregation.

ARTICLE 15: Preaching in Other Places

No one shall be permitted to preach the Word or to administer the sacraments in another church without the consent of the consistory of that church.

ARTICLE 16: The Office of Ministers of the Word

The specific duties of the office of minister of the Word are thoroughly and sincerely to proclaim to the congregation the Word of the Lord, to administer the sacraments, and publicly to call upon the name of God in behalf of the whole congregation; also to instruct the children of the church in the doctrine of salvation, to visit the members of the congregation in their homes, and to comfort the sick with the Word of God; and further, with the elders, to keep the church of God in good order, to exercise discipline, and to govern it in such a manner as the Lord has ordained.

ARTICLE 17: Equality Among the Ministers of the Word

Among the ministers of the Word equality shall be maintained with respect to the duties of their office and in other matters as far as possible, according to the judgment of the consistory and, if necessary, of classis.

ARTICLE 18: Missionaries

When ministers of the Word are sent out as missionaries, they shall be and remain subject to the Church Order. They shall report and give account of their labours to the church which sent them and shall at all times remain subject to its calling.

It shall be their task, in the specific region assigned to them or chosen by them in consultation with the church that sent them, to proclaim the Word of God, to administer the sacraments to those who have come to the profession of their faith, teaching them to observe all that Christ has commanded his church, and to ordain elders and deacons when this appears feasible, according to the rules given in the Word of God.

ARTICLE 19: Training for the Ministry

The churches shall maintain an institution for the training for the ministry. The task of the professors of theology is to instruct the students of theology in those disciplines which have been entrusted to them, so that the churches may be provided with ministers of the Word who are able to fulfil the duties of their office as these have been described above.

ARTICLE 20: Students of Theology

The churches shall endeavour that there be students of theology, extending financial aid to those who are in need of it.

ARTICLE 21: An Edifying Word

Besides those who have been permitted, according to Article 8, to speak an edifying word, others may be given such consent in accordance with general ecclesiastical regulations, for their own training and in order that they may become known to the congregations.

ARTICLE 22: The Office of Elder

The specific duties of the office of elder are, together with the ministers of the Word, to have supervision over Christ's church, that every member may conduct himself properly in doctrine and life according to the gospel; and faithfully to visit the members of the congregation in their homes to comfort, instruct, and admonish them with the Word of God, reproving those who behave improperly. They shall exercise Christian discipline according to the command of Christ against those who show themselves unbelieving and ungodly and refuse to repent and shall watch that the sacraments are not profaned. Being stewards of the house of God, they are further to take care that in the congregation all things are done decently and in good order, and to tend the flock of Christ which is in their charge. Finally, it is the duty of elders to assist the ministers of the Word with good counsel and advice and to supervise their doctrine and conduct.

ARTICLE 23: The Office of Deacon

The specific duties of the office of deacon are to see to the good progress of the service of charity in the congregation; to acquaint themselves with existing needs and difficulties and exhort the members of Christ's body to show mercy; and further, to gather and manage the offerings and distribute them in Christ's name according to need. They shall encourage and comfort with the Word of God those who receive the gifts of Christ's love, and promote with word and deed the unity and fellowship in the Holy Spirit which the congregation enjoys at the table of the Lord.

ARTICLE 24: Term of Office

The elders and deacons shall serve two or more years, according to local regulations, and a proportionate number shall retire each year. The place of the retiring office-bearers shall be taken by others, unless the consistory with the deacons judges that the circumstances and the benefit of the church render it advisable to have them serve another term, or to extend their term, or to declare them immediately eligible for re-election.

ARTICLE 25: Equality to Be Maintained

Among the elders as well as among the deacons equality shall be maintained with respect to the duties of their office, and also, as far as possible, in other matters, of which the consistory shall judge.

ARTICLE 26: Subscription to the Confession

All ministers of the Word, elders, deacons, and professors of -theology shall subscribe to the confessions of the Canadian Reformed Churches by signing the form(s) adopted for that purpose. Anyone refusing to subscribe in that manner shall not be ordained or installed in office. Anyone who, being in office, refuses to do so shall, because of that very fact, be immediately suspended

from office by the consistory with the deacons, and classis shall not receive him. If he obstinately persists in his refusal, he shall be deposed from office.

ARTICLE 27: False Doctrine

To ward off false doctrines and errors which could enter the congregation and constitute a danger to the purity of its doctrine or conduct, the ministers and elders shall use the means of instruction, of refutation, of warning, and of admonition, in the ministry of the Word as well as in Christian teaching and family visiting.

ARTICLE 28: Civil Authorities

As it is the office of the civil authorities to promote in every way the holy ministry, so all office-bearers are in duty bound to impress diligently and sincerely upon the whole congregation the obedience, love, and respect which are due to the civil authorities; they shall set a good example to the whole congregation in this matter, and endeavour by due respect and communication to secure and retain the favour of the authorities towards the church, so that the church of Christ may lead a quiet and peaceable life, godly and respectful in every way.

III. The Assemblies

ARTICLE 29: The Ecclesiastical Assemblies

Four kinds of ecclesiastical assemblies shall be maintained: the consistory, the classis, the regional synod, and the general synod.

ARTICLE 30: Ecclesiastical Matters

These assemblies shall deal with no other than ecclesiastical matters and that in an ecclesiastical manner.

A major assembly shall deal with those matters only which could not be finished in the minor assembly or which belong to its churches in common.

A new matter which has not previously been presented to that major assembly may be put on the agenda only when the minor assembly has dealt with it.

ARTICLE 31: Appeals

If anyone complains that he has been wronged by the decision of a minor assembly, he shall have the right to appeal to the major assembly; and whatever may be agreed upon by a majority vote shall be considered settled and binding, unless it is proved to be in conflict with the Word of God or with the Church Order.

ARTICLE 32: Credentials

Delegates to the major assemblies shall bring with them their credentials, signed by those sending them; they shall have a vote in all matters except those in which either they themselves or their churches are particularly involved.

ARTICLE 33: Proposals

Matters once decided upon may not be proposed again unless they are substantiated by new grounds.

ARTICLE 34: Proceedings

The proceedings of all assemblies shall begin and end with calling upon the name of the Lord.

At the close of major assemblies, censure shall be exercised over those who in the meeting have done something worthy of reproof, or who have scorned the admonition of the minor assemblies.

Furthermore, each classis, regional synod, or general synod shall determine the time and place of the next classis, regional synod, or general synod respectively and appoint the convening church for that meeting.

ARTICLE 35: President

In all assemblies there shall be a president whose task it is to present and explain clearly the matters to be dealt with, to ensure that every one observe due order in speaking, to deny the floor to those who argue about minor things or who let themselves be carried away and cannot control their strong emotions, and to discipline those who refuse to listen.

In major assemblies the office of the president shall cease when the assembly has ended.

ARTICLE 36: Clerk

A clerk shall be appointed whose task it shall be to keep an accurate record of all things worthy to be recorded.

ARTICLE 37: Jurisdiction

The classis has the same jurisdiction over the consistory as the regional synod has over the classis, and the general synod over the regional synod.

ARTICLE 38: Consistory

In all churches there shall be a consistory composed of the ministers of the Word and the elders who, as a rule, shall meet at least once a month. As a rule the ministers of the Word shall preside. If a church is served by more than one minister, they shall preside in turn.

ARTICLE 39: Consistory and the Deacons

Where the number of elders is small, the deacons may be added to the consistory by local arrangement; this shall invariably be done where the number of elders or the number of deacons is less than three.

ARTICLE 40: Constitution of a Consistory

In places where a consistory is to be constituted for the first time or anew, this shall be done only with the advice of classis.

ARTICLE 41: Places without a Consistory

Places where as yet no consistory can be constituted shall be assigned by classis to the care of a neighbouring consistory.

ARTICLE 42: Meetings of Deacons

When the deacons meet separately, as a rule once a month, to deal with the matters pertaining to their office, they shall do so with calling upon the name of God. They shall give account of their labours to the consistory.

The ministers shall acquaint themselves with the work of the ministry of mercy and, if need be, may visit these meetings.

ARTICLE 43: Archives

The consistories and the major assemblies shall ensure that proper care is taken of the archives.

ARTICLE 44: Classis

Neighbouring churches shall come together in a classis by delegating, with proper credentials, a minister and an elder, or, if a church has no minister, two elders. Such meetings shall be held at least once every three months, unless the convening church, in consultation with the neighbouring church, concludes that no matters have been sent in by the churches which would warrant the convening of a classis. Cancellation of a classis shall, however, not be permitted to occur twice in succession.

In these meetings the ministers shall preside in rotation, or one shall be chosen to preside; however, the same minister shall not be chosen twice in succession.

The president shall ask whether the ministry of the office-bearers is being continued, whether the decisions of the major assemblies are being honoured, and whether there is any matter in which the consistories need the judgment and help of classis for the proper government of their church.

The last classis before regional synod shall choose the delegates to that synod.

If two or more ministers are serving a church, those who have not been delegated shall have the right to attend classis in an advisory capacity.

ARTICLE 45: Counsellors

Each vacant church shall request classis to appoint as counsellor the minister it desires as such, to the end that he may assist the consistory in maintaining good order and especially may lend his aid in the matter of the calling of a minister; he shall also sign the letter of call.

ARTICLE 46: Church Visitors

Each year classis shall authorize at least two of the more experienced and able ministers to visit the churches in that year.

It shall be the task of these visitors to inquire whether all things are regulated and done in full harmony with the Word of God, whether the office-bearers fulfil the duties of their office faithfully as they have promised, and whether the adopted order is being observed and maintained in every respect, in order that they may in good time fraternally admonish those who are found negligent in any thing, and that by their good counsel and advice all things may be directed towards the edification and preservation of Christ's church.

They shall submit a written report of their visits to classis.

ARTICLE 47: Regional Synod

Each year some neighbouring classes shall send delegates to meet in a regional synod. If there are two classes, each classis shall delegate four ministers and four elders. If there are three classes, the number shall be three ministers and three elders. If there are four or more classes, the number shall be two ministers and two elders.

If it appears necessary to convene a regional synod before the appointed time, the convening church shall determine the time and place with the advice of classis.

The last regional synod before the general synod shall choose delegates to that general synod.

ARTICLE 48: Deputies of Regional Synod

Each regional synod shall appoint deputies who are to assist the classes in all cases provided for in the Church Order, and, upon the request of the classes, in cases of special difficulties.

These deputies shall keep proper record of their actions and submit a written report to regional synod, and, if so required, they shall give account of their actions.

They shall not be discharged from their task before and until regional synod itself discharges them.

ARTICLE 49: General Synod

The general synod shall be held once every three years. Each regional synod shall delegate to this synod six ministers and six elders.

If it appears necessary to convene a general synod before the appointed time, the convening church shall determine the time and place with the advice of regional synod.

ARTICLE 50: Churches Abroad

The relation with churches abroad shall be regulated by general synod. With foreign churches of Reformed confession a sister-church relationship shall be maintained as much as possible. On minor points of Church Order and ecclesiastical practice churches abroad shall not be rejected.

ARTICLE 51: Mission

The churches shall endeavour to fulfil their missionary task.

When churches cooperate in this matter, they shall, as much as possible, observe the division into classes and regional synods.

IV. Worship, Sacraments, and Ceremonies

ARTICLE 52: Worship Services

The consistory shall call the congregation together for worship twice on the Lord's day.

The consistory shall ensure that, as a rule, once every Sunday the doctrine of God's Word as summarized in the Heidelberg Catechism is proclaimed.

ARTICLE 53: Days of Commemoration

Each year the churches shall, in the manner decided upon by the consistory, commemorate the birth, death, resurrection, and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ, as well as his outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

ARTICLE 54: Days of Prayer

In time of war, general calamities, and other great afflictions the presence of which is felt throughout the churches, a day of prayer may be proclaimed by the churches appointed for that purpose by general synod.

ARTICLE 55: Psalms and Hymns

The metrical Psalms adopted by general synod as well as the hymns approved by general synod shall be sung in the worship services.

ARTICLE 56: Administration of Sacraments

The sacraments shall be administered only under the authority of the consistory, in a public worship service, by a minister of the Word, with the use of the adopted forms.

ARTICLE 57: Baptism

The consistory shall ensure that the covenant of God is sealed by baptism to the children of believers as soon as feasible.

ARTICLE 58: Schools

The consistory shall ensure that the parents, to the best of their ability, have their children attend a school where the instruction given is in harmony with the Word of God as the church has summarized it in her confessions.

ARTICLE 59: Baptism of Adults

Adults who have not been baptized shall be incorporated into the Christian church by holy baptism upon their public profession of faith.

ARTICLE 60: Lord's Supper

The Lord's supper shall be celebrated at least once every three months.

ARTICLE 61: Admission to the Lord's Supper

The consistory shall admit to the Lord's supper only those who have made public profession of the Reformed faith and lead a godly life.

Members of sister churches shall be admitted on the ground of a good attestation concerning their doctrine and conduct.

ARTICLE 62: Attestations

Communicant members who move to a sister church shall be given, after previous announcements to the congregation, an attestation regarding their doctrine and conduct, signed on behalf of the consistory by two of its members.

In the case of non-communicant members such an attestation shall be sent directly to the consistory of the church concerned.

ARTICLE 63: Marriage

The Word of God teaches that marriage is a union between one man and one woman.

The consistory shall ensure that the members of the congregation marry only in the Lord, and that the ministers—as authorized by the consistory—solemnize only such marriages as are in accordance with the Word of God.

The solemnization of a marriage may take place either in a private ceremony or in a public worship service. The adopted Form for the Solemnization of Marriage shall be used.

ARTICLE 64: Church Records

The consistory shall maintain church records in which the names of the members and the dates of their birth, baptism, public profession of faith, marriage, and departure or death are properly recorded.

ARTICLE 65: Funerals

Funerals are not ecclesiastical but family affairs, and should be conducted accordingly.

V. Christian Discipline

ARTICLE 66: Nature and Purpose

Since church discipline is of a spiritual nature and, as one of the keys of the kingdom of heaven, has been given to the church to shut and to open that kingdom, the consistory shall ensure that it is used to punish sins against both the purity of doctrine and the piety of conduct, in order to reconcile the sinner with the church and with his neighbour, and to remove all offence out of the church of Christ—which can be done only when the rule given by our Lord in Matthew 18:15-17 is followed in obedience.

ARTICLE 67: Consistory Involvement

The consistory shall not deal with any matter pertaining to purity of doctrine or piety of life that is reported to it unless it has first ascertained that both private admonitions and admonitions in the presence of one or two witnesses have remained fruitless, or that the sin committed is of a public character.

ARTICLE 68: Excommunication

Anyone who obstinately rejects the admonition by the consistory or who has committed a public sin shall be suspended from the Lord's supper. If he continues to harden himself in sin, the consistory shall so inform the congregation by means of public announcements, in order that the congregation may be engaged in prayer and admonition, and the excommunication may not take place without its cooperation.

In the first public announcement the name of the sinner shall not be mentioned.

In the second public announcement, which shall be made only after the advice of classis has been obtained, the name and address of the sinner shall be mentioned.

In the third public announcement a date shall be set at which the excommunication of the sinner shall take place.

In case a non-communicant member hardens himself in sin, the consistory shall in the same manner inform the congregation by means of public announcements.

In the first public announcement the name of the sinner shall not be mentioned.

In the second public announcement, which shall be made only after the advice of classis has been obtained, the name and address of the sinner shall be mentioned and a date shall be set at which the excommunication of the sinner shall take place.

The time between the various announcements shall be determined by the consistory.

ARTICLE 69: Repentance

When someone repents of a public sin or of a sin which had to be reported to the consistory, the latter shall not accept his confession of sin unless he has shown real amendment.

The consistory shall determine whether the benefit of the congregation requires that this confession of sin shall be made publicly and, in case it is made before the consistory or before two or three office-bearers, whether the congregation shall be informed afterwards.

ARTICLE 70: Readmission

When someone who has been excommunicated repents and desires to be again received into the communion of the church, the congregation shall be informed of his desire in order to see whether there are any lawful objections.

The time between the public announcement and the readmission of the sinner shall be not less than one month.

If no lawful objection is raised, the readmission shall take place with the use of the form for that purpose.

ARTICLE 71: Suspension and Deposition of Office-Bearers

When ministers, elders, or deacons have committed a public or otherwise gross sin, or refuse to heed the admonitions by the consistory with the deacons, they shall be suspended from office by the judgment of their own consistory with the deacons and of the consistory with the deacons of the neighbouring church. When they harden themselves in their sin or when the sin committed is of such a nature that they cannot continue in office, elders or deacons shall be deposed by the judgment of the above-mentioned consistories with the deacons. Classis, with the concurring advice of the deputies of regional synod, shall judge whether the ministers are to be deposed.

ARTICLE 72: Serious and Gross Sins on the Part of Office-Bearers

As serious and gross sins which are grounds for the suspension or deposition of office-bearers the following are to be mentioned particularly: false doctrine or heresy, public schisms, blasphemy, simony, faithless desertion of office or intrusion upon that of another, perjury, adultery, fornication, theft, acts of violence, habitual drunkenness, brawling, unjustly enriching oneself, and, further, all sins and serious misdemeanours that rate as ground for excommunication with respect to other members of the church.

ARTICLE 73: Christian Censure

The ministers, elders, and deacons shall mutually exercise Christian censure and shall exhort and kindly admonish one another with regard to the execution of their office.

ARTICLE 74: No Lording It over Others

No church shall in any way lord it over other churches, no office-bearer over other office-bearers.

ARTICLE 75: Property of the Churches

All property, both real and personal, which belongs to the churches comprised respectively in classes, regional synods, and general synods in common, shall be held in trust for such churches in equal shares by deputies or trustees appointed for that purpose from time to time by the appropriate classis, regional synod, or general synod, and such deputies or trustees shall be bound by the terms of their appointment and instruction and are subject to being discharged by a subsequent classis, regional synod, or general synod.

ARTICLE 76: Observance and Revision of the Church Order

These articles, which regard the lawful order of the church, have been adopted with common accord. If the interest of the churches demand such, they may and ought to be changed, augmented, or diminished. However, no consistory, classis, or regional synod shall be permitted

to do so, but they shall endeavour diligently to observe the articles of this Church Order as long as they have not been changed by a general synod.

Forms of Subscription¹⁹

Form to be used in the local congregation:

We, the undersigned, ministers of God's Word, elders and deacons of the Canadian Reformed Church at _____, do, by our subscription, declare sincerely and in good conscience before the Lord that we heartily believe that the whole doctrine contained in the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons of Dort fully agrees with the Word of God.

We promise, therefore, that we will diligently teach this doctrine and faithfully defend it without contradicting it publicly or privately in teaching or writing. We also declare that we reject all errors conflicting with the doctrine expressed in these confessions and promise to oppose, refute and help prevent such errors.

If at any time in the future it should happen that we would disagree with this doctrine or any part of it, we promise that we will not propose, teach, preach or publish our opinion, either publicly or privately; rather, we will first make this known to the consistory and the classis, and if necessary to the broader assemblies, for judgment. We are willing to submit to their decision; if we refuse we will by that very fact be suspended from our office.

If at any time the consistory, classis or regional synod, upon sufficient grounds of suspicion and in order to maintain the unity and purity of the teaching, would decide to require of us a further explanation of our views, we do hereby promise that we are always willing and ready to comply under the penalty of suspension.

However, we reserve the right of appeal if we believe ourselves wronged. During the time of appeal we will acquiesce in the decision of consistory or classis or regional synod.

Form to be used at classis meetings:

We, the undersigned, ministers of God's Word belonging to Classis _____, do, by our subscription,

declare sincerely and in good conscience before the Lord that we heartily believe that the whole doctrine contained in the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism and the Canons of Dort fully agrees with the Word of God.

We promise, therefore, that we will diligently teach this doctrine and faithfully defend it without contradicting it publicly or privately in teaching or writing. We also declare that we reject all errors conflicting with the doctrine expressed in these confessions and promise to oppose, refute and help prevent such errors.

If at any time in the future it should happen that we would disagree with this doctrine or any part of it, we promise that we will not propose, teach, preach or publish our opinion, either publicly or privately; rather, we will first make this known to the consistory and the classis, and if

¹⁹ GS 2016 Art. 54.

necessary to the broader assemblies, for judgment. We are willing to submit to their decision; if we refuse we will by that very fact be suspended from our office.

If at any time the classis or regional synod, upon sufficient grounds of suspicion and in order to maintain the unity and purity of the teaching, would decide to require of us a further explanation of our views, we do hereby promise that we are always willing and ready to comply under the penalty of suspension.

However, we reserve the right of appeal if we believe ourselves wronged. During the time of appeal we will acquiesce in the decision of classis or regional synod.

