

REPORT TO GENERAL SYNOD ALDERGROVE 2025

Introduction

The Standing Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise* (Committee) hereby submits a report on its activities in regard to the mandate given by General Synod (GS) Guelph-Emmanuel 2022.

We thank our Lord for allowing us to work together to fulfill the mandate given to us by GS 2022. The *Book of Praise* continues to be well received by the churches and others. This is indicated by the fact that over the past years the Committee has received and granted numerous copyright requests to make use of a variety of psalms and hymns (and even some prose sections) from the *Book of Praise* in other publications. What a blessing that our churches' songbook continues to facilitate the praise and worship of our great and awesome God by members in our churches and beyond!

Overview of the Report

For ease of reading, the report is divided into four sections. Each section deals with a key element of the Committee's mandate and is organized under headings and subheadings with specific references to the *Acts* of GS 2022.

SECTION ONE

Mandate received from GS 2022:

- 1. Implement Synod decisions on Committee proposals (*Acts*, Arts. 43, 71)**
- 2. Study and propose appropriate changes to the forms for Lord's Supper (*Acts*, Art. 120)**
- 3. Provide shorter forms for the celebration of the Lord's Supper (*Acts*, Art. 156)**
- 4. Foster awareness of the existence of the *Book of Praise* (*Acts*, Art. 120)**
- 5. Publishing and funding model (*Acts*, Art. 120)**
- 6. Facilitate and evaluate input on the proposed psalms and hymns and existing hymns (*Acts*, Art. 111)**
- 7. Proposal for a principled view of the *Book of Praise***
- 8. Contact with the Standing Committee for the Australian *Book of Praise* (*Acts*, Art. 120)**

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- 1 **9. Corporate status (*Acts*, Art. 120)**
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- 3 **10. Maintain archives and website (*Acts*, Art. 120)**
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- 5 **11. Appoint committee member to validate and submit to the treasurer of the General**
- 6 **Fund all expenses for committee work (*Acts*, Art. 120)**
- 7
- 8 **12. Committee membership (*Acts*, Art. 170)**
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10 **SECTION TWO**

- 11
- 12 **13. Corrections for a future printing of the *Book of Praise***
- 13
- 14 **14. Committee proposals**
- 15

16 **SECTION THREE**

- 17
- 18 **15. Committee address**
- 19
- 20 **16. Acknowledgements and summary of requests**

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1 **SECTION ONE**

2
3 **Mandate received from GS 2022:**

4
5 **1. Implementation of Synod decisions on Committee proposals (*Acts*, Arts. 43, 71)**

6
7 1.1 *Acts*, Arts. 43, 3.1; 71, 3.1.1, 3.3.1, 3.5.1

8 Remove the bracketed qualifier “For the Second Service” from the Abbreviated Form for
9 the Celebration of the Lord’s Supper.

10 Amend the wording and musical notation of Hymn 1 and the Apostles’ Creed to the
11 Committee’s recommendation.

12 Adopt the updated language for Hymn 55 as recommended by the Committee.

13 Adopt the change of melody for Hymn 58 as recommended by the Committee.

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15 The Committee has noted these changes for the next publication of the *Book of Praise* or an
16 authorized augment.

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18 **2. Study and propose appropriate changes to the forms for Lord’s Supper (*Acts*, Art.
19 **120**) per the following considerations:**

20
21 *Acts* 2019, Art. 23 Consideration 3.1

22 RSE Nov. 2018 makes a valid point that the English language has changed and therefore
23 the use of masculine pronouns in the forms for Lord’s Supper could make them liable to
24 misinterpretation.

25
26 *Acts* 2019, Art. 23 Consideration 3.2

27 General Synod has been served by SCBP in matters of linguistic changes to the liturgical
28 forms (see GS 2013 Art. 101). It would be advisable to ask the Committee to study this and
29 propose appropriate changes to the Lord’s Supper forms giving special attention to the
30 personal nature of self-examination. In this process the churches would have the
31 opportunity to interact with any proposed changes.

32
33 *Acts* 2022, Art. 120, 3.8.1

34 Fulfill as yet the directive of GS 2019 to study and propose appropriate changes to the
35 masculine pronouns used in Lord’s Supper forms.

36
37 2.1 Process of fulfilling the mandate

38 To begin to fulfill this mandate from GS 2022, the Committee considered the strengths and
39 weaknesses of four options: 1) the current Form (the third-person masculine singular,
40 “he/his/himself”); 2) the first-person plural cohortative; 3) the second-person singular
41 imperative; 4) the third-person indefinite plural (“they/their/themselves”). We also sought
42 out the advice of Dr. Arjan de Visser, Dr. William Helder, and Dr. Jason Van Vliet.

43 Further, we considered the relevant formulations in the liturgical forms of various sister
44 churches. From our consideration of the above advisers and our own study of the issue, the
45 Committee reckoned that while there remains merit in the current form (option #1), it

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1 would not be in keeping with the spirit of GS 2022’s mandate to propose that to GS 2025 as
 2 the preferred option. Furthermore, we judged the third-person indefinite plural (option #4)
 3 to be the least appealing option, given its vague, imprecise formulation.

4
 5 The Committee gravitated toward the first-person plural cohortative and the second-
 6 person singular imperative (options #2 and 3, respectively) as the strongest among the four.
 7 An overarching consideration that led us to this is as follows. First Corinthians 11:17–34
 8 contains predominantly second-person plurals (“you”), with first-person plurals in two
 9 verses (verses 31–32). Verse 28, however, in its call to self-examination in advance of the
 10 celebration of the sacrament, distinguishes itself by including three things: 1) the third-
 11 person masculine singular imperative δοκιμαζέτω (“let one examine himself”); 2) the use of
 12 the generic ἄνθρωπος (“man/person”); 3) the third-person singular masculine reflexive
 13 pronoun ἑαυτὸν (“himself”). The coordinating of these three parts of the sentence points up
 14 the emphasis on the individual in the preparation for the Lord’s Supper. We need to retain
 15 this emphasis in the section of the Lord’s Supper liturgical forms that deals with self-
 16 examination, as GS 2022 noted, because that is where we are personally addressed three
 17 times in succession at every Lord’s Supper celebration. Either the first-person plural
 18 cohortative or the second-person singular or plural imperative facilitates this personal
 19 emphasis. The so-called singular “they” (e.g., “Let a person consider *their* sins”) succumbs
 20 to both awkwardness (where “their” linguistically disagrees with its antecedent “a person”
 21 in number, person, and gender) and the contemporary gender politics, which in our
 22 reckoning disqualify it as an option worthy of serious consideration.

23 **Option #1 – First-Person Plural Cohortative**

24 The use of the *first-person plural cohortative* would entail replacing “let everyone” with
 25 “let us” or “let us all,” and changing personal pronouns from the singular to the plural, as
 26 required. As follows:
 27

28
 29 First, let **us** consider **our** sins and accursedness, so that **we**, detesting **ourselves**, may humble
 30 **ourselves** before God. For the wrath of God against sin is so great that he could not leave it
 31 unpunished, but has punished it in his beloved Son Jesus Christ by the bitter and shameful
 32 death on the cross.

33 Second, let **us** search our hearts **whether we** also believe the sure promise of God that all
 34 **our** sins are forgiven **us** only for the sake of the suffering and death of Jesus Christ and that
 35 the perfect righteousness of Christ is freely given **us** as **our** own, as if **we ourselves** had
 36 fulfilled all righteousness.

37 Third, let **us** examine **our** consciences **whether it is our** sincere desire to show true
 38 thankfulness to God with **our** entire **lives** and, laying aside all enmity, hatred, and envy, to
 39 live with **our** neighbours **in true love and unity**.

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 41 We see the following as strengths and weakness of this option.
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Strengths:

1. Most of the liturgical form is already worded in the first-person plural. Also, the final part of the “Institution” section is in the first-person plural: “We must first rightly examine ourselves.”
2. It can be argued that this option loses some of the personal and direct quality. The first-person plural cohortative expresses *communal* action, yet at this juncture in the Form the emphasis is on *personal, self-examination*. This argument, however, falls away when we note that the personal and direct quality is suitably and sufficiently introduced already in the Form’s opening quote from 1 Corinthians 11 (“*Whoever, therefore, eats the bread.... Let a person examine himself*”). Indeed, this personal element remains applicable to the very next paragraph, even though it marks a switch from the third-person singular to the first-person plural: “In order that *we* may now celebrate this holy supper of the Lord to *our* comfort, *we* must first rightly examine *ourselves*. Further, *we* must use it as Christ intended it, namely, to his remembrance.” This paragraph, in the context of the preceding 1 Corinthians 11 quotation, reiterates that the self-examination in view is indeed individual.

Weakness:

1. This approach loses some of the personal and direct quality. The first-person plural cohortative expresses *communal* action, yet at this juncture in the Form the emphasis is on the *personal, self-examination*.
 - We could then strengthen the introductory sentence under “Self-examination” to say something like, “In order that we may now celebrate this holy supper of the Lord to our comfort, we must each first rightly examine ourselves.”

Option #2 – Second-Person Imperative

The use of the *second-person imperative* should be in the singular, and the reflexive pronouns along with it. This would be in keeping with the personal nature of the Form at the juncture in question. This would entail the following changes:

First, **consider your sins** and accursedness, so that **you, detesting yourself, may humble yourself** before God. For the wrath of God against sin is so great that he could not leave it unpunished, but has punished it in his beloved Son Jesus Christ by the bitter and shameful death on the cross.

Second, **search your heart whether you also believe the sure promise of God that all your sins are forgiven you** only for the sake of the suffering and death of Jesus Christ and that the perfect righteousness of Christ is freely given **you as your own, as if you yourself** had fulfilled all righteousness.

Third, **examine your conscience whether it is your** sincere desire to show true thankfulness to God with **your** entire life and, laying aside all enmity, hatred, and envy, to live with **your** neighbour in true love and unity.

We see the following as strength and weakness of this option.

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Strength:

1. Second-person imperatives feel the most direct. For example, “Consider your sins and accursedness” has a more powerful impact than “Let us consider our sins and accursedness.”

Weakness:

1. The use of the second-person singular is unusual in the liturgical forms. It appears nowhere other than in the questions used when vows have to be made. This is not necessarily a weakness of the use of the second-person singular; it simply points to what would be an unusual flow in the Form, in comparison to our other forms.

2.2 Recommendation

The Committee recommends a modifying of the current “Self-examination” section of the Lord’s Supper liturgical form to the first-person plural cohortative, as illustrated above under Option #1, along with the suggested modifying of the introductory sentence under “Self-examination” to, “In order that we may now celebrate this holy supper of the Lord to our comfort, we must each first rightly examine ourselves.”

3. **Provide shorter forms for the celebration of the Lord’s Supper (*Acts*, Art. 156)**

3.1 Mandate regarding shorter forms for the Lord’s Supper

To mandate the Committee 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.

3.2 Process of fulfilling the mandate

The Committee reviewed forms of the following sister churches: the United Reformed Churches of North America, the Reformed Churches of New Zealand, the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, and the Reformed Churches of the United States. They were reviewed in light of the requirements of GS 2022.

With regard to the second requirement, the Committee used the headings in our current forms as guidelines. Most of the forms were shorter than the current Abbreviated Form but lacked one or more aspects of our current forms. The only form in content comparable to our current shorter form is the form of the RCUS. However, it is longer than our current Abbreviated Form and therefore not in line with the third requirement from GS 2022.

GS 2022 also indicated that the Committee could draft new shorter forms. We submit the following two drafts to GS 2025 for possible adoption and use in the churches. The first draft is based on the Scripture passages that underpin our confession concerning the Lord’s Supper. We submit it both with and without Scripture and other references. The second draft is based on what we express in our confessions concerning the Lord’s Supper.

We are thankful for the input of Dr. K. Dieleman, Dr. W. Helder, and Dr. J. Van Vliet.

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3.2.1 Possible short forms

Short Form #1 (without Scripture and other references)

Beloved in the Lord Jesus Christ,

Institution

The Lord Jesus, on the night when he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way he also took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me” (1 Cor 11:24–25). Therefore, the cup of blessing that we bless is a participation in the blood of Christ and the bread that we break is a participation in the body of Christ.

Explanation

The Lord’s Supper is a visible sign and seal of the promise of the gospel. This is God’s promise to us: he graciously grants us forgiveness of sins and everlasting life because of the one sacrifice of Christ on the cross. Christ humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on the cross. By our sins we daily increase our debt before God, but on the cross Christ cancelled our debt and delivered us from eternal death. In addition, the evil inclinations that still cling to us were crucified with him. Indeed, through his death, he even destroyed the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil. In this way he secured for us a full and eternal redemption.

Self-Examination

Our Father in heaven gave his only begotten Son as the atoning sacrifice to be received by faith. Faith is the hand and mouth of our soul. To ensure that we eat and drink this spiritual banquet in a worthy manner, we must first examine ourselves.

Each one of us must humbly confess that we have done evil in God’s sight and have fallen short of his glory. We should grieve with godly, heartfelt sorrow that we have offended our God in this way.

At the same time, we are called to trust wholeheartedly that in Christ we are declared righteous before God. In fact, with Christ as our righteousness and holiness, it is as if we had never committed any sin and as if we had accomplished all the obedience that our Saviour has rendered for us and in our place. So, if we confess with our mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in our heart that God raised him from the dead, we will be saved.

Surely, the fitting response to such a great salvation is sincere gratitude. Therefore, each of us should also consider whether we genuinely desire to serve our God according to his Word, to forsake the world, and to love our neighbours as ourselves.

Invitation, Admonition, and Assurance

God will certainly receive in grace all who trust and obey in this way. Christ Jesus, who calls us to this supper, says, “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will

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1 give you rest” (Mt 11:28). However, all those who do not sincerely believe this gospel and
 2 do not repent of their sins, should abstain from this holy meal. The apostle Paul also warns,
 3 “Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner
 4 will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord” (1 Cor 11:27). This admonition,
 5 though, is not meant to discourage those who seek their life outside of themselves and in
 6 Jesus Christ. Our compassionate God has promised not to snuff out the smouldering wick
 7 nor to break the bruised reed. In Christ we receive the confidence to draw near to the throne
 8 of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

9 **Prayer**

10 Have mercy on us, O God, according to your steadfast love. Wash us thoroughly from our
 11 iniquity. For against you we have sinned. If you should mark our iniquities, O Lord, who
 12 could stand? But with you there is forgiveness. You have said that if we confess our sins,
 13 you are faithful and just to forgive us our sins. In Christ, we ask, hide your face from our
 14 sins, and blot out all our iniquities. Create in us a clean heart, O God, and renew a right
 15 spirit within us. We ask this all in the name of our Saviour. Amen.

16 **Confession/Creed**

17 Let us now profess our catholic, undoubted Christian faith.
 18 (The Apostles’ Creed or The Nicene Creed)

19 **Exhortation**

20 Since then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is,
 21 seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that
 22 are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ
 23 who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory, and he will drink the
 24 wine new with us in the kingdom of his Father.

25 **Communion**

26 (When he breaks the bread, the minister shall say:)

27 The bread which we break is the communion of the body of Christ. Take, eat, remember
 28 and believe that the body of our Lord Jesus Christ was broken for the complete forgiveness
 29 of all our sins.

30 (When he gives the cup:)

31 The cup of blessing, for which we give thanks, is the communion of the blood of Christ.
 32 Take, drink, remember and believe that the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ was
 33 shed for the complete forgiveness of all our sins.

34 **Doxology**

35 To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom,
 36 priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

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Prayer

Father in heaven, according to the riches of your glory, grant that through this Supper we may be strengthened with power in our inner being through your Spirit. May Christ so dwell in our hearts through faith that we become more and more rooted and grounded in love. Help us, along with all your saints, to know the love of Christ more deeply and so be filled with your fullness. Amen.

Short Form #1 (with Scripture and other references)

Beloved in the Lord Jesus Christ,

Institution

The Lord Jesus, on the night when he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way he also took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me” (1 Cor 11:24–25). Therefore, the cup of blessing that we bless is a participation in the blood of Christ and the bread that we break is a participation in the body of Christ (1 Cor 10:16).

Explanation

The Lord’s Supper is a visible sign and seal of the promise of the gospel. This is God’s promise to us: he graciously grants us forgiveness of sins and everlasting life because of the one sacrifice of Christ on the cross (LD 25, q/a 66). Christ humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on the cross (Phil 2:8). By our sins we daily increase our debt before God (LD 5, q/a 13), but on the cross Christ cancelled our debt (Col 2:15) and delivered us from eternal death (LD 16, q/a 44). In addition, the evil inclinations that still cling to us were crucified with him (Rom 6:6; LD 2, q/a 5; LD 51, q/a 126). Indeed, through his death, he even destroyed the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil (Heb 2:14). In this way he secured for us a full and eternal redemption (Ps 130:7–8; Heb 9:12).

Self-Examination

Our Father in heaven gave his only begotten Son as the atoning sacrifice to be received by faith (Rom 3:25). Faith is the hand and mouth of our soul (BC 35). To ensure that we eat and drink this spiritual banquet in a worthy manner, we must first examine ourselves (1 Cor 11:27–28).

Each one of us must humbly confess that we have done evil in God’s sight (Ps 51:4) and have fallen short of his glory (Rom 3:23). We should grieve with godly, heartfelt sorrow that we have offended our God in this way (2 Cor 7:10–11; LD 30, q/a 81; LD 33, q/a 89).

At the same time, we are called to trust wholeheartedly (Form of Baptism) that in Christ we are declared righteous before God (LD 23). In fact, with Christ as our righteousness and holiness (1 Cor 1:30), it is as if we had never committed any sin and as if we had accomplished all the obedience that our Saviour has rendered for us and in our place (LD 23, q/a 60; BC 22). So, if we confess with our mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in our

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1 heart that God raised him from the dead, we will be saved (Rom 10:9). Surely, the fitting
 2 response to such a great salvation is sincere gratitude. Therefore, each of us should also
 3 consider whether we genuinely desire to serve our God according to his Word, to forsake
 4 the world, and to love our neighbours as ourselves (Form for the Profession of Faith; Matt
 5 22:39).

6 7 **Invitation, Admonition, and Assurance**

8 God will certainly receive in grace all who trust and obey in this way. Christ Jesus, who
 9 calls us to this supper, says, “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will
 10 give you rest” (Mt 11:25). However, all those who do not sincerely believe this gospel and
 11 do not repent of their sins, should abstain from this holy meal. The apostle Paul also warns,
 12 “Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner
 13 will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord” (1 Cor 11:27). This admonition,
 14 though, is not meant to discourage those who seek their life outside of themselves and in
 15 Jesus Christ. Our compassionate God has promised not to snuff out the smouldering wick
 16 nor to break the bruised reed (Isa 42:3). In Christ we receive the confidence to draw near to
 17 the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need (Heb
 18 4:16).

19 20 **Prayer**

21 Have mercy on us, O God, according to your steadfast love. Wash us thoroughly from our
 22 iniquity. For against you we have sinned. If you should mark our iniquities, O Lord, who
 23 could stand? But with you there is forgiveness. You have said that if we confess our sins,
 24 you are faithful and just to forgive us our sins. In Christ we ask, hide your face from our
 25 sins, and blot out all our iniquities. Create in us a clean heart, O God, and renew a right
 26 spirit within us. We ask this all in the name of our Saviour. Amen.

27 28 **Confession/Creed**

29 Let us now profess our catholic, undoubted Christian faith.
 30 (The Apostles’ Creed or The Nicene Creed)

31 32 **Exhortation**

33 Since then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is,
 34 seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that
 35 are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ
 36 who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory (Col 3:1–3), and he
 37 will drink the wine new with us in the kingdom of his Father (Mt 26:29).

38 39 **Communion**

40 (When he breaks the bread, the minister shall say:)

41 The bread which we break is the communion of the body of Christ. Take, eat, remember
 42 and believe that the body of our Lord Jesus Christ was broken for the complete forgiveness
 43 of all our sins.
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1 (When he gives the cup:)

2 The cup of blessing, for which we give thanks, is the communion of the blood of Christ.

3 Take, drink, remember and believe that the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ was

4 shed for the complete forgiveness of all our sins.

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6 **Doxology**

7 To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom,
8 priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen (Rev
9 1:5–6).

10
11 **Prayer**

12 Father in heaven, according to the riches of your glory, grant that through this supper we
13 may be strengthened with power in our inner being through your Spirit. May Christ so
14 dwell in our hearts through faith that we become more and more rooted and grounded in
15 love. Help us, along with all your saints, to know the love of Christ more deeply and so be
16 filled with your fullness. Amen.

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18 **Short Form #2**

19 Beloved in the Lord Jesus Christ,

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21 **Institution and Explanation**

22 The Lord's Supper has been instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ on the night when he was
23 betrayed. He commands us to eat the broken bread and drink the cup in remembrance of
24 him. With this sign and seal, he testifies to us that he graciously grants us forgiveness of
25 sins and everlasting life because of his one sacrifice on the cross. All his suffering and
26 obedience are as certainly ours as if we ourselves had suffered and paid for our sins. Our
27 Lord assures us that as certainly as we receive and taste the bread and cup as sure signs of
28 his body and blood so surely does he nourish and refresh our souls to eternal life with his
29 crucified body and shed blood.

30
31 **Self-Examination and Admonition**

32 Scripture warns us not to eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner
33 lest we eat and drink judgment upon ourselves. For this reason we need to examine
34 ourselves. We are to be truly displeased with ourselves because we have broken God's
35 laws. According to the command of Christ, we admonish all who, by word or deed, show
36 that they are unbelieving and refuse to repent to abstain from the table lest the covenant of
37 God be profaned and his wrath kindled against the whole congregation. But this is not
38 meant to discourage us. The Lord gave us his supper to help us in our weakness and
39 struggles. The Lord's Supper is for sinners who seek their lives outside of themselves in
40 Jesus Christ. In spite of our many sins, we trust that these sins are forgiven us and that our
41 remaining weakness is covered by the suffering and death of Christ. As a result we desire
42 more and more to strengthen our faith and live in thankful obedience to him.

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Fellowship

The Lord's Supper is a sign and seal that Christ unites us with himself. We share in all the treasures and gifts of his love. This supper also shows and confirms that through Christ's sacrifice we are members of one body. Therefore, we are duty-bound to use Christ's gifts readily and cheerfully for each other's benefit.

Prayer

Our Father in heaven, we thank you that you gave your only begotten Son for the complete forgiveness of all our sins. By his blood, we have been transferred from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light. We ask that, by the power of the Holy Spirit, you confirm us in the truth that we have complete forgiveness of all our sins through the one sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ. Strengthen our faith by the use of this sacrament so that we may be assured of eternal life and be made willing to live for you from the heart. In the name of Jesus Christ we ask this, Amen.

Exhortation

Even though Christ is in heaven at the right hand of the Father and we are on earth, yet we are united to his sacred body through the Holy Spirit who lives both in Christ and in us. Let us then lift up our hearts to him and so eat and drink in remembrance of him.

Confession/Creed

Let us now profess our catholic, undoubted Christian faith.
(The Apostles' Creed or The Nicene Creed)

Communion

(When he breaks the bread, the minister shall say:)

The bread which we break is the communion of the body of Christ. Take, eat, remember and believe that the body of the Lord Jesus Christ was broken for the complete forgiveness of all our sins.

(When he gives the cup:)

The cup of blessing, for which we give thanks, is the communion of the blood of Christ. Take, drink, remember and believe that the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ was poured out for the complete forgiveness of all our sins.

Doxology

To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honour and glory and might forever and ever. Amen.

Thanksgiving

Father in heaven, we thank you for the riches of your grace. We pray that, governed by your Spirit, we may be united more and more to Christ. May this celebration move us to a heartfelt love of you and our neighbour. We also long for the day when our Lord will drink the wine new with us in your kingdom. To you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one only God who lives and rules forever, we give thanks. Amen.

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1 3.3 Recommendation

2 The Committee recommends the two proposed shorter Lord’s Supper forms for adoption
3 and use in the churches.

4
5 3.4 Usage note

6 Liturgical forms have a profound impact on the life of the churches through the generations
7 because they are used repeatedly. In the sacraments, many doctrinal truths come together
8 and to unpack these in a biblically faithful way takes time and space. Our current long Form
9 does this very well and a short Form cannot bring this out in the same way. Therefore not
10 using the long Form on a regular basis could lead to important portions of the biblical truth
11 to slowly fall out of our communal understanding. On the other side, short forms can bring
12 out elements which the long Form does not mention. For this reason it would be helpful for
13 the churches to use the shorter forms in conjunction with the long Form and not instead of
14 it. The Committee suggests adding to the shorter forms a “usage note” that indicates that
15 they are to be used in conjunction with the longer Form.

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17 **4. Foster awareness of the existence of the *Book of Praise* (Acts, Art. 120)**

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19 The Committee notes with gratitude the many expressions of interest in our *Book of Praise*.
20 During the past three years, the Committee has continued to respond to various requests for
21 information regarding the *Book of Praise*, and has dealt with a number of requests to copy,
22 in whole or in part, the Psalms and Hymns as well as other parts of the *Book of Praise*.
23 These requests came from both within and outside our federation of churches. The
24 Committee is delighted that there remains considerable interest at home and abroad in the
25 Anglo-Genevan Psalter.

26
27 The Committee requests that GS 2025 continue the mandate to foster an increased
28 awareness of the existence of the *Book of Praise* among others in the English-speaking
29 world.

30
31 **5. Publication and funding model (Acts, Art. 120)**

32
33 5.1 Mandate regarding publishing and funding model (Acts, Art. 120, 3.8.7)

34 To survey the churches to determine the priority/relative importance regarding types of
35 availability (digital, open-source, print), formatting (e.g., four-part harmony), and other
36 publication variables (including copyright) with regard to the *Book of Praise*, as listed in
37 the SCBP report:

38 To review the input of the churches, and on that basis, propose a publishing and funding
39 model to GS 2025.

40
41 5.2 Process of fulfilling the mandate

42 The Committee sent out a survey seeking feedback on copyright, layout and print, and
43 funding concerns. This report summarizes the feedback from the churches. (The original
44 survey follows our report; see Appendix 2.)
45

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Section 1 – Feedback from the Churches

1.1.Layout: Many of the churches expressed a strong appreciation for the layout of the current print editions of the *Book of Praise*. While a small number of churches would like the Committee to produce an authorized four-part version of the songs in our *Book of Praise* either alongside or instead of our current version, the large majority prefer to keep the *Book of Praise* as is. Some churches recommended a smaller book, uniform font, multiple stanzas under notation, larger font editions, etc., but no significant rationale was provided for making any substantial changes on these matters. Overall, there is strong appreciation for the current print editions of our *Book of Praise*. We anticipate that we will continue publishing the print version, as we have done recently.

Some feedback regarding the layout of digital versions of the *Book of Praise* was also helpful. We are seeking to find ways whereby we can address some of the suggestions, such as publishing a version that can be easily displayed on church screens with full notations. Being able to adapt the publication in order to place songs, confessional readings, and liturgical forms on the churches’ screens is becoming more important, and we are hoping to be able to assist the churches in this way.

1.2.Copyright: The majority of the churches encouraged the Committee to continue with the use of copyrighted materials despite the associated extra costs to the churches. For most churches, these costs are the purchase of two copyright licenses. Our *Book of Praise* in its current state has three externally copyrighted hymns (Hymns 38, 50, 79 – Hope Publishing), but with the expansion of the hymn section, we would be limited in what we propose if we as churches restricted our options to non-copyrighted hymns. Having received the feedback from the churches, we have decided not to limit our additions to or deletions from the hymn section based on copyright challenges. At the same time, a significant minority did encourage us to avoid copyrighted hymns so that copyright licensing and/or other legal considerations become moot.

There is a strong appreciation for our current version of the *Book of Praise*. We were encouraged to perhaps make available, as an open-source document, a digital version of the non-copyrighted content of our psalms and hymns for anyone to use. This, of course, has implications for our publishing considerations.

Given that most churches have already purchased copyright licenses, the Committee will continue to move forward with the recommendation and assumption that use of copyrighted songs remains a possibility and preference. Other decisions surrounding what might be made available more widely will have to be determined later, depending on funding considerations.

1.3.Funding Considerations: This part of the survey garnered the most varied feedback. There is a strong sentiment that we not publish a new version of the *Book of Praise* too quickly. Many have expressed an appreciation for the solidly bound edition of our book and the longevity of such an edition. Many find the idea of publishing a new edition to be unsteardly at this time. Instead, many suggest the publication of an authorized

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1 augment. This augment would include any new hymns and alternative psalms approved
 2 and added by GS 2025 as well as any approved changes to the notation and/or text of
 3 psalms and hymns in the current printed editions (e.g., Hymn 1). Taking such an
 4 approach would reduce immediate costs significantly.

5
 6 As to the principle of shared costs for the publication of the *Book of Praise*, there is
 7 general consensus that the costs for the layout and publication should be shared by the
 8 churches rather than rest on the shoulders of the publisher, whose ability to recoup such
 9 costs is strongly hindered by the small market for printed editions of the book. In the
 10 end, we believe that sharing the costs for the layout of and pre-press preparations for the
 11 print and digital versions of the *Book of Praise* should be shared by the churches by
 12 means of an assessment. The publisher could then decide on how many printed copies it
 13 would make available by means of pre-orders by churches and schools, charging a fair
 14 price for the printing only, rather than incorporating the other costs into the price of the
 15 book. The publisher would also be able to charge a fair price for any digital versions
 16 sold. This seems to have the greatest consensus by the churches and seems most fair to
 17 the publisher. This also seems to be amenable to the churches who make use of a digital
 18 version for worship services rather than providing the books in the pews or having the
 19 expectation that people have their own book.

21 5.3 Progress report

22 Regarding the mandate from GS 2022, the Committee has surveyed the churches and
 23 reviewed their input, but particularly on the matter of funding, we have been unable to
 24 complete the discussion with the publisher because of certain hindrances, namely, how best
 25 to handle unpaid inventory. Therefore, the Committee asks that this mandate be renewed
 26 for another three years.

28 5.4 Authorized augment

29 Because it would be unsteewardly to publish a *Book of Praise* at this time, the Committee
 30 would like to take up the suggestion of churches to publish an authorized augment. This
 31 augment would include the melody and text of any new hymns and alternative psalm
 32 settings approved by GS 2025, as well as any approved changes to the notation and/or text
 33 of psalms and hymns in the current printed editions (e.g., Hymn 1).

35 5.5 Recommendation regarding the authorized augment

36 The Committee recommends the following.

- 37 1. An authorized augment be published, to contain
 - 38 a. the melody and text of new hymns and alternative psalms approved by GS
 - 39 2025;
 - 40 b. the previously approved changes to Hymns 1, 55, and 58; and
 - 41 c. the shorter Lord's Supper forms, if they are adopted.
- 42 2. The costs for the layout of and pre-press preparations for the print and digital versions
 43 of the authorized augment be shared by the churches by means of an assessment as
 44 negotiated between the Committee and the publisher.

45
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1 5.6 Publisher’s report

2 Premier Printing Ltd. provided the Committee with a report outlining the number of hard-
3 copy books printed and distributed, as well as the number of electronic editions distributed
4 (see Appendix 1). It can be seen that digital sales make up the largest portion. Sales to
5 Australia are no longer included, now that the Australian churches have published their
6 own book.

7
8 **6. Facilitate and evaluate input on the proposed psalms and hymns and existing hymns**
9 **(Acts, Art. 111)**

10
11 6.1 Mandate regarding proposed psalms and hymns 2022

- 12 To provide the churches with a single file of the updated and recommended songs;
- 13 To receive for evaluation the churches’ letters to GS 2022 that engage the Committee’s
- 14 Supplement Reports 1 and 2 – Psalms and Hymns;
- 15 To encourage the churches to send responses directly to the committee before March 1,
- 16 2024. Individual church members are asked to send their submissions through their
- 17 consistories or councils;
- 18 To review the suitability of individual hymns which we already have in our *Book of Praise*,
- 19 for possible change, deletion, or improvement;
- 20 To evaluate additional input from the churches and prepare a report for the churches with
- 21 recommendations no less than 6 months prior to the next General Synod.

22
23 6.2 Process of fulfilling the mandate

24 Since a number of the proposed songs are copyrighted, the Committee first needed to
25 contact the copyright owners for a renewal of permission to publish their songs online. In
26 addition, there were several songs whose tune and/or text needed updating, per GS 2022’s
27 decision (Acts, Art. 111, 3.1). These matters were completed in early October 2022,
28 whereupon the Committee then notified the churches that the updated proposed songs were
29 all uploaded, both individually and in a single file, to the Resource section of the website.
30 The churches were encouraged to once again use the electronic survey forms for feedback
31 on the proposed songs, and have their feedback submitted to the Committee by March 1,
32 2024.

33
34 The Committee looked through the forty-three letters submitted by churches to GS 2022,
35 categorized them according to their various observations regarding the proposed psalms and
36 hymns, and took these observations into consideration in 2024 when dealing with all the
37 feedback from the churches.

38
39 Once the date of March 1, 2024, passed, the Committee gathered the additional feedback
40 that the churches submitted regarding the proposed songs. Two sub-committees were
41 struck, each of which having to review feedback on half of the proposed psalms and hymns.
42 These sub-committees evaluated all the submissions received from the churches and made
43 recommendations to the full Committee. The Committee then worked through these
44 recommendations to decide which alternative psalm settings and additional hymns would
45 be proposed to the churches for adding to our existing collection. See the supplement for

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1 the reports on all the proposed songs, including the final recommendations as to which
2 songs to adopt and which to leave out.

3 4 6.2.1 Evaluating the feedback on the proposed psalms and hymns

5 In fulfilling its mandate given by GS 2022, the Committee worked with the supplement
6 reports that served GS 2022, the letters to GS 2022 interacting with the reports, and the
7 feedback given after GS 2022.

8
9 The following explains the structure of our reports on the proposed songs, which are found
10 in the supplement.

11
12 **Step 1** refers to the Committee’s initial proposed psalm or hymn for testing in the churches,
13 in 2020.

14 **Step 2** summarizes the churches’ feedback on the song and the Committee’s subsequent
15 recommendation to GS 2022.

16 **Step 3** deals with the work done after GS 2022 and it has three components.

17 The Observations summarize the feedback of the churches after GS 2022. In the
18 Considerations, the Committee engages this feedback and at times offers further reflections.
19 This leads to the **Final Recommendation** for GS 2025.

20
21 Some further remarks about these steps are as follows.

22 Re Step 1, the Committee did not redo the work done by the Committee prior to GS 2022.
23 The report is therefore short on this point. If more information is needed for the initial
24 recommendation, see the supplement reports to GS 2022.¹

25
26 Re Step 2, the Committee was also selective with this step. If more information is needed,
27 see the supplement report to GS 2022.

28
29 Re Step 3, in considering the feedback from the churches, the Committee looked at the
30 statistics and the comments from the churches. The Considerations weighed both aspects.
31 Statistics by themselves are not a reason for either adopting or not adopting a song. They
32 are certainly helpful to show the sentiments of the churches that responded, but are only a
33 part of the total picture. Other factors are involved as well, such as the wording of the song,
34 its clarity, its suitability for worship, and whether its contents are already covered in other
35 songs within our *Book of Praise*.

36
37 The responses from the churches were helpful, but there were limitations in that regard.
38 Some of the feedback was more an opinion than an argued position. Positive feedback
39 could range from definitely wanting the song in the *Book of Praise* to not being opposed to
40 including the song. Similarly, negative feedback had a wide range as well, ranging from
41 “This is wrong” to “We do not need more.” At times, familiarity with the tune was more a
42 motivation to adopt than any particular appreciation of the words.

¹ These can be found online, at <https://canrc.org/documents/9146> and <https://canrc.org/documents/9164>, accessed Nov. 5, 2024.

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1 The Committee has tried to consider all these elements, and the structure of Step 3 reflects
 2 this. What appears first are the statistics, then the feedback on the text of the song, followed
 3 by feedback on the tune. The Committee realizes that evaluating the songs and the feedback
 4 by the churches has a subjective element to it, but hopefully this structure gives the
 5 churches insight into the reasoning of the Committee.

6.2.2 Recommended psalms

8 The report to GS 2022 contained several alternative versions of psalms. This was a result of
 9 the mandate given by GS 2019 to look for alternative tunes for so-called difficult tunes, as
 10 well as the Committee's subsequent survey of churches and individuals. Not only was there
 11 a desire to have alternative tunes for the difficult (not often sung) psalms, but there was also
 12 a desire to have alternative tunes to psalms that are more often sung so that there would be
 13 variation. With regard to the more difficult tunes, it was very hard to find suitable
 14 alternatives, while for the more frequently used ones, it was easier. This led to the proposal
 15 as presented to GS 2022.

17 The feedback from the churches after 2022 seems to indicate a shift within the churches
 18 away from alternative psalm renditions in favour of the Genevan settings. A recurring
 19 response with regard to the proposed alternatives was that though there may be no
 20 objections to them, the current Genevans are much loved and there is no need for
 21 alternatives. This explains why this report proposes considerably fewer alternative versions
 22 than the one submitted to GS 2022. The Committee wants to stress that these are not
 23 replacements of the corresponding Genevans, but additional or alternative ones. In the
 24 report submitted to GS 2022, several of the proposed alternative psalms were partial
 25 versifications of a psalm. From this report, it will be clear that the Committee was more
 26 sympathetic to including whole psalms rather than partial versifications.

28 Here then follows the list of eight alternative psalms that the Committee proposes for
 29 adoption. Please see the supplement for the reports on all the tested psalms.

- 30 1. Psalm 4 – Give Ear, God of My Righteousness (text copyright)
- 31 2. Psalm 13 – How Long Will You Forget Me? (text copyright)
- 32 3. Psalm 19 – The Heavens Above Declare (text copyright)
- 33 4. Psalm 22 – Amid the Thronging Worshipers
- 34 5. Psalm 23 – The Lord's My Shepherd
- 35 6. Psalm 41 – Blessed Is the One Who Helps the Weak and Poor (text copyright)
- 36 7. Psalm 112 – O Praise the LORD! The Man Is Blest (text/melody copyright)
- 37 8. Psalm 149 – Give Praise to the LORD (text copyright)

6.2.3 Review of current hymn section

40 In coming to a recommended set of hymns for adoption, the Committee had to review the
 41 suitability of individual hymns that we already have in our *Book of Praise*.

43 The Committee benefitted from the work done in this regard previous to GS 2022. A survey
 44 had previously been sent to the ministers in the federation. On the matter of the hymns in
 45 our current collection, the ministers were asked to respond to the following questions:

NOTES: _____

1. Which hymns do you tend to choose infrequently or very rarely for use in the worship services?
2. What keeps you from choosing those hymns for use in worship?

The Committee had received detailed responses from thirty ministers in the federation.

The Committee had also surveyed the accompanists in the churches and asked them to consider the following questions, relating to our hymns:

1. Which hymns do you find difficult for the congregation to sing?
2. Which musical elements in these hymns make them difficult to sing?

The Committee received feedback in two different ways from the churches. Some of the churches sent in a combined accompanists' report, while others sent in individual responses to the questions.

The Committee concluded from the feedback that the existing collection of hymns in the *Book of Praise* may remain intact.

6.2.4 Recommended hymns

When it came then to the churches' feedback on the proposed hymns, there was more positivity here than in relation to the proposed psalms.

In considering the feedback, the Committee struggled with the individual/singular aspects of many hymns. The Committee found particularly helpful an article by Gert Kwakkel, "I in Psalms and Hymns."²

Here then follows the list of twenty-three hymns that the Committee proposes for adoption. Please see the supplement for the reports on all the tested hymns.

1. Abide with Me
2. All Creatures of Our God and King
3. Amazing Grace!
4. Christians, Awake
5. Come, Thou Almighty King
6. Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus
7. Crown Him with Many Crowns
8. Guide Me, O My Great Redeemer
9. Hark! the Herald Angels Sing
10. How Deep the Father's Love for Us (text & melody copyright)
11. How Great Thou Art (text & melody copyright)
12. In Christ Alone (text & melody copyright)
13. Let All Things Now Living (melody copyright)
14. May the Mind of Christ, My Saviour

² <https://www.christianstudylibrary.org/article/i-psalms-and-hymns>, accessed Nov. 5, 2024.

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- 1 15. My Lord, I Did Not Choose You
- 2 16. O Christ, Our Hope, Our Heart's Desire
- 3 17. O Come, All Ye Faithful
- 4 18. O Sacred Head, Now Wounded
- 5 19. Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above
- 6 20. Speak, O Lord (text & melody copyright)
- 7 21. Take My Life, and Let It Be
- 8 22. When I Survey the Wondrous Cross
- 9 23. Your Law, O God, Is Our Delight (text copyright)

10
11 Since there is a cap of one hundred hymns (per GS 2004), here is the list of fifteen
12 recommended for adoption.

- 13
- 14 1. Abide with Me
- 15 2. All Creatures of Our God and King
- 16 3. Come, Thou Almighty King
- 17 4. Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus
- 18 5. Crown Him with Many Crowns
- 19 6. Guide Me, O My Great Redeemer
- 20 7. Hark! the Herald Angels Sing
- 21 8. How Deep the Father's Love for Us (text & melody copyright)
- 22 9. In Christ Alone (text & melody copyright)
- 23 10. Let All Things Now Living (melody copyright)
- 24 11. O Christ, Our Hope, Our Heart's Desire
- 25 12. O Come, All Ye Faithful
- 26 13. O Sacred Head, Now Wounded
- 27 14. Speak, O Lord (text & melody copyright)
- 28 15. Take My Life, and Let It Be

29
30 New permissions will have to be sought from each of the copyright holders should GS 2025
31 approve any of the copyrighted songs.

32 33 **7. Proposal for a principled view of the *Book of Praise***

34
35 Fulfilling certain aspects of the mandate from GS 2022 led the Committee to amply
36 consider the character of our churches' songbook. For the Committee was tasked with a)
37 reviewing the suitability of individual hymns in our existing collection, for possible change
38 or removal, and b) evaluating the churches' feedback on the proposed psalms and hymns
39 with a view to final recommendations (*Acts*, Art. 111, 3.3). These two tasks were carried
40 over from GS 2019, whose relevant decision included such terminology: "to get to the goal
41 of an *enhanced* and expanded selection of songs for the churches," and "the SCBP is the
42 authorized body for the *enhancement* and expansion of the BoP" (*Acts* GS 2019, Art. 142,
43 3.8, 3.9; emphasis added). This mandate is weighty, for it entails the potential modification,
44 by means of additions and/or deletions, of a songbook that is already a solid collection of
45 worship songs. Any "enhancement and expansion" of our songbook, therefore, should be

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1 governed by a principled view of the songbook, to aid us in *both* preserving and
2 strengthening our treasured *Book of Praise*.

3
4 As churches we have observed that “the Book of Psalms is foundational for the Church’s
5 songs” (“Principles and Guidelines,” Guideline 2³) and that “the Psalms have a
6 predominant place in the liturgy.”⁴ At the same time, the churches have also agreed that
7 scriptural hymns have a place in the liturgy. They “constitute a thank offering of praise
8 when we sing the facts of redemption by God in Jesus Christ our Lord.”⁵ In this way “the
9 songs of the Church...are to represent the full range of the revelation of God, Father, Son
10 and Holy Spirit” (“Principles and Guidelines,” Guideline 1). For this reason the division of
11 the hymns in the *Book of Praise* is according to the articles of the Apostles’ Creed.⁶

12
13 This approach to hymns is in line with what we see in Scripture.⁷ The songs we find in the
14 New Testament are anchored in the Psalms, but at the same time reflect on God’s work of
15 redemption as the church moves from the old to the new covenant. In Luke 1, in response to
16 the news of the conception of Christ by the Spirit, Mary sings her Magnificat, and in
17 response to the birth of John, his father Zechariah produces his Benedictus. Both hymns are
18 rather psalm-like (e.g., the Magnificat echoes the song of Hannah (1 Sam. 2:1–11), itself
19 resonant of Ps. 113). Similarly, the book of Revelation gives us some new songs from the
20 new covenant. “And they sang a new song, saying, ‘Worthy are you to take the scroll and to
21 open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from
22 every tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and
23 priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth’” (Rev. 5:9–10). The song, while
24 indeed echoing earlier revelation, is new insofar as it is a response to God’s new revelation
25 of the worthiness and honour of the heavenly Lamb. The same can be said of Rev. 15:3–4.
26 That is where the song of old, the Song of Moses, becomes the new song of Moses and of
27 the Lamb. Not all phrases in this new song come from either the Song of Moses or one of
28 the canonical psalms. Rather, it is imbued with the newness of the new covenant, telling of
29 a redemption greater than that of the exodus from Egypt.

30
31 The crafting and singing of songs in the New Testament reflect the living, dynamic
32 character of the covenant: the Lord acts, and his people respond by singing afresh of his
33 work, building on what they already knew of him. These songs are “a response of God’s
34 people to God’s revelation and the experience of a new act of deliverance.”⁸ Appropriately
35 so, for God, by further acting and revealing himself, gave his people so much more to sing
36 about. The new covenant realities surpass the old covenant shadows. Particularly the author
37 to the Hebrews labours to show that Christ is greater and more glorious than all that

³ See Supplement 1, page 1–2, for a reproducing of the “Principles and Guidelines for the Selection of Music in the Church,” originally printed in Appendix 2B of the *Acts* of GS Chatham 2004 (pp. 176–77).

⁴ *Book of Praise: Anglo-Genevan Psalter* (Winnipeg, MB; Premier Printing, 2014), v.

⁵ *Book of Praise: Anglo-Genevan Psalter*, v.

⁶ *Book of Praise: Anglo-Genevan Psalter*, 356–57.

⁷ For some of what follows, the Committee gratefully acknowledges its use of various insights coming from the report of the FRCSA Deputies Liturgical Music report to Synod 2021, “Laat die woord van Christus ryklik in julle woon.”

⁸ Pieter A. Verhoef, “New,” in *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, 2:36.

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1 preceded him in the covenant of grace. Heb. 8:6 says, “But as it is, Christ has obtained a
 2 ministry that is as *much more excellent* than the old as the *covenant* he mediates is better,
 3 since it is enacted on *better* promises.” While the old and new covenant are one covenant in
 4 which there is unity and continuity, this verse emphasizes the superiority of the covenant in
 5 the age of fulfilment, by virtue of the now-heavenly ministry of Christ. The promises and
 6 obligations of the new covenant are explicitly carried out through Christ. New Testament
 7 worship is heavenly in location, through Christ (Heb. 12:18, 22–24). Thus, our worship,
 8 including our singing, is to be patterned after the heavenly worship that includes new songs,
 9 like those of Revelation.

10
 11 Our current collection of hymns reflects our churches’ desire to sing according to the riches
 12 of the new covenant (see CO Art. 55). The Psalms foreshadow and anticipate Christ and
 13 things of the new covenant, but they do not explicitly cover the fullness of God’s trinitarian
 14 revelation.

15
 16 Hence, our hymns. If the church must worship on the day that points to our redemption
 17 achieved (Sunday), if we must pray in the name that sums up our redemption achieved (“in
 18 Jesus’ name”), and if we must preach the message of our redemption achieved (Christ
 19 crucified and raised), then our singing should also capture the message of redemption
 20 achieved and also applied. With God’s help, that is possible. Christ has given the Holy
 21 Spirit to the church of the new covenant to guide her into all the truth, taking what is
 22 Christ’s and declaring it to us (John 16:13–14).⁹

23
 24 The main reason for adding a hymn, even one that sings about a theme already found in the
 25 Psalms, should be that it *complements* the Psalms with the wealth of the new covenant. One
 26 could therefore say that “the hymnody springs from the psalmody; it is inspired by the
 27 psalmody.”¹⁰ It comments on and continues the psalmody, which implies that the psalmody
 28 must be well understood before one can appreciate how the hymnody actually complements
 29 it. To illustrate, our Hymn 45, “Jesus Shall Reign,” is a Christ-centred rendering of Ps. 72,
 30 but its value cannot be fully appreciated unless the church already knows Ps. 72.

31
 32 In view of the above, we need to ask ourselves, Are we singing of the fullness of our
 33 salvation in Christ with what we currently have? To help identify where our collection has
 34 both sufficient and insufficient coverage of a scriptural topic in light of the New Testament
 35 revelation, the Committee would be willing to prepare a spreadsheet. Such would show to
 36 what extent our adopted psalms and hymns cover the doctrines of the Christian faith under
 37 the headings in the Apostles’ Creed.¹¹ The spreadsheet would confirm where our current

⁹ For more on the church making new, uninspired hymns, see the response of Dr. Arjan de Visser to a letter interacting with an earlier article of his on adding hymns, in *Clarion*, vol. 63, no. 24, 654–55. See further 1 Cor. 14:15, 26; Eph. 5:14, for non-inspired new covenant hymns.

¹⁰ Hughes Oliphant Old, *Leading in Prayer: A Workbook for Worship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995), 324. See pp. 322–25 for a fuller discussion.

¹¹ The Committee is aware of published lists that give suggested psalms and hymns to sing in relation to each Lord’s Day. Our observation, however, is that such lists include even songs that have very brief, passing reference to the respective topic/doctrine. Such lists, therefore, have rather limited usefulness.

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1 collection sufficiently covers or does not cover a topic/doctrine according to the terms of
 2 the new covenant. Decisive in judging how well a topic is covered is *not* the number of
 3 psalms that are already there on the matter, but to what degree our songbook expresses the
 4 topic in the light of the complete divine revelation. For example, if we found fifteen psalms
 5 that sing of the resurrection, we would still benefit from hymns that build on the psalms by
 6 expressing the fullness of God’s revelation on the topic: the Father approving of his Son’s
 7 sacrifice; the Son raised as the firstfruits of the final resurrection harvest, and raised for our
 8 justification, sanctification, and glorification; and the Spirit raising us up with Christ to a
 9 new life.

10 *How does this work out?*

11
 12
 13 By necessity, this proposed view of the church’s songbook will then *limit* the number of
 14 hymns that can be added. This view will prevent us from being flooded with “the vast
 15 multiplication of hymns” in our songbook, a concern GS 2007 noted in view of such a
 16 development in the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (*Acts* GS 2007, Art. 133, 4.2).
 17 We are promoting here what amounts to a *principled cap*, not a *numbered cap*. Synods
 18 would not be obligated to accept and include in our songbook every scripturally sound
 19 hymn just because it is scriptural. Instead, with the above framework, if a party (church or
 20 individual) wants a certain hymn added to our songbook, that party needs to *show*, in a
 21 submission to the Committee via the local church, how such a hymn *adds* to what we
 22 already have. The party needs to *prove* how the hymn *further* helps the church to sing the
 23 fullness of God’s words and deeds. The Committee would review and evaluate the party’s
 24 proposal and come to the next synod with its recommendation as to whether or not the
 25 synod should adopt the proposed hymn.

26
 27 In cases where there are themes and subjects already covered sufficiently by the existing
 28 hymns, our above considerations would suggest that such areas of the songbook need no
 29 further additions. To illustrate, our songbook currently has a number of songs pertaining to
 30 the Holy Spirit (Pss. 51:4; 119 (implicit, by virtue of declared meditation upon the Word);
 31 143:6; Hy. 47–50). There is one provisionally approved hymn that fits in that section of the
 32 *Book of Praise*, namely, “For Your Gift of God the Spirit.” The Committee is proposing
 33 that GS 2025 not adopt this hymn. Our impression, along with that of many churches, is
 34 that this hymn does not add to the existing songs on the Spirit, nor for that matter do its
 35 lyrics speak more clearly than what we already have and so serve as a replacement for one
 36 of our existing hymns.

37
 38 In summary:

- 39 1. In the “Principles and Guidelines” for selecting songs, the Committee suggests the
 40 addition of the guideline that hymns that are added will be those that deal with the
 41 riches of the new covenant.
- 42 2. The Committee suggests that any proposal for a further addition to our songbook,
 43 with or without a hymn cap, needs to prove that such an addition would fill a gap in
 44 the current collection of our worship songs.

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- 1 3. The identifying of such gaps would be facilitated by a spreadsheet that demonstrates
2 to what extent the current collection covers the fullness of God’s trinitarian
3 revelation. The Committee would be willing to prepare such spreadsheet.
4

5 7.1 Recommendation

6 The Committee recommends that Synod decide

- 7 1. to present to the churches the above, distilled in the summary, as the path to follow
8 for proposing additional hymns;
9 2. to mandate the Committee to produce a spreadsheet identifying to what extent the
10 doctrines of the Apostles’ Creed are covered by our adopted songs.
11

12 **8. Contact with Australian Sister Churches (Acts, Art. 120)**

13 8.1 Official communication

14 GS 2022 mandated the Committee to maintain contact with the Standing Committee for the
15 Australian *Book of Praise*. Such contact was maintained, not only through email but also by
16 a face-to-face meeting between Rev. D. Agema and their committee while he was in
17 Australia in 2023.
18

19
20 The Committee is thankful with our sister churches in Australia that they have now
21 published an Australian version of the *Book of Praise*. This is an exciting milestone in the
22 history of their churches.
23

24 Having published their Australian version of the *Book of Praise*, their Committee drafted a
25 protocol agreement between Australia and us, for making changes to their *Book of Praise*.
26 Our Committee agreed to the draft protocol. It is here reproduced as an appendix to the
27 report; see Appendix C.
28

29 8.2 Recent decisions by the FRCA Synod (June 2024)

30 From the report of the SCABP, we learned that with God’s blessing their deputies were
31 able to fulfill their task.
32

33 The following relevant decision was gleaned from the approved Acts of Synod Darling
34 Downs 2024:¹²

35 Maintain good contact with the Standing Committee for the Publication of the *Book of*
36 *Praise* of the Canadian Reformed Churches
37

38 8.3 Request to continue mandate

39 The Committee requests GS 2025 that the mandate to maintain good contact with the
40 Standing Committee for the Australian *Book of Praise* be continued.
41
42
43

¹² <https://frca.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Acts-Full-Document-2024.pdf>, accessed Nov. 5, 2024.

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1 **9. Corporate status (*Acts*, Art. 120)**

2
3 The Committee has maintained its status as a corporation; all necessary documents for this
4 purpose have been kept up to date. This also includes filing the Annual Income Tax forms
5 with Revenue Canada. This is a legal requirement even though the Committee does not
6 operate under an annual budget, and the Corporation does not generate an income or profit.

7
8 The Committee requests that GS 2025 continue the mandate to maintain the Committee's
9 corporate status for the purpose of protecting the interests of the Canadian Reformed
10 Churches in matters concerning the *Book of Praise*.

11
12 **10. Maintain archives and website (*Acts*, Art. 120)**

13
14 10.1 Archives

15 The Committee continues to maintain archives at our permanent address, in the CRTS
16 library. Dr. J. Smith has functioned as archivist for the past three years, devoting most of
17 his work on the archives to updating the electronic format of the Index and sorting through
18 materials received from former members of the Committee.

19
20 Further, to maintain the integrity of the archives, the Committee had taken a decision to
21 implement triennial inspections of the archives in the September/October before General
22 Synod (see the *Acts* of GS 2019, Art. 145, Obs. 2.7). An archives inspection report was
23 received on October 2, 2024, summarizing the structure and state of the archives. Although
24 the electronic format of the Index has been updated, the content of the archives continues to
25 expand (particularly with the addition of hard-copy materials), meaning that the work of
26 maintaining the archives remains a complex endeavour.

27
28 10.2 Website

29 The Committee continues to maintain its website as part of its efforts of promotion and
30 awareness for the *Book of Praise*. The website can be found at www.bookofpraise.ca.

31
32 The portal on the website for the purpose of holding PDF copies of all the proposed
33 alternative psalms and additional hymns was maintained. Members of the churches could
34 obtain access via a login with password. This also served to satisfy the requirements of
35 some of the copyright holders.

36
37 10.3 Request to continue mandate

38 The Committee requests that the mandate to maintain the archives and website be
39 continued.

40
41 **11. Appointment of a committee member to validate and submit to the treasurer of the
42 General Fund all expenses being submitted for committee work (*Acts*, Art. 120)**

43
44 The Committee appointed br. Brian Vanderhout to validate and submit to the treasurer of
45 the General Fund all expenses being submitted for committee work.

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1 **12. Committee membership (*Acts*, Art. 170)**

2
3 **12.1 Members as appointed by GS 2022**

4 GS 2022 appointed Committee members as follows.

5 D. Agema (convenor) (2031)

6 C. deBoer (2025)

7 M. Jongsma (2025)

8 R. Kampen (2031)

9 C. Oosterhoff (2025)

10 B. Vanderhout (2028)

11
12 **12.2 Upcoming term completion**

13 Brs. C. deBoer, M. Jongsma, and C. Oosterhoff will complete their terms of, respectively,
14 three, nine, and three years at the end of GS 2025. Additionally, br. D. Agema has
15 requested not to be reappointed. The Committee is tremendously grateful for these brothers
16 and their dedicated work on the Committee throughout his term. The Committee
17 recommends that GS 2025 formally thank brs. D. Agema, C. deBoer, M. Jongsma, and C.
18 Oosterhoff for their work on the Committee.

19
20 **12.3 Suggested future membership**

21 The Committee recommends that its membership continue to be set at six members. The
22 Committee will provide GS 2025 with a recommendation for replacements in a separate
23 letter.

24
25 **SECTION TWO**

26
27 **13. Corrections for a future printing of the *Book of Praise***

28 The Committee maintains a list of corrigenda, which are submitted to Premier Printing for
29 inclusion in the next print run. Corrigenda items include formatting changes, punctuation,
30 and other minor corrections, as follows.

31
32 13.1 Psalm 47:1.4 – The syllable division needs correction: “humb-ling” should be “hum-bling.”

33 13.2 Psalm 52:1.5 – A semicolon is missing at the end of the line. Also, there should be a
34 hyphen preceding “sharp”: ra - zor - sharp.

35 13.3 Psalm 103:3.3 – A period is missing at the end of the line.

36 13.4 Psalm 113:1.1 – The first exclamation mark should be in regular font (not small caps font).

37 13.5 Hymn 30 – Regarding the missing time signature, add the little half-note with the one on
38 top of it (tactus minor symbol) as is found in Hy. 17 and 18.

39 13.6 Hymn 48:1.1 – A comma should be inserted after “Come.”

40 13.7 Athanasian Creed – Article 6, incorrectly has the archaic term “Godhead.” In the prose
41 section of the 1984 *Book of Praise*, this term was replaced with “divinity,” as in Q&A 48 of
42 the Heidelberg Catechism and in articles 33 and 35 of the Athanasian Creed. Its continued
43 use in article 6 of the latter is an oversight in need of correction.

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- 1 13.8 Belgic Confession – In Art. 23, 3rd paragraph, “judgement” in the quote from Ps. 143
 2 should be “judgment,” per the ESV. This error is also in Canons of Dort, I.18, second
 3 paragraph, and III/IV, Rejection of Errors 1.
- 4 13.9 Belgic Confession – Art. 24, 2nd paragraph, Luke 17:10 is incorrectly included within the
 5 quotation marks.
- 6 13.10 Heidelberg Catechism – Lord’s Day 10, q/a 28, footnote 1 needs to be changed from
 7 Psalm 39:10 to Psalm 39:9.
- 8 13.11 Heidelberg Catechism – Lord’s Day 50, footnote 4 needs to be changed from “Ps...62” to
 9 “Ps...62:10,” and from “Ps...146” to “Ps...146:3.”
- 10 13.12 “Prayer for All the Needs of Christendom” (p. 636) and “A Closing Prayer for
 11 Ecclesiastical Assemblies” (p. 642), – The reference to “our Queen and her house” needs to
 12 be changed to “our King and his house.”

14. Committee proposals

14.1 Amend Hymn 17:1

17 It was brought to our attention that GS 2013 unintentionally made an unauthorized change
 18 to the first stanza of Hymn 17 (*Acts*, Art. 171). That is, it retained the 2009 version of
 19 Hymn 17 except for stanza 1, which it replaced with the 1984 rendition. This was done
 20 without consulting the copyright holder of the 2009 version. This is an error that needs to
 21 be corrected by restoring stanza 1 to its 2009 version. The correction can be made when a
 22 revised edition of the *Book of Praise* is eventually published.

14.1.1 Recommendation

25 Hymn 17:1 be restored to its 2009 version.

14.2 Amend the wording of the liturgical forms for baptism

28 Though grammatically accurate, the wording in the current versions of the liturgical forms
 29 for baptism, “He adopts us *for his* children and heirs” (pp. 597, 600) is no longer commonly
 30 used. “Adopts...as” coheres with the language of Ephesians 1:5 and Galatians 4:5 (ESV,
 31 NASB, and NKJV), and Romans 8:23 (ESV, NASB).

14.2.1 Recommendation

34 In the fifth paragraph of both of our liturgical forms for baptism, change “He adopts us for
 35 his children and heirs” to “He adopts us as his children and heirs.”

14.3 Amend the wording of the liturgical form for Lord’s Supper

38 In the 1984 *Book of Praise*, the wording in the liturgical form for Lord’s Supper was, “By
 39 his perfect obedience he has fulfilled for us all the righteousness of God’s law” (p. 605).
 40 The Committee noted the ambiguity of the wording (is it “for *us all*” or “for us *all the*
 41 *righteousness*?”), and therefore proposed a change to GS 2007, recommending the wording
 42 that we now have (*Acts* GS 2007, Art. 172, 2.4.1).

44 Upon more recent consideration, the Committee observes that while the current wording is
 45 textually clear, the intrusion of the prepositional phrase (“for us”) into the conjugated verb

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1 (“he has fulfilled”) actually impedes a smooth reading of the text. Notably, when
 2 interacting with the Committee’s report to GS 2007 on this issue, the church of Carman
 3 West proposed a different wording: “By his perfect obedience he has fulfilled all the
 4 righteousness of God’s law *for us*” (Art. 172, 2.4.1.2). We see this as a definite
 5 improvement to the readability of the Form that does not change the meaning of the
 6 sentence.

8 14.3.1 Recommendation

9 In the first full paragraph of the “Remembrance of Christ” section of the Lord’s Supper
 10 liturgical form, change “By his perfect obedience he has *for us* fulfilled all the
 11 righteousness of God’s law” to “By his perfect obedience he has fulfilled all the
 12 righteousness of God’s law *for us*.”

14 14.4 Amend a Scripture reference in Belgic Confession, Art. 5

15 In the Belgic Confession, Art. 5, footnote 3, the footnote pointing to 1 John 5:7 does not by
 16 itself make much sense. The Committee believes the footnote should be modified to the
 17 more straightforward 1 John 5:6b. Notably, this is the reference used in the Dutch
 18 *Gereformeerde Kerkboek*.

20 14.4.1 Recommendation

21 In the Belgic Confession, Art. 5, footnote 3, change reference 1 John 5:7 to 1 John 5:6b.

23 SECTION THREE

25 15. Committee address

27 15.1 Permanent mailing address

28 The Committee served as the address to which correspondence regarding the *Book of*
 29 *Praise* could be directed.

31 Standing Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise* (SCBP)
 32 c/o Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary
 33 110 West 27th Street
 34 Hamilton, Ontario,
 35 L9C 5A1

37 15.2 Email address

38 In addition to the regular mailing address, correspondence may be sent electronically to
 39 bookofpraise@canrc.org.

41 15.3 Meetings and place of meetings

42 The Committee regularly met at the facilities of the Bellstone Christian School in Mount
 43 Hope, and less regularly at Trinity Canadian Reformed Church of Glanbrook. All meetings
 44 were conducted in excellent harmony under the capable leadership of br. M. Jongsma.

45 NOTES: _____

1 **16. Acknowledgments and summary of requests**

2
3 16.1 Acknowledgements

4 As the Committee worked out its mandate in the past three years, some expert advice was
5 required in specific areas. The Committee is grateful that such advice was always provided
6 when requested. In addition to those who were mentioned earlier in the report, the
7 Committee wishes to acknowledge with appreciation the contributions of the following
8 individuals in their respective areas of expertise:

9 Mr. A. den Hollander

10 Dr. J. Smith

11 Rev. D. Wynia

12
13 The Committee would also like to separately express its gratitude to the churches for their
14 participation in testing and providing feedback on the proposed songs. This was a lengthy
15 exercise, and so the churches are to be commended for their commitment to the task.

16
17 16.2 Summary of requests

18 Re par. 2: The Committee requests that GS 2025 adopt the proposed modification of the
19 current “Self-examination” section of the Lord’s Supper liturgical form to the first-person
20 plural cohortative, and the proposed modification of the introductory sentence under “Self-
21 examination.”

22
23 Re par. 3: The Committee requests that GS 2025 adopt the proposed shorter Lord’s Supper
24 forms.

25
26 The Committee suggests adding to the shorter forms a “usage note” that indicates that they
27 are to be used in conjunction with the longer Form.

28
29 Re par. 4: The Committee requests that GS 2025 continue the mandate to foster an
30 increased awareness of the existence of the *Book of Praise* among others in the English-
31 speaking world.

32
33 Re par. 5: The Committee requests that GS 2025 renew for another three years its mandate
34 regarding the publication and funding model for the *Book of Praise*.

35
36 The Committee also requests that GS 2025 approve the publication of an authorized
37 augment, and that the costs associated with the layout and pre-press preparations of its print
38 and digital versions be shared by the churches by means of an assessment as negotiated
39 between the Committee and the publisher.

40
41 Re par. 6: The Committee requests that GS 2025 adopt eight of the proposed alternative
42 psalms and fifteen of the proposed additional hymns.

43
44 Re par. 7: The Committee requests that GS 2025 present to the churches the principled
45 view as the path to follow for proposing additional hymns, and mandate the Committee to

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1 produce a spreadsheet identifying to what extent the doctrines of the Apostles' Creed are
2 covered by our adopted songs.

3
4 Re par. 8: The Committee requests that GS 2025 continue the mandate to maintain good
5 contact with the Standing Committee for the Australian *Book of Praise*.

6
7 Re par. 9: The Committee requests that GS 2025 continue the mandate that the Committee
8 maintain its corporate status for the purpose of protecting the interests of the Canadian
9 Reformed Churches in matters concerning the *Book of Praise*.

10
11 Re par. 10: The Committee requests that GS 2025 continue the mandate to maintain the
12 archives and website.

13
14 Re par. 12: The Committee requests that GS 2025 formally thank brs. D. Agema, C.
15 deBoer, M. Jongsma, and C. Oosterhoff for their work on the Committee.

16
17 Re par. 14: The Committee requests that GS 2025 approve the recommended adjustments
18 therein.

19
20 The Committee is pleased to make members available to GS 2025 when the proposed
21 alternative psalms and additional hymns are going to be discussed, should questions arise
22 or further explanations be required.

23
24 Respectfully submitted,

25
26 The Standing Committee for the Publication of the *Book of Praise*:

27 Rev. Douwe G.J. Agema

28 Dr. Chris deBoer

29 Dr. Martin Jongsma, chairman

30 Rev. Ryan J. Kampen, corresponding and recording secretary

31 Mr. Carl Oosterhoff

32 Mr. Brian Vanderhout, recording secretary, treasurer

NOTES: _____

1

Appendix 1 – Publisher’s Report for Synod 2025

Publisher's Report for Synod 2025

| | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024* | TOTAL |
|---------------------------------|-------|------|------|-------|-------|
| Deluxe Edition | | | | | |
| Printed | - | - | - | - | - |
| Distribution Canada | 41 | 107 | 285 | - | 433 |
| Distribution US | 20 | 18 | 3 | - | 41 |
| Distribution Australia | - | - | - | - | - |
| Distribution International | - | - | - | - | - |
| Total Distribution | 61 | 125 | 288 | - | 474 |
| Inventory Sep 30 2024 | | | | | - |
| Standard Edition | | | | | |
| Printed | - | - | - | - | - |
| Distribution Canada | 598 | 753 | 442 | 930 | 2,723 |
| Distribution US | 25 | 23 | 28 | 26 | 102 |
| Distribution Australia | - | - | - | - | - |
| Distribution International | - | - | - | - | - |
| Total Distribution | 623 | 776 | 470 | 956 | 2,825 |
| Inventory Sep 30 2024 | | | | | 1,029 |
| Pulpit / Accompanist Set | | | | | |
| Printed | - | - | 44 | - | 44 |
| Distribution Canada | 7 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 31 |
| Distribution US | - | 4 | 2 | 2 | 8 |
| Distribution Australia | - | - | - | - | - |
| Distribution International | - | - | - | - | - |
| Total Distribution | 7 | 13 | 10 | 9 | 39 |
| Inventory Sep 30 2024 | | | | | 25 |
| Electronic Editions** | | | | | |
| Distribution in Canada | 1,249 | 694 | 172 | 311 | 2,426 |
| Distribution US | 7 | 7 | 7 | 22 | 43 |
| Distribution Australia | 72 | 22 | 21 | 21 | 136 |
| Distribution International | 11 | 11 | 175 | 8 | 205 |
| Total Distribution | 1,339 | 734 | 375 | 362 | 2,810 |

* 2024 through September 30

** corporate purchases included, listed as number of members

2

3

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Appendix 2 – Survey Regarding Publishing and Funding Model

Section A - Copyright

The inclusion of copyrighted songs in the *Book of Praise*, particularly from copyright holders other than the SCBP, has immediate implications for the usability of the book. Such implications include the inability to provide a fully open-source version of the *Book of Praise*, the cost associated with having multiple copyright agreements with various copyright holders, and the subsequent limitations on what others can do with our *Book of Praise*.

1. Currently, the *Book of Praise* has three copyrighted hymns for which the holders of the copyright are compensated (38, 50, 79; the copyright for Hymn 66 is expired, leaving the hymn to be used freely). In its recommendations to GS 2025 from the proposed psalms and hymns, should the committee be diligent in choosing non-copyrighted songs? (*Please feel free to make more than once choice—but not two opposing choices.*)
 - a. Yes, please choose non-copyrighted songs so churches do not need to purchase two CCLI licences (one for worship, one for livestreaming).
 - b. Yes, please choose non-copyrighted songs so churches and individuals can freely share the content of the *Book of Praise* without concern about inadvertently sharing copyrighted materials for which other companies are compensated.
 - c. Yes, please choose non-copyrighted songs so that the SCBP can freely share the content of the *Book of Praise* with churches around the world that make various requests.
 - d. No, please feel free to choose copyrighted songs. Copyright licensing is a small price to pay for including and sharing some rich psalms and hymns for worship.
 - e. No, please feel free to choose copyrighted songs. Members and churches will need to take responsibility for abiding by the necessary laws surrounding copyright issues. We encourage the SCBP to correct those who are presently creating an open-source version of the entirety of the songs of the *Book of Praise*.
2. Please comment on any other aspects of copyright you would like us to consider:

Section B – Layout/Print Considerations

When considering the matter of the layout of the songs in the *Book of Praise*, there are a number of things to keep in mind. For instance, if we have an open-source *Book of Praise*, then there is an even smaller market of certainty for sales for the publisher/printer but also a greater opportunity for other individuals to publish different renditions of our psalms and hymns. You are also reminded that our focus is on the publication of the formal Canadian Reformed *Book of Praise*.

1. Layout considerations include the current practice of having notation on every other page of the songbook, the possibility of four-part harmony, the size of font and amount of whitespace. In its recommendations to GS 2025, what layout considerations ought the committee to prioritize? (*Once again, please feel free to choose more than one option—but not opposing options.*)

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- a. The current practice of having notation on every other page means that some psalms have said notation on two pages (e.g., Psalm 30) and others have it on up to eight pages (e.g., Psalm 119). Please keep this practice in future editions of the printed *Book of Praise*.
 - b. Despite the increased size of the *Book of Praise*, and the more crowded text, we would prefer that the SCBP take ownership of publishing a four-part harmony for every psalm and hymn, as our official songbook.
 - c. The SCBP should take ownership of publishing the *Book of Praise* in both its current forms AND a separate version in four-part harmony.
 - d. The SCBP should take ownership of publishing the *Book of Praise* in its current form and give permission to others to publish a book in four-part harmony that churches could feel free to purchase and use (e.g., Carl Oosterhoff's publication).
 - e. The publication should retain its strong sewn binding and hard-cover option for longevity purposes.
 - f. The publication should retain a soft cover and the option of thinner paper for easier carrying and portability.
 - g. The current font, white space, and notation in the *Book of Praise* are just right.
 - h. The current font should be increased.
 - i. The amount of white space per page should be increased.
2. Please comment on any other aspects of the layout you would like us to consider.

Section C – Funding

The cost of publishing the *Book of Praise* cannot easily be covered by our publishing partner by means of selling the book. Churches and schools are able to purchase the digital PDF versions, which makes for a very small profit margin. In connection to our SCBP mandate above, we are seeking feedback from the churches about how best to fund the publication of the *Book of Praise*. We present the following ideas and ask for feedback.

A. The churches corporately pay up front (e.g., via the General Fund or on a per communicant member (PCM) basis) for all preparation and production costs, including an agreed print run (e.g., 10,000 books), after which the books can be purchased by churches at no cost, by schools at a reasonably low cost, and by other interested parties at regular cost. The publishing partner could likely still handle the distribution for the churches but would not have to carry the cost of high inventory and potentially low sales. All income from sales, aside from a small handling fee, would be returned to a newly established SCBP fund, to be used to further fulfil the mandate of the SCBP.

B. The initial print run could be based on committed pre-orders from the individual churches or schools, who for the requested quantity will receive from the publishing partner invoices that cover the cost of file preparation, printing, and freight.

Given either A or B, subsequent to the initial run the churches corporately order a small inventory from time to time at a set inventory level, and pay for these costs up front (e.g., via the General Fund or PCM). The publishing partner takes sales and distributes books,

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1 and remits the balance of funds collected (after freight and handling price) back to the
2 SCBP fund.

3
4 Both options have the benefits of no inventory risk to the publishing partner (and little to
5 the churches corporately), as well as management by a publishing partner on behalf of
6 SCBP/the churches. Option B has the further option of very little burden on the churches as
7 a whole (e.g., General Fund or PCM).

8
9 What feedback do you have on these ideas?

10
11 If there are other suggestions that you believe our committee should consider, please let us
12 know. We are open to creative solutions and ideas.

NOTES: _____

Appendix 3 – Protocol for making changes to the Australian *Book of Praise*

The Standing Committee for the Publication of the Australian *Book of Praise* (SCABP) and the Standing Committee for the *Book of Praise* (SCBP) agree to the following protocol for making changes to the Australian *Book of Praise*:

(1) With respect to the prose section of the *Book of Praise*:

- There is no copyright, and freedom to make changes is unrestricted.

(2) With respect to changing psalms and hymns for which the SCBP of the CanRC holds copyright:

- The Free Reformed Churches of Australia, through their Standing Committee, will inform the SCBP of the CanRC of changes they wish to implement;
- The SCBP of the CanRC is authorized to approve such proposals. Permission from ecclesiastical assemblies of the Canadian Reformed Churches is not required;
- In all cases the FRCA will ensure that the necessary acknowledgements are duly published.

(3) With respect to changing psalms and hymns for which other parties hold copyright:

- The Free Reformed Churches of Australia, through their Standing Committee, will take up direct contact with copyright holders;
- Involvement of the SCBP of the CanRC will not be required.

(4) With respect to changing the tunes of psalms and hymns:

- The SCBP of the CanRC holds no copyright to any of the tunes;
- The Free Reformed Churches of Australia, through their Standing Committee, will take up direct contact with copyright holders, should they be subject to copyright;
- Involvement of the SCBP of the CanRC will not be required.

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