

agenda for 1967 synod



AGENDA

1967

Synod of the Christian Reformed Church



PREFACE

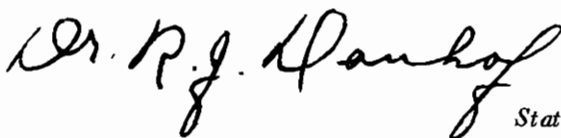
The Synod of 1967 will have the largest number of delegates in our church history, and since the introduction of annual Synod meetings in 1936 the largest Agenda awaits the action of 136 delegates.

The Synod of 1967 also marks a change in the place of meeting. On *Wednesday morning, June 14 at 9:00 a.m.* the first session of Synod will convene at the *Knollcrest Campus of Calvin College in the Fine Arts Center building*, located on the East Belt Line, two blocks north of Burton Street in the southeast section of Grand Rapids.

Alger Park is the convening church of the 1967 Synod, located on the corner of Eastern Avenue and Walsh Street, in the southeast section of Grand Rapids. The Rev. George Gritter will conduct the *special prayer service on Tuesday evening beginning at 8:00 p.m., June 13*. Delegates and advisors to Synod are expected to attend with the congregation of Alger Park.

The minister of the convening church will also be in charge of the opening devotions at the first session of the 1967 Synod and serve as president pro-tem until the officers are elected and Synod is properly constituted.

Ministers of our congregations will please remember the Synod in their intercessory prayers in the worship services on *Sunday, June 11*.



Stated Clerk

2850 Kalamazoo Avenue, S.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49508

DELEGATES PLEASE OBSERVE THE FOLLOWING NOTICES

All delegates and advisors are kindly requested to bring a copy of the Acts of the Synod of 1966, and the Agenda copy of the Synod of 1967. Both copies are essential for the proper understanding of Agenda report 40 of the 1967 Synod. Copies of the 1966 Acts of Synod are no longer available at our Publishing House. Hence the urgency of bringing a copy with you. Your own consistory can supply you with the 1966 copy of the Acts of Synod.

All delegates travelling by auto are again reminded of the decision of the Synod of 1962 that travelling together will effect considerable savings in travel expenses. (See pages 11, 513, Acts of 1961, and page 102, Acts of 1962.)

Travel by plane is the most economical, since no expenses are incurred for lodging or meals. "Group Plan" travel by plane affords lesser rates.

REPORTS

REPORT 1

DENOMINATIONAL SEAL

To the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

The Denominational Seal Committee submits the accompanying design for adoption as the seal of the Christian Reformed Church.

This design can be used in color or black and white.

The elements in this seal include the following symbols:

The circle symbolizes eternity; it may also be taken to suggest the created world.

The three segments in the circle symbolize the Trinity.

The tulip in the center of the design refers to the well-known version of the "five points of Calvinism" elaborated by the Synod of Dordt:

Total Depravity
 Unconditional Election
 Limited Atonement
 Irresistible Grace
 Perseverance of the Saints.

The cross, central to redemption and the life and work of the Church, occupies the central place.

The top part of the tulip forms a crown, symbolizing victory and eternal life through Christ.

The open Bible forms the platform on which the seal rests.

The Christian Reformed Church is identified and attached to these basic symbols through the lettering which crowns and completes the design.

The workmanship in this seal is a composite of the labors of two artists. One is Theo. Anema, who submitted the basic tulip-cross-crown design several years ago. The other is Wayne De Jonge, who adapted the design and added the elements of the circle and the symbol of the Trinity.

Respectfully submitted,

William Kok, chairman
 J. H. Kromminga, secretary
 E. B. Pekelder



REPORT 2

THE MINISTERIAL CREDENTIALS OF EMERITI MINISTERS

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

Your committee appointed by the Synod of 1965 to study the matter of Ministerial Credentials of Emeriti Ministers (Acts of Synod, p. 117, No. 17) submits the following report.

I. BACKGROUND

The matter which the Synod of 1965 presented to our committee for study and advice was first brought to the attention of Synod by fifteen retired ministers. They requested that the official connection of a retired minister should not remain with the church he last served, as is now the case, but should be transferred to the church of which he chooses to become a member. In this request these ministers were supported by the consistory of the Seymour Christian Reformed Church and Classis Grand Rapids East. Synod, upon the advice of its advisory committee, did not discuss the matter but decided to appoint a committee to study the whole matter of the relation of a retired minister with the church he last served and the church of which he is a member. (Acts 1965, p. 29.)

II. MANDATE

What our mandate is may be learned in a general way from the title given our committee as stated above. More specifically our mandate is to be determined from the decision of Synod, on page 29 of the Acts of 1965, as seen in the context of the original request of the retired ministers, as well as the grounds which Synod adduced for its decision. In the light of these givens we believe our mandate is:

A. To study the relation of the retired minister to the church he last served and the relation which this church sustains to him.

B. To study his relation to the church in which he is a member.

C. To determine in the light of these studies whether any change should be made in Article 18 of the Church Order.

D. To determine what other changes, if any, should be made in the Church Order in view of this special study.

E. To serve Synod with recommendations with respect to the request of the retired ministers and to suggest changes in the Church Order if this is deemed necessary.

III. STUDY

A. *Status of Active Minister*

In our study of the relation of a minister to the church he last served and the relation of that church to him, it will be helpful first of all to consider the status of an active minister in the Christian Reformed

Church. Then there are principally two things that must be considered; first, his relation to the calling church and second, his relation to the whole denomination.

1. As minister of a local church.

a. The official relation of a minister with a local congregation is constituted by his acceptance of its call and his installation into the office of pastor in that church.

b. As long as he continues as minister of this church he remains under the supervision of its consistory.

c. When he accepts a call to another congregation his relation with the church he has been serving is dissolved completely.

d. Without a call from a local church one cannot enter the ministry in the Christian Reformed Church and, ordinarily, he cannot continue as a minister without an official connection with a local congregation.

2. As minister of the whole denomination. One cannot become, remain or discontinue as a minister in the Christian Reformed Church without the knowledge and approval of the denomination. This appears from many facts:

a. He enters the ministry by way of: (1) being trained in the seminary and being declared a candidate, or (2) Article 7 of the Church Order which provides for those who are singularly gifted, or (3) Article 8 of the Church Order, being called as a minister from another denomination. However, no matter by which of these three methods a man enters the ministry of the Christian Reformed Church, he cannot be ordained and/or installed in a local church without an examination of a classis. Cf. Church Order Articles 7, 8, 10.

b. Such an examination requires the presence and the approval of the synodical delegates. The Synod of 1936 decided that every classical examination must be attended by three delegates from adjacent classes, Acts 1936, p. 90. Our present Church Order requires this in Articles 7, 8, 10. The idea is that these deputies represent the church as a whole.

c. The examination, if successful, admits the candidate to all the churches in the denomination. Thus through its deputies the whole denomination satisfies itself with respect to the qualifications of the candidate. So Van Dellen and Monsma, *The Church Order Commentary*, p. 29, also Joh. Jansen, *Korte Verklaring v.d. Kerkenordening*, p. 21.

d. Men thus ordained or admitted as ministers become ministers of the local churches in which they serve but in a sense also of the denomination. This has always been the order in our church and this is also recognized in Article 8 of our Church Order, just recently adopted, when it speaks of "Ministers of the Christian Reformed Church." For this reason they are eligible for call by any church in the denomination, can move from one congregation to another without being re-examined and re-ordained, as long as they are sound in doctrine and life. And since they give themselves to this work for life the church guarantees them that it will recognize them and provide for them as long as they remain faithful in their office. See Heyns, *Kybernetiek*, pp. 170, 216.

1) They may be released under certain circumstances, from the active ministry in a congregation but only with the approval of the classis and the synodical deputies, i.e. the denomination, while still remaining ministers of the Christian Reformed Church. Church Order Article 17.

2) They may be released from office permanently to take up another profession but only with the approval of the classis and the synodical deputies. Church Order Article 14.

3) When a minister desires to retire, this "shall take place with the approval of the consistory and classis and in accordance with synodical regulations." Church Order Article 18.

4) Finally, a minister may be deposed only with the approval of classis and the synodical deputies. Church Order Article 90.

We submit that all these facts clearly indicate that the ministers of the Christian Reformed Church, although ministers of local congregations, are all under synodical supervision because they are also ministers of the denomination, committed to their office in the denomination for life.

B. *Status of Emeritus Minister*

1. Who he is.

a. Webster's Dictionary indicates that the term "emeritus" is derived from the latin past participle of emerere emereri, to obtain by service, serve out one's term, from e out + merere, mereri, to merit, earn, serve. It defines the term as, "Retired from office or active duty on account of age, infirmity, or long and faithful service, and honored with a non official position and title corresponding to those held in active service especially of a clergyman or college professor."

b. An emeritus minister therefore is one who has honorably and faithfully served in the office of minister and who, because of illness, age, or length of service, seeks retirement from the active ministry with the retention of the honor and title of a minister of the Word of God in the Christian Reformed Church.

c. We are dealing in this study only with such cases as described above where the status of emeritus minister is a permanent one. In all cases in which the retirement is of a temporary nature, or in cases where some measure of discipline is involved, the emeritus minister should remain officially connected with the church that granted his retirement.

2. His relation to the church last served.

a. Actually, unless he chooses to remain with this church as a member, his relation with this church is completely dissolved, just as much as if he had accepted a call to another church. His work is finished, he preaches a farewell sermon and moves to another location. The church he served calls another man, installs him as its minister and acknowledges him as its pastor. The place of the retired minister is fully occupied by another, just as it would be if he had accepted a call to another church instead of retiring from active duty.

b. What about his "ministerial credentials"?

It is true that in our Year Book and other places mention is made of his ministerial credentials as remaining with the church he last served. We believe that this is inaccurate terminology with reference to emeriti ministers. "Ministerial credentials" is certainly a proper term with respect to active ministers. This refers to a document which accompanies a minister when he moves from one church to another. It serves as his authentication as a minister in good standing in the Christian Reformed Church and as a recommendation from one consistory to another. However, when this document has been received by another consistory it has served its purpose. A minister does not have credentials which are deposited with a certain church until he moves to another, no more than any church member has "church papers" deposited with the church where he is a member and sent along with him when he moves to another church. Hence, with respect to retired ministers such credentials do not exist, and to speak of their "ministerial credentials" is a misnomer. It is better, we believe, to speak of their "official connection" or "consistorial supervision." Actually the whole question involved here is not one of credentials or official connection but of supervision. Such supervision can best be exercised by the church of which he is a member. In fact in many cases it is virtually impossible for a former consistory to exercise supervision as e.g. when the minister has moved to a distant place.

3. Relation of the church last served to him.

a. As the case stands now the church which he served last continues to have supervision over him in his position as minister until he dies.

b. Actually, however, there is no reason why this church should continue to exercise supervision over him, unless he remains a member there and then only because he remains a member there. Why should this church maintain supervision over him?

1) It might be held by some that he must remain officially connected with this church because only in this way can he continue to function as a minister, since without this official connection with this church he would not have a call. Now it is true that ordinarily a man cannot function as a minister without a call from some local church. But the case of the emeritus minister is an exception to the rule. The very fact that he is called an "emeritus minister" indicates that he continues to function as minister not because he was once called by the last church he served but rather because of his unique position which he holds in the whole denomination as one who has served honorably and faithfully while in the regular ministry.

2) Someone might appeal to the antiquity of the provision of Article 18 that the last church "shall be responsible for providing honorably for his support and that of his dependents according to synodical regulations." We believe, however, that this provision arose historically from a practical necessity. Someone had to care for an emeritus minister, and, since formerly the retiring minister usually continued his residence in the city of his last charge, Article 18 of the Church Order provided that this church should support him. But today we live in different times. Emeriti ministers seldom continue their residence where they served last. Usually

they seek a place that is near their children or that is advantageous to their health, etc. Ease of transportation and an increase of Christian Reformed churches over a broader area of our land make this possible today. The fact is too that for many years this provision has not been in effect in our church. According to synodical regulations, Cf. Acts of Synod 1939, pp. 21, 22, his support is provided not by a single church which he last served but by the denomination through its Board of Pension and Relief. This makes the provision of Article 18 passe and also obviates on this score the need of an official connection with the church he last served.

3) Professor W. Heyns in his *Gereformeerd Kerkrecht en Gereformeerde Kybernetiek*, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1922 (mimeographed form) when reflecting on Article 12 of the old Church Order argues that the expression "voor zijn leven lang aan de Kerkdienst is verbonden" (is bound for life to the service of the church) rejects the view that the office inheres only in the local church and thus one in order to remain a minister must be officially connected with a local church, p. 216. He points out, too, that the old Article 13, on becoming an emeritus minister, says nothing about it being necessary to be connected with a local church, p. 219. Also, he declares that the idea of the necessity of being connected with a local church "is contradicted by practically every article in the Church Order which speaks of the Minister of the Word, and is thus rejected as being in conflict with Reformed Church Policy." (translation ours) p. 221.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

In the light of our findings above and in answer to our mandate we conclude:

A. That there is no reason why the emeritus minister in normal cases should remain officially connected with the church he last served. When he retires the relation is severed from both sides;

B. That it is entirely proper that the church of which the emeritus minister becomes a member should exercise supervision over him as minister. This church is most qualified to do so;

C. That the provision of Article 18 of the Church Order for the support of the emeritus minister has become obsolete because his support is provided for through better means. Hence there is no reason here why the retired minister should continue to be officially connected with the church he last served. This Article of the Church Order should be amended;

D. That in our opinion no other article of the Church Order is concerned with this matter and, therefore, no other changes need to be made.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. That Synod in substance, without adopting all the argumentation, grant the request of the fifteen retired ministers for a change in Article 18 of the Church Order:

Grounds:

1. There is no scriptural or church-political principle involved here, since this matter concerns only emeriti ministers and does not pertain to active ministers of local congregations.

2. There are a number of practical reasons in favor of it:

a. The emeritus minister severs all relations with the church he last served when he moves away.

b. The consistory of the church with which he affiliates is in the best position to exercise supervision over him both as member and as minister.

c. This arrangement works for a better relation between the emeritus minister and the church where he resides, since it frees him from a remote involvement with a church with which he is no longer connected in the way of active fellowship.

B. That the last part of b. of Article 18, "and this church shall be responsible for providing honorably for his support and that of his dependents according to synodical regulations" be eliminated.

Ground: This provision has become obsolete through disuse and a much better means for his support has been provided according to synodical regulations. Cf. Acts of Synod 1939, pp. 21, 22.

C. That in the place of the words eliminated Synod supply: "shall cease and, except for cases of temporary retirement, the church of which he chooses to become a member shall exercise supervision over him both as member and as minister. It shall be the responsibility of this church to see that his support and that of his dependents is honorably provided according to synodical regulations." Article 18, b., as reformulated, would then read as follows:

"A retired minister shall retain the honor and title of a minister of the Word, and his official connection with the church he served last shall cease, and, except for cases of temporary retirement, the church of which he chooses to become a member shall exercise supervision over him both as member and as minister. It shall be the responsibility of this church to see that his support and that of his dependents is honorably provided according to synodical regulations."

Ground: This brings Article 18 up to date

Humbly submitted,

N. Veltman

H. De Wolf

J. Gritter

REPORT 3

SERMONS FOR READING SERVICES

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

We present to you the following report and recommendations. Through the cooperation of many ministers and the Credo Publishing Company your committee was able to supply a number of churches with sermons for reading services, as well as for other purposes, during the past year. We were greatly encouraged by the increase in the number of subscriptions during the year to 238 from 204 the previous year. It is due to this increase that it is possible to offer to the churches the same two series of sermons without increasing the price. There is reason for gratitude in the fact that a number of non-vacant churches subscribe to one of the series of sermons, thereby helping to provide this valuable and necessary service for our vacant churches. It is hoped that many more will do so because through still greater support the service can be improved. As of January 31, 1967 2 Australian, 149 Canadian, 1 New Zealand and 1 United States churches were subscribing. In addition 5 individual persons were each receiving a subscription.

Your committee has been requested by Classis Alberta South to “. . . look into the possibility of publishing a series of 52 sermons on the (Heidelberg) Catechism.”

After due consideration it was agreed that such a series, if published, will serve a two-fold need that has been brought to our attention on several occasions. The first is that with which Classis Alberta South is concerned, viz. that churches vacant for a long time usually must do without a systematic preaching of “the Word as summarized in the Heidelberg Catechism, following its sequence” (C.O. Art. 54b). A second need is one expressed by several seminary students, viz., that there exists an extreme scarcity of study material on the Heidelberg Catechism in the English language while most students need such aid for a thorough understanding and exposition of this precious confession. This consideration led the committee to explore the possibility of publishing a book of sermons on the Heidelberg Catechism. Several ministers expressed their willingness to prepare the “dual-purpose” sermons required to fill the above mentioned need. After consultation with our publisher, however, it appears that financing such a project would present some difficulty. We were informed that it is unrealistic to expect a sufficiently rapid turn-over in sales to make this a “paying project.” Also, the price of such a book must remain within reach of the student.

It is the unanimous conviction of your committee that, notwithstanding the difficulty of financing, the matter warrants further consideration.

We therefore humbly bring it to your attention and request your serious thought and possible action.

We respectfully present the following recommendations:

1. That Synod approve the publication of sermons through "The Living Word" for the year beginning June 1, 1968 through May 31, 1969.
2. That Synod *strongly* recommend these sermons for use by the churches.
3. That Synod authorize the committee to arrange for the publication of a book of sermons on the Heidelberg Catechism.
4. That Synod authorize the underwriting of this project in a way and to the extent deemed responsible.
5. That Synod continue the committee on Sermons and Reading Services.
6. That the Rev. H. De Moor of Clarkson, Ontario be appointed to fill the vacancy left by the Rev. H. R. De Bolster's departure for Calgary, Alberta.
7. That, since vacancies often occur in the committee, the Rev. W. Van Dyk of Orillia, Ontario, be appointed as alternate member.

L. Slofstra

J. Joosse

J. W. Van Stempvoort

REPORT 4

REFORMED ECUMENICAL SYNOD
AND MISSIONS CONFERENCE

ESTEEMED BRETHERN:

The mission and evangelism task of the Church has long occupied the attention of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod. It has been discussed at every gathering of the RES since the first meeting in 1946. The Synod of 1963 sensed even more strongly than the previous Synods that reformed christian churches should increase their attempts to fill the earth with the knowledge of the Lord and proceeded to fulfill the Lord's mission mandate.

The 1963 RES accordingly asked the Standing Committee on Missions to consider holding a congress on evangelism. In response to this request, the committee proposed to the RES Interim Committee that a conference on both home and foreign missions be held during the week prior to the 1968 Synod of Amsterdam. The Interim Committee readily endorsed the proposal. The Standing Committee on Missions, through the General Secretary who also functions as the secretary for the Committee on Missions, would hereby inform your church of this conference and invite you to send delegates to it. Please bring this letter to the attention of the proper official, committee, or assembly of your church so that an early decision to participate in the conference may be made.

The conference will be called: **THE RES BAARN MISSIONS CONFERENCE 1968**. The theme is: "The Christian Message to a Changing World." It will be held from Monday, August 5, to Friday, August 9, 1968 in the Missionary Centre in Baarn, the Netherlands.

Enclosed please find a programme of speakers and topics. You will note that the hours of the daytime will be devoted to the presentation of papers and discussion and that ample time will be given after each lecture to reflect upon and consider the presentation. The evenings will be spent in exchanging information on the mission activity of the churches. We hope for active participation from all delegates to the conference.

On behalf of the Standing Committee on Missions, I would hereby extend to the Christian Reformed Church the invitation to send two delegates to the conference. If it is possible, each church should make use of its right to send a complete delegation. If this is not possible then one person should be assigned to attend the conference.

Please bear in mind that the conference concerns the work of both home and foreign missions and therefore covers what is commonly called home evangelism as well as "world" or "foreign" missions. You may

want to consider this in appointing persons to attend the conference. The committee hopes for a representation that will discuss thoroughly the proclamation of the gospel in its many facets both to fellow country men and to others.

The estimated expenses of the conference are as follows:

Conference expenses in the Missionary Centre	\$1,000.00
Traveling expenses of speakers	2,200.00
Total	\$3,200.00

The committee proposes that these expenses be met by the participating churches on a pro rata basis similar to that in force at the 1963 Synod. This means that your church, which was then assessed 20%, is asked to contribute \$640 to the *RES Baarn Missions Conference 1968*. Please send this money prior to the conference to the RES secretariat. All expenses should be met before the conference adjourns.

You will realize that the cost of the conference would be much greater if it were not coordinated with the 1968 Synod. In order that there may be the greatest possible cooperation between the Conference and the Synod, I would suggest that in appointing delegates to one you bear in mind that persons should be sent to the other as well. It may prove, at least to some churches, most feasible and economical to send the same persons to both.

Since the conference and Synod are so closely related, it may be well to inform you that the committee to arrange the 1968 Synod has suggested that a Central Assistance Fund be established to help churches which are unable to send delegates to the Synod. This committee suggests that the larger and more affluent churches be asked to contribute to this fund. Among those who may be considered "supporting" churches they list: Christian Reformed Church of North America; de Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland; de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland; the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa; and the Reformed Church in South Africa. Please note that your church is included in this list. We have made an estimate of the amount which would be needed to enable the smaller churches to send delegates to both the Synod and the conference and arrived at the sum of \$13,000. This is exclusive of the estimated expenses of the conference as indicated above. In our estimation there are several churches which may neither be able to assist other churches nor desirous of requesting help for themselves. We are fully aware that we do not know the details of each church's financial situation and may miscalculate.

We would ask each of the churches to consider whether they can provide transportation for their own delegates and, if they are unable, to request the RES secretariat for assistance from the proposed Central Assistance Fund. The amount that any church might receive from this fund would not, in all likelihood, exceed the amount required for the transportation of one delegate.

Brethren, we believe that a study of the conference programme will convince you of the great significance of the proposed conference and that you will want to participate in every possible way. Much time has already been given to planning. Many prayers have been offered. We shall continue to plan and would ask that your church earnestly ask the Father of all grace to make His people willing to fulfill their great calling to proclaim the gospel to every creature. Our world is changing. The forces of secularism and unbelief are becoming stronger. The increase in world population is outstripping the increase in Christian people. May the Lord use the Reformed churches in general and the conference in particular to bring about a biblically directed revival.

Kindly inform me at an early date of the decision of your church regarding the RES Baarn Missions Conference.

On behalf of the Standing Committee on Missions,
Paul G. Schrotenboer, General Secretary

THE RES BAARN MISSIONS CONFERENCE 1968

"The Christian Message to a Changing World"

A conference on home and foreign missions by the churches of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod at the Missionary Centre, Baarn, The Netherlands, August 5-9, 1968.

Conference Programme

Monday, August 5

Evening session—Keynote address by the Rev. John P. Galbraith, The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Chairman of the Standing Committee on Missions.

Tuesday, August 6

Morning session—"The Goal of Missions" by the Rev. Shigero Yoshioka, The Reformed Church of Japan.

Afternoon session—"The Evangelizing Church amidst Growing Secularism" by the Rev. P. E. S. Smith, The Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa.

Evening session—Reports on mission work in Asia and the South Pacific.

Wednesday, August 7

Morning session—"World Missions and Syncretism" by Prof. D. C. Mulder, The Reformed Churches in the Netherlands.

Afternoon session—"Ecumenism in Evangelism" by the Rev. W. Deenink, The Reformed Churches in Australia.

Evening session—Reports on mission work in Africa.

Thursday, August 8

Morning session—"The National Church and the Foreign Mission." Panelists will include the Rev. H. A. Van Hoff, Ceylon, the Rev. F. L. Schalkwijk, Brazil; Dr. Raden Soedarno, Indonesia; the Rev. H. Bird, Eritrea; and the moderator, the Rev. Peter van Strien, the Netherlands.

Afternoon session—"The Church's Mission Programme" by the Rev. Robert Recker, Nigeria, The Christian Reformed Church.

Evening session—Reports on mission work in the Americas.

Friday, August 9

Morning session—"Consolidating Reformed Missions."

Afternoon session—"Missions and the Consummation" by Dr. Paul G. Schrottenboer, General Secretary.

DAILY SCHEDULE

7:30 a.m. Breakfast — 8:30 a.m. Bible study — 9 a.m. Lecture — 10 a.m. Recess
10:15 a.m. Group discussions — 10:45 a.m. Plenary discussion; 12 noon Lunch.
1:45 p.m. Lecture — 3 p.m. Recess — 3:30 p.m. Group discussions — 4 p.m.
Plenary discussion — 6 p.m. Dinner — 8 p.m. Evening session.

Members of the Standing Committee on Missions:

The Rev. John P. Galbraith, 7401 Old York Road, Philadelphia, Pa., U.S.A.

The Rev. Henry Evenhouse, 2850 Kalamazoo Ave. S.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49508, U.S.A.

Prof. Hugo De Plessis, Theological College, Potchefstroom, South Africa

The Rev. Clement Graham, Free Church Manse, Tain, Scotland

Prof. G. Van Groningen, 112 Prospect Rd., Newton, Geelong, Australia

The Rev. P. E. S. Smith, Box 443, Pretoria, South Africa

The Rev. B. Richters, Wilhelminalaan 3, Baarn, The Netherlands

Dr. Paul G. Schrottenboer, 1677 Gentian Dr. S.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan, U.S.A.

REPORT 5**COUNCIL OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
IN CANADA****ESTEEMED BRETHREN:**

The Synod of 1966 adopted a number of directives for the formation of a council of Canadian classes to deal with specific matters of the Canadian churches. (See Acts of Synod 1966, pages 53, 54.)

We herewith present to Synod of 1967 the Agreement of Cooperation of Classes in Canada adopted at a meeting in Winnipeg on November 2, 1966. We request that Synod take notice of this agreement, and, if Synod deems necessary, also affix its approval.

Council of Christian Reformed
Churches in Canada,

Rev. J. Van Harmelen, sec'y

P.S. A copy of the minutes of the meeting held in Winnipeg will be submitted to the advisory committee of Synod.

**AGREEMENT OF COOPERATION BETWEEN THE CLASSES OF THE
CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH IN CANADA****Preamble**

Believing that the God of all grace brought the Christian Reformed Churches into being in the Dominion of Canada for His own redemptive purposes, we the classes of these churches accept the calling, and affirm the need, of engaging in mutual consultation and cooperation on a nation-wide basis. To this end we pledge ourselves to work together in an assembly for such consultation and joint action.

Name

The name of this assembly shall be

**THE COUNCIL OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCHES
IN CANADA**

Authority and Jurisdiction

The authority of this Council is derived from the member classes who hereby accept as binding the decisions of the Council on all matters under its mandate,

subject to the Confessional Standards, the Church Order and the Decisions of the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church. Its jurisdiction shall be limited to those ecclesiastical matters which are of common concern to the member classes and which cannot be dealt with equally well either by the local churches or by the Synod. The Council shall not be a court of appeal in cases of discipline and protest against the decisions of ecclesiastical assemblies.

Mandate

The Council shall deliberate and take action on all matters presented to its assembly by one or more affiliated classes or churches in such areas as the following:

- (a) Official contact with Canadian Government
- (b) Matters of public relations
- (c) Spiritual care in the Canadian Armed Forces
- (d) Contacts with other churches in Canada
- (e) Liaison with Christian institutions of mercy and social-cultural organizations
- (f) Evangelism in the national context.

Classis adopts this agreement of cooperation,

.....president

.....clerk

Classis also accepts the credentials, by-law No. I and No. II as contained in the minutes of the meeting held at Winnipeg on November 2, 1966

.....president

.....clerk

REPORT 6

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF CALVIN COLLEGE
AND SEMINARY

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

This report of the Board of Trustees of Calvin College and Seminary covers the activities of the board from June, 1966, to the February, 1967, meeting of the board. A supplementary report on developments between the February meeting and the May meeting of the board will be presented to Synod, containing recommendations that will arise out of the May meeting.

I. INFORMATION

A. *Board of Trustees*

1. The membership of the Board of Trustees has increased to 43 members with the creation of the new Classis Illiana, which was represented in February by the Rev. J. C. Scholten. At the February meeting there was even more than the usual change in membership due to retirement, moving, and the application of the six year rule. In addition to the ministerial delegates representing the classes there are nine members-at-large representing four districts.

2. *Officers.* The officers chosen at the February meeting remained the same as last year, namely:

President, Rev. Henry De Mots
First Vice-president, Dr. Jacob Hoogstra
Second Vice-president, Rev. Charles Greenfield
Secretary, Rev. Elco H. Oostendorp
Assistant Secretary, Mr. Robert Goldsword
Treasurer, Mr. Richard Hoekstra

3. *Meeting.* The winter meeting of the board was held in the Commons Board Room on the Franklin Campus on February 7, 8, 9, and 10, 1967. This meeting lasted about the usual time, due to four interviews with prospective nominees for the Seminary and many interviews with candidates for reappointment and new appointments on the College Faculty. The whole of Thursday from 8:30 in the morning to 6:00 in the evening was taken up with such interviews. For most of the board members these are most rewarding and stimulating contacts with those teaching in or administering our schools.

4. *Executive Committee.* This committee, composed of seven ministers and five laymen, met monthly except in June and July. The meetings

of the Executive Committee usually last from 11:00 a.m. to about 4:00 p.m. They are attended by the Presidents of the College and the Seminary. Many important decisions that cannot be postponed to the board meetings must be disposed of, but all transactions of the Executive Committee are reported to the board and are ratified by it. As in previous years, several members of the Executive Committee, among others the Chairman who also functions as Chairman of the Long Range Planning Committee, are members of the latter committee which meets frequently with architects and guides the board in the important work of erecting the buildings on the Knollcrest Campus. Again many hours have gone into this urgent aspect of our program, and notable progress has been made.

5. *Class Visits.* As in past years members of the board living within reasonable distance of the campus have been asked to visit classes of faculty members who are up for reappointment. As the staff grows, this becomes an increasing task, and this year an innovation was the use of alternates so as to share the work and save time and expense. This has worked well, and is a good means of introducing the alternate delegates to the schools in a more intimate way than just receiving minutes of the meetings. As indicated last year, there is continued study of more contact with the teaching staff, and there have been some experiments along the line of obtaining better teacher evaluations.

6. *The Graduate Studies Committee.* This continues to be a very important area of concern. The board has received a number of communications from individuals and especially from the Association for Reformed Scientific Studies. The committee has wrestled with the problems involved but to date has come to no solution and basis for a workable program. The matter of a possible joint meeting with the board of the ARSS was discussed at the February board meeting and will be reported on in May, the Lord willing.

B. *The Seminary*

1. *Faculty.* As was the case last year, there has been no change in the personnel of the Faculty. In alphabetical order, except for Dr. John Kromminga, President, they are: Dr. Andrew J. Bandstra, Dr. Peter Y. De Jong, Professor Harold Dekker, Dr. Anthony Hoekema, Dr. Fred Klooster, Dr. Carl Kromminga, Professor John H. Stek, Dr. Henry Stob, Dr. Bastian Van Elderen, Dr. Martin Woudstra, and Professor Henry Zwaanstra. Some College Faculty members have been engaged on a part-time basis to teach courses in view of the absence of Dr. Van Elderen and to help out in the area of Speech. Dr. Van Elderen was on leave this year, spending his time in research in the Near East and speaking on his way home in Ceylon and Australia. Professor Harold Dekker has been on leave also, spending a good part of the school year in Nigeria and in further study. Rev. Robert Recker has been teaching mission courses on a part-time basis during his absence. Dr. Anthony Hoekema spent the 1965-66 school year in Cambridge, England, on a \$4,000 grant from the A.A.T.S. and reported a very profitable year; he resumed his duties this fall. During the year the Faculty produced two numbers of the new

Calvin Theological Journal, which has been sent to all our ministers and has met with a good response. The board encouraged the Faculty to continue this good work and commended their efforts.

2. *The Curriculum.* The board approved the introduction of the following new elective courses: The New Morality, by Dr. Henry Stob; Writers of Church History, by Professor Henry Zwaanstra; The Psalms, by Professor John Stek. A decision of the Seminary Faculty which has been studied and approved by the board involves the introduction of the Quarter System instead of the present semester system. This involved also some rearranging of courses and a new curriculum schedule has been set up. At the recent board meeting in response to overtures from some classes the board went on record as urging study of the place of exegesis, particularly New Testament exegesis, in the Seminary curriculum and emphasized the need of adequate knowledge of Scripture.

A Special Lectures Program will also be introduced soon with board approval. Two outstanding lecturers will deliver a total of six special lectures on subjects of special interest to students of theology and with a view to the advancement of the Reformed faith.

An interesting document entitled "Profile of a Seminarian" has been compiled by Dr. Roel Bijkerk as a result of the psychological testing program of seminary students.

A second Evangelism Institute was conducted by the Home Missions Board in cooperation with the Seminary and proved valuable not only for interested ministers but also for the students.

The increasing number of students and faculty members is crowding the facilities of the new Seminary building and a building planning committee has been appointed by the Seminary Faculty. In this connection the proposal of the Faculty to the board that the Theological Book Collection of the Calvin Library be housed in the enlarged Seminary was the occasion of a lively debate at the board meeting, and is being studied by various competent committees.

3. *Students.* As reported by Dr. Kromminga to the board the enrollment in the Seminary is 64 Juniors, 39 Middlers, and 60 Seniors for a total of 163. This is the largest number of undergraduate students the Seminary has ever had. The number of graduate students has fallen off slightly so that the overall enrollment as of February, 1967, was 183.

Ten students from Dordt College were admitted to the Seminary. In 1967 at its May meeting the board will follow the new method approved by Synod 1966 regarding admission to the Seminary without board interviews. The new procedure regarding the interview for licensure will be followed and result, hopefully, in a more thorough investigation at this important point in the student's preparation for the ministry in our churches. During the course of the year a number of probation and special students were granted licensure or granted a change in status as they met the necessary requirements.

4. *Appointments.* Under Recommendations the board will make proposals for the reappointment of Professor Henry Zwaanstra, and the ap-

proval of the appointment of Mr. James Vander Laan to a two year lectureship in Ethics.

C. *The College*

1. *The Faculty*

a. Eighteen new teachers joined the College staff last year. Five faculty members who had been on leave returned to teaching. There are 138 persons on the teaching staff of the College, of whom eight are on leave of absence. In addition there are 36 part-time teachers whose class hours are equivalent to 14 full-time teachers. It is estimated that minimal needs next year, 1967-68, are for 164 full-time teachers. There are many areas of urgent need, and we as board join the administration in urging the prayers and cooperation of the Church in obtaining these essential kingdom workers.

During the past year an extra large amount of work has developed upon many of the faculty members in working out the program of the new curriculum to be introduced in the 1967-68 school year. Despite this added work faculty morale is high and there has been a splendid spirit of unity and zeal. The board heartily joins the President in calling the attention of the Church through Synod to the dedicated labors of our faculty members and expresses its sincere appreciation.

Five new appointments were approved by the board in February and the names will be submitted to Synod under Recommendations. In addition 43 reappointments were approved and will be presented to Synod. Besides these there were a number of reappointments to the Library and Administrative staffs which do not require Synod's approval. It is hoped that more new appointments can be presented for approval in May and brought to Synod's attention in a supplementary report.

b. *Faculty Honors.* As usual the President listed in his report to the board a very large number of special honors that have been given to members of the Faculty. He also mentioned many of the special accomplishments of faculty members in the area of their specialties, such as lectures, articles and books. The board asked the President to convey its sincere congratulations to all concerned and calls Synod's attention to the fact that many of the College teaching staff are active both in academic and other areas far beyond the mere call of duty.

c. *Leaves of Absence.* Six members of the staff have been granted leaves of absence for the academic year 1967-68.

d. None of the active Faculty was removed by death during the time of our report. However, the President reported a large number of bereavements among the members of the Faculty and the board conveyed its condolences. On June 25, 1966, Dr. Peter Hoekstra, Professor of History, Emeritus, died. He served many years as one of our pioneer professors. Other deaths of special significance for the cause of Calvin were those of Mr. Leo Cayvan, who has contributed much toward the Music Department over the years and remembered Calvin College with a valuable bequest in his will; Mr. Bernard Zondervan, who served Calvin enthusiastically as Chairman of the Campus Development Campaign; Dr.

Peter Berkhout, member of the Board of Trustees for the Eastern District who died July 19, 1966, as a result of an auto accident; Mrs. Maria S. Rinck, widow of former Professor William Rinck, passed away January 7, 1967, at the age of 88. There were more than the usual number of cases of serious illnesses among the members of the staff, but we are grateful for healing mercies.

2. *The Curriculum.* As reported last year, a very important change in the curriculum will be introduced with the beginning of the next school year. It is based upon lengthy and thorough study by the entire Faculty. It involves introduction of what is known as the four course plan, and also the 4-1-4 arrangement of the school year; that is, four months of regular courses, a one month interim course and a concluding four month semester. The new curriculum will be set forth in detail in the new College catalogue. While it no doubt will not accomplish wonders the Faculty and Administration are hopeful that many real benefits will accrue from it for both students and staff. As board we bespeak the goodwill and cooperation of our constituency as this significant change is being effected. Pending the introduction of new courses and rearranged schedules in the new curriculum, few new courses are being introduced this year.

3. *Spiritual Care.* The board has watched with great interest the development of a program of worship services on the Knollcrest Campus in the Fine Arts Center. The supervisory committee as proposed to the last Synod and approved by it has been set up consisting of two elders and two deacons each from the Calvin, Neland Avenue, Fuller Avenue, and Plymouth Heights consistories together with the College Chaplain. Rev. Pekelder sent a report to all consistories. The program has been well received and has resulted in reduction of crowding in several churches as well as increased church attendance by the students. At the February meeting of the board the chaplain gave an interesting report on the policy toward outside religious organizations on Calvin's Campus. An extensive program is encouraged for the deepening and expression of the spiritual life of the students; there is much that encourages and for which we may be thankful, but many problems remain to call for our fervent efforts and prayers.

4. *The Library.* In any school the library serves a most important function. As the College grows the library is also becoming larger and offering more services. In his report to the board President Spoelhof called attention to the progress being made under recently appointed departmental librarians. More and more tools for research and study are made available. Of special interest to the churches and our Christian schools are the services of the Colonial Origins Collection, where many valuable historical documents concerning our denominational heritage are being microfilmed and catalogued, and the services that are available to our church and school libraries. Modern technical advances are revolutionizing the science of storing and cataloguing books and periodicals and placing many tools at the disposal of scholars. As it plans the ex-

pansion of the Library on the Knollcrest Campus Calvin hopes to incorporate as many of these as possible.

5. *The Students.* The total enrollment at the opening of the school year was 3,234, an increase of 9.9% over 1965. There were 1,039 freshmen, among whom there was an unusually large number of women students. There are 238 students from Canada, or 7.4% of the total. 93% of the students come from Christian Reformed homes. Projected enrollment for 1967-'68 could well be 3,590 students. Despite the fact that Calvin is pressed for room, efforts are being made to urge our students to attend the College of the Church, not only for the sake of the college, but because we have so much to offer in the way of Christian education. There are many financial aids available so that in spite of rising costs no deserving student needs to go to a public college because of financial inability. The board urges all ministers and consistories to familiarize themselves with these financial aid programs so that they may be of assistance to their young people in this regard.

The large increase in school population, especially the larger than usual percentage of women, caused difficult problems in the area of student housing. Construction of new residence halls at Knollcrest is an urgent necessity. Lack of adequate housing more than anything else might be a reason for needing to curtail enrollment.

6. *Upward Bound Program.* The "Upward Bound Program" in which Calvin cooperated with Aquinas College in training disadvantaged high school pupils during the past summer and with follow-up work during the past school year proved highly successful. It made a real contribution to good-will toward the College and racial relations in Grand Rapids. Hopefully Calvin will participate again in 1967.

7. *Film Arts.* The decision of the Synod 1966 regarding the Film Arts has many implications for Calvin College. A report of a committee of the College faculty on this matter was distributed to board members. This is the first step in what may prove to be an extensive program to implement the principles laid down in Synod's decision concerning the positive use of this modern art medium.

D. *Property and Finance*

1. We are grateful that we can report that in the fiscal year of 1966, ending August 31, 1966, the financial needs of the general operating fund of the College and Seminary have again been met. Total expenses were \$2,739,192.25 and income was \$2,720,674.67, leaving a deficit of \$18,517.58.

2. As was reported last year, the Plant Finances, or building fund, is not in the same favorable condition. The continued rapid expansion of the Knollcrest Campus necessitated borrowing from various sources as authorized by previous Synods. A new loan has been received from the Federal agency in charge of this program; this finances the two new residence halls which were formally dedicated on Thanksgiving Day, 1966, and have been in use since the beginning of the school year.

3. The new Fine Arts Center in which Synod will hopefully hold its meetings, was dedicated in October, and has proved a most welcome addition to the Campus. Construction is going on apace on the new Commons or Student Center, which will include not only dining facilities, but also bookstore and office areas.

4. Last year's Synod approved the construction of the new Science Building for the cost of some \$2.5 million. The board was informed that greatly increased costs of construction and additional costs made necessary by the detailed working out of the plans have raised the estimated cost of this project to \$3.6 million. The board voted to proceed with this essential structure and request Synod's approval. Hopefully about one third will be financed by a government grant, another third by a government loan, and the balance from funds on hand (Ford Foundation) and Capital Funds Drive. Further details on this project will be included in the May supplementary report. It is hoped that by the time Synod meets, construction on this building can be under way since it is imperative that it be available for use by the fall of 1968. This is of special urgency in connection with any possible sale of the Franklin Street Campus.

5. Other necessary planning is progressing on the addition to the Library Classroom Building so that the entire library could be housed on the Knollcrest Campus, and at a less advanced stage of planning is the construction of an Administration-Classroom Building.

E. College Relations and Development

1. Mr. Sydney Youngsma is in his fifteenth year as "Development Secretary," now called "Director of College Relations." In his report the President listed the progress of collection of Capital Funds through various campaigns since 1952. It was reported that the "Campus Development Campaign" which came to an official end as of December 31, 1966, resulted in a total income in cash of \$1,729,588, with some pledges still outstanding. Receipts for 1966 were \$525,042.

2. At its February meeting the board went on record as favoring the organization of a Capital Funds Campaign Committee. Mr. Richard Evenhuis of Chicago will serve as General Chairman and Mr. Sydney Youngsma as Campaign Director. Details are to be worked out in the near future and will be presented to the May meeting in time for report to Synod.

3. The board approved the suggestion of the Administration that we borrow money from our own people and others through the sale of notes at 5½% interest. The sale of \$1,000,000 worth of these notes was advertised through a special edition of *Calvinalia*.

4. In connection with the Office of College Relations President Spoelhof called attention to the valuable contributions of five men whom he called "Social Security Aids." They are men who work for the College full-time, but at the small wage permitted under Social Security. They are: Mr. Joe Orlebeke, Development Representative and Editor of *Calvinalia*; Mr. George Kamp, Statistician; Mr. John Kaashoek, Head of Machine and Wood-working Shop for Science Division; Mr. John Helder,

Traffic Control Officer; Mr. Jacob Bosscher, Housing Inspector. The board hopes to recognize the services of these men in an appropriate manner at its May meeting.

5. As usual, more financial details will be presented in the supplementary report in May. At that time also the board will present its recommendations concerning tuition charges and quota payments.

6. The board took special note of the many valued services of the Vice-president for financial affairs, Mr. Henry De Wit. At present because of the overwhelming amount of paper work involved in government financing of building operations he is over-loaded with work. The board decided to institute the office of Assistant Business Manager so that he may have someone to share his responsibilities and work load. Until plans projected for the next several years are completed the task of getting the Knollcrest Campus transformed from a dream to a reality will involve much wisdom and effort, and in this gigantic project Mr. De Wit is the key man.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SYNODICAL ACTION

A. *Seminary*

1. *Reappointment.* The board recommends that Professor Henry Zwaanstra be reappointed as Associate Professor of Church History for four years.

2. *New Appointment - Chair of Ethics.* In view of the extreme difficulty that the board experienced in coming to Synod with an adequate nomination, and in view of the unusual talents and possible handicap of the nominee that gained a majority vote of the board, the board recommends that Mr. James Vander Laan be appointed to a lectureship in Ethics for two years.

3. The board calls Synod's attention to the request of Mr. Simon Wolfert for interview *after* Synod with a view to becoming a candidate for the ministry. It is the judgment of the board that it does not have the jurisdiction in this matter. Mr. Wolfert is presently a student at the Free University in Amsterdam and aspires to become a missionary on the foreign field.

B. *The College*

The board recommends that Synod approve the following *new appointments* to the College Faculty:

1. Bert De Vries, M.A., Assistant Professor of History for two years.
2. Carl J. Huisman, M.F.A., Instructor in Art for two years.
3. Arlin G. Meyer, M.A., Instructor in English for two years.
4. Stephen V. Monsma, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Political Science for two years.
5. Howard Van Till, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Physics for two years.
6. Dorothy Westra, M.A., Instructor in Education for two years.

The board recommends that Synod approve the following *reappointments* to the College Faculty:

1. Robert Bolt, Ph.D., Associate Professor of History for four years.
2. Bert P. Bos, Ed.D., Administrative Director of Teacher Placement, Certification, and Field Services with indefinite tenure.
3. Lenore R. Brashler, M.A., Assistant Instructor in Modern Languages (German) for one year.
4. Donald Byker, M.A., Assistant Professor of Speech for two years.
5. Elsa Cortina, Doctora en Pedagogia (Universidad Habana), Assistant Instructor in Modern Languages (Spanish) for one year.
6. Margaret De Boer, M.S., Assistant Instructor in Biology for one year.
7. James De Borst, M.A., Assistant Professor of Political Science for four years.
8. Peter A. De Vos, M.A., Assistant Professor of Philosophy for four years.
9. Alan I. Gebben, Ph.D., Professor of Biology with indefinite tenure.
10. Sharon Haan, M.A., Assistant Instructor in Education for two years.
11. George Harris, M.A., Assistant Professor of Classical Languages for two years.
12. Cornelius P. Hegewald, M.A., Assistant Professor of Modern Languages for four years.
13. William C. Hendricks, M.A., Supervisor of Student Teaching for two years.
14. Deborah Hess, M.A., Assistant Instructor in Modern Languages (French) for one year.
15. David J. Holquist, M.A., Assistant Instructor in Speech for one year.
16. Gertrude A. Huisman, M.A., Instructor in Music for two years.
17. Dirk W. Jellema, Ph.D., Professor of History with indefinite tenure.
18. Beverly J. Klooster, M.S., Assistant Professor of Biology for two years.
19. Albion J. Kromminga, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Physics for two years.
20. George M. Marsden, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of History for two years.
21. Theodore Minnéma, Th.D., Associate Professor of Religion and Theology for two years.
22. Larry R. Nyhoff, M.Sc., Assistant Professor of Mathematics for four years.
23. Thomas J. Ozinga, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Speech for two years.
24. Alvin C. Plantinga, Ph.D., Professor of Philosophy with indefinite tenure.
25. Jon Pott, A.B., Assistant Instructor in English for one year.

26. Donald E. Pruis, M.B.A. (C.P.A.), Assistant Professor of Economics and Business Administration with indefinite tenure.

27. Alfred J. Reynolds, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Psychology for four years.

28. Theodore A. Rottman, Ph.D., Professor of Sociology with indefinite tenure.

29. Gordon J. Spykman, Th.D., Professor of Religion and Theology with indefinite tenure.

30. Robert P. Swierenga, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of History for two years.

31. Henrietta Ten Harmsel, Ph.D., Professor of English with indefinite tenure.

32. Kathleen M. Timmer, M.S., Assistant Instructor in Mathematics for one year.

33. Marten Vande Guchte, M.Ed., Assistant Professor of Speech with indefinite tenure.

34. Peter Vande Guchte, M.B.A., Registrar for four years.

35. Jenniete Vander Berg, M.A., Assistant Instructor in Physical Education for two years.

36. David Vila, M.A., Assistant Professor of Modern Languages (Spanish) for two years.

37. Louis Vos, Th.D., Assistant Professor of Religion and Theology for two years.

38. Anthony Donald Vroon, M.A., Assistant Professor of Physical Education for four years.

39. Mary Ann Walters, M.A., Instructor in English for two years.

40. Lois Ann Westra, M.A., Instructor in Modern Languages (French) for two years.

41. Stanley M. Wiersma, Ph.D., Professor of English with indefinite tenure.

42. George Roderick Youngs, Ed.D., Associate Professor of Education for two years.

43. Marvin Zuidema, M.A., Assistant Professor of Physical Education with indefinite tenure.

The board recommends that Synod receive as information the appointments of the following Library and Administrative personnel:

1. Conrad Bult, A.M.L.S., Librarian for four years.

2. Marvin Monsma, A.M.L.S., Librarian for your years.

3. Myrtle Van Laar, A.M.L.S., Librarian for four years.

4. James P. Hoekenga, M.A., Coordinator of Alumni Relations and College Information for four years.

5. Donald Lautenbach, M.A., Coordinator of Admissions and Student Financial Aid for four years.

6. Ann Minnema Trap, R.N., Campus Nurse for four years (retroactive to 1965).

C. *Property and Finance*

1. The board recommends that Synod approve the decision of the board to authorize the administration to proceed with bidding for the Science building with the total cost estimated at \$3,600,000.

Grounds:

a. Synod of 1966 authorized the construction of this building for an estimated cost of \$2,316,000 *or at current costs*.

b. Current costs as reflected in the revised estimate reported to the board show that while the original estimate was at \$20 per square foot, present costs are closer to \$30 per square foot; the decision to air-condition the entire building added from \$2 to \$3 per square foot to the cost; interest during construction must be added to the cost; the original equipment budget was arrived at very hastily and shows an increase in actual costs.

c. Consideration of ever increasing costs makes it inadvisable to postpone construction until after Synod can approve; delay will cause great difficulty accommodating the students and there is urgent need for the ten general purpose classrooms incorporated in the building plan; salability of the Franklin Street Campus depends somewhat on the completion of this building as soon as possible; it is not feasible nor economically sound to try to "phase" construction of this building.

2. The board recommends that Synod authorize the board to organize and conduct a Capital Funds Campaign under the supervision of a Capital Funds Committee of which Mr. Richard Evenhouse will be General Chairman and Mr. Sidney Youngsma will be Campaign Director. (More details will be submitted in our supplementary report.)

3. The board recommends that Synod approve the charge of \$8 per semester hour for all part-time and graduate students in the Seminary. (cf. Acts of Synod, 1966, page 164, C, 6.)

4. The board recommends that Synod approve the construction of two additional Residence Halls on the Knollcrest Campus, these halls to be ready for occupancy if possible by September, 1968. The board recommends that Synod authorize the board to make application for financing these halls with a loan from the H.H.F.A. as soon as the moratorium on such applications has been lifted.

5. The board recommends that Synod authorize the construction of an addition to the Knollrest Dining Hall, according to the original plans for the building, so that its seating capacity be increased from 480 to 720, and that this work be included in the contract for the first residence hall project (4 above).

6. The board recommends that Synod approve the action of the board in advertising the sale of notes bearing $5\frac{1}{2}\%$ interest in the amount of \$1,000,000 to finance our building program.

Respectfully submitted,
The Board of Trustees of
Calvin College and Seminary
Elco H. Oostendorp, *Sec'y*

REPORT 7

DENOMINATIONAL AGENCIES COMMITTEE ON
GIFT ANNUITIES AND TRUSTS

ESTEEMED BRETHERN:

In compliance with the request of Synod 1966, the Board of Foreign Missions, on January 23, 1967, and after preliminary consultations, "convened a meeting of representatives of all denominational agencies to establish an association which would cooperatively explore and implement all avenues of mutual concern in publicizing and administering programs involving annuities, trusts, estates and wills." (cf. Acts 1966, Art. 120, E, 3, p. 100.)

Present were the following representatives of denominational agencies:

1. Back to God Hour—Rev. E. Bradford, Mr. D. Dykstra and Mr. M. Ozinga.
2. Board of Foreign Missions—Mr. S. De Young and Mr. W. Medendorp.
3. Board of Home Missions—Mr. D. Bosscher.
4. Calvin College and Seminary—Mr. H. DeWit and Mr. S. Youngsma.
5. Word Relief Committee—Mr. Peter Bosch.

The representatives of the various agencies, after a thorough discussion of the Synodical decision with regard to the establishing of an association, its practical considerations, and the factors involved in its implementation, decided to recommend to the Synod of 1967:

1. That Synod instruct all *official* denominational agencies to conform with the rates and contract proposals established by the Committee on Gift Annuities, 450 Park Ave., New York, N.Y. 10022.*)
2. That Synod urge all *allied* agencies to adhere to the contract proposals of the Committee on Gift Annuities and that these agencies also adhere to the annuity rates established by that committee.
3. That the Publication Committee be requested to adopt policies whereby our denominational agencies may publicize gift annuities and related means of exercising Christian stewardship.
4. That our Christian Reformed constituency be informed of the opportunities which gift annuities, trusts, and wills offer as a means of Christian stewardship and financial assistance to the Lord's Kingdom

causes among us; by a series of instructive articles in our official publications.

Grounds:

a. The Committee on Gift Annuities (New York) does exist and is a thoroughly practical and actuarially sound vehicle which would be difficult and impracticable to duplicate.

b. A formal association, as envisioned, has many practical difficulties whereas goals, uniformity and sound policies can be attained by cooperation with the existing Committee on Gift Annuities.

c. It is problematical that savings and advantages can be realized from a united or common investment fund.

d. Nearly all of the official and the allied denominational agencies are conference delegates of the Committee on Gift Annuities.

Respectfully submitted,

Denominational Agencies Committee
on Gift Annuities and Trusts

Sidney De Young, *Chairman*

David Bosscher, *Sec'y*

*) The Committee on Gift Annuities is an independent agency of service to religious, educational and charitable organizations providing a continuing advisory service in the field on gift annuities and life income agreements. It studies and recommends the proper range of rates - accepted methods of yield computation - form of contracts - amount and type of reserve funds and the nomenclature to be used in describing, advertising and issuing of life income agreements and gift annuities.

It reports as to legislation in the United States and the various states regarding these agreements, their taxability, etc. The best of professional and actuarial consultants and services are employed.

It calls a conference, at least once every four years inviting all those who contribute to its activities to attend.

The committee consists of twenty-five members chosen from the organizations issuing and experienced in gift annuities and life income agreements.

The latest conference delegation numbered over 400 members who represented over 300 religious, educational and charitable organizations.

The thirty-five dollar conference registration fee provides, in addition to instructive addresses and materials, actuarial and other professional services which would cost each organization thousands of dollars.

REPORT 8**QUOTA EQUALIZATION****ESTEEMED BRETHREN:**

The committee appointed by the Synod of 1965 to study the matter of "Equalization of Quotas" regrets to inform you that it is not able to report on the matter at this time.

Considerable spade work has been done, but for various reasons we have found it impossible to meet as a committee.

We therefore kindly request that you extend the time allotted us to the Synod of 1968.

Humbly submitted,
G. Kamp

REPORT 9

THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

To the Synod of 1967

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

The Christian Reformed Committee on Education is pleased to present its report of activities for the year 1966. We are grateful to God for the blessings He has given us as we continue the work of producing educational material in the field of catechism instruction and vacation Bible school.

I. ADMINISTRATION AND PERSONNEL

Our work is administered by the committee composed of ten members which meets regularly each month. Three sub-committees—catechism committee, VBS committee, and business committee—meet frequently to prepare recommendations to the entire committee and supervise the execution of committee decisions in their respective fields.

Last fall Rev. Wm. Haverkamp, who was then serving as our president, presented his resignation. Since he had just taken over the pastoral duties at the East Leonard Christian Reformed Church and was continuing his work as editor of *De Wachter*, he felt that the press of his responsibilities made it impossible to do justice to the work of the Committee on Education. Rev. Haverkamp has been with the committee since it was reconstituted and has performed valuable service. The synodical committee appointed Dr. Anthony Hoekema to fill the unexpired term.

The personnel of the committee is as follows: Rev. M. Doornbos, President; Dr. A. Hoekema, Vice-president; Dr. M. Snapper, Secretary; Mr. B. Woldring, Treasurer; Mr. H. Baker; Prof. H. Dekker, Rev. J. Eppinga; Mr. B. Scholten; Dr. G. J. Spykman; Mrs. D. Van Halsema.

At the time Synod convenes the terms of service of the following committee members will have expired: Rev. M. Doornbos, Dr. A. Hoekema, and Mr. B. Scholten. These three are eligible for re-election. To fill these positions we submit the following nominations:

elect one	elect one	elect one
*Rev. Milton Doornbos	*Dr. Anthony Hoekema	*Mr. Bernard Scholten
Rev. John De Vries	Dr. Melvin Hugen	Mr. Harold Pruis

The steadily growing task of implementing the committee's policies and decisions belongs to our editor, Rev. W. Vander Haak. Planning, obtaining writers, co-ordinating all the personnel and work involved in publication, managing an office and a growing warehouse inventory,

*indicates incumbents

distribution, and editing continue to be his major tasks. The committee is aware of the fact that, despite the assistance of an office secretary, he is overburdened with the business administration aspect of the work, leaving less time than he should have for editorial activity and leadership. Despite this he works diligently and competently at the things which must be done.

We are eagerly waiting the completion of the new wing to the Denominational Building at which time we will occupy a part of the office space now used by the Board of Foreign Missions. The new basement will be used as our warehouse and mailing room. Up to the present time our stock has been stored in a fourth floor loft in the downtown area. This has involved considerable inconvenience.

II. CATECHISM MATERIALS

Last year, after extensive field testing, the material for two new courses was made available to our churches. *Steps in Faith*, authored by Dr. Dennis Hoekstra, is the course for the sixth grade level. This material is different than anything we have produced before. It is composed of a basic text utilizing programmed instruction. This work is to be completed by the student at home. By means of easy steps (frames of information) the student is led through the basic doctrinal information prescribed for this course in our curriculum plan. Since the student immediately checks the accuracy of his written answer, this method has proven extremely successful in many areas of education. Field testing has confirmed that this is also an effective means of communicating the factual information necessary to the understanding of doctrine. Repeated Scripture quotations give the biblical basis for the doctrines. Multiple-choice test material makes it possible for the teacher to check the progress in learning by his pupils. The course also has a book of classroom discussion materials. By means of actual and simulated life situations the student is challenged to make judgments as to the practical implications of the doctrines he has studied at home. A teacher's manual with an extensive introduction and lesson plans for each class session is a helpful addition to this course.

That I May Know is a course for seventh grade students written by Dr. George Stob. It is divided into four sections: That I May Know God; That I May Know Myself; That I May Know the Savior; and That I May Know the Christian Life. The course is written in a concise and lucid manner with profuse reference to the Scriptures. The book is illustrated with famous works of religious art, most of which are works by Rembrandt. The student workbook requires extensive use of the Bible in the search for answers.

The eighth grade material is in the final stages of preparation and should be available for use this fall. It is a course on the church, written by Rev. Richard De Ridder and Thea B. Van Halsema. There are four sections in this book. The first deals with Scripture's teaching regarding the nature of the church. The second section contains lessons on church history in which the history of our denomination is traced back to the New Testament. The third section deals with the distinctiveness of our church as Reformed. The final section introduces the student to the

many fields of endeavor conducted by the church and the church community. The teacher's manual will be helpful in teaching this course.

For an over-all view of curriculum materials available this fall we submit the following list of publications.

Grade 3—	<i>Light Upon My Path</i> Textbook—second printing	(16,000 total)
	<i>Light Upon My Path</i> Workbook—second printing	(16,000 total)
Grade 4—	<i>With All My Heart</i> Textbook—fourth printing	(20,000 total)
	<i>With All My Heart</i> Workbook—third printing	(15,000 total)
Grade 5—	<i>Teach Me Thy Way</i> Textbook—third printing	(20,000 total)
	<i>Teach Me Thy Way</i> Teacher's Manual—second printing	(2,000 total)
	<i>Teach Me Thy Way</i> Filmstrips—first production	(300 total)
Grade 6—	<i>Steps in Faith</i> Programmed Instruction—first printing	(10,000 total)
	<i>Steps in Faith</i> Classroom Discussion Material—first printing	(10,000 total)
	<i>Steps in Faith</i> Quarterly Test—first printing	(10,000 total)
	<i>Steps in Faith</i> Teacher's Manual—first printing	(1,200 total)
Grade 7—	<i>That I May Know</i> Textbook—second printing	(20,000 total)
	<i>That I May Know</i> Workbook—second printing	(20,000 total)
Grade 8—	<i>My Church</i> Textbook—first printing this year	(10,000 total)
	<i>My Church</i> Teacher's Manual—first printing this year	(1,200 total)

Work is presently beginning on the course material for grades nine and ten. Considerable time has been spent in planning this course. Both courses will be built upon a basic reading textbook explaining the content of the Heidelberg Catechism and the Compendium. This book will contain numbered sections and a thorough index. The student will be guided in his study by means of study manuals. These study guides will contain the text of both Compendium and Catechism together with study assignments, thought and discussion questions, and so forth. The committee plans to produce several types of study guides from which selections may be made by the individual teacher.

The material for grades eleven and twelve is still in the planning stages. One of these courses will deal with a survey of our creeds and the other will deal with the Christian life.

The completed catechism materials have found wide acceptance in our churches and are being used increasingly in churches of other denominations. Last year we were privileged to serve more than 550 churches and some 24,000 students.

Mindful that we ought always to be improving our materials, the committee recently mailed out appraisal materials to our churches. Apart from field testing, this is our first official attempt to gain the reaction of our churches. In response to these appraisals we hope to detect weaknesses where they may exist and be guided in our future work. We are determined to produce good material that is soundly scriptural and Re-

formed. We are fully mindful that our material is under careful scrutiny by every minister in the classroom as well as by our membership at large. If anything suspect should ever appear in our publications we expect to hear immediately from those who are competent to judge. Because of some criticism of certain expressions in the book *Teach Me Thy Way*, some minor changes are being made in the second edition which is presently being printed.

III. INSTRUCTION MATERIAL FOR NEW CONVERTS

Persistent requests from churches and an expressed desire on the part of the Christian Reformed Board of Home Missions for study materials to prepare new converts for membership in the church has convinced the committee of the need for this material. For a considerable time we have been looking for authors for this type of material with no success. Last summer the committee announced a contest to secure manuscripts for this material. We have received eight manuscripts which are presently being judged by a representative committee. We hope this contest will produce the type of material we are seeking.

IV. VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL MATERIALS

Last year was our best year of sales in the VBS field. This indicates to the committee that we have finally been able to learn from our experiences and are now able to produce the kind of material our vacation Bible schools are seeking. The course "Learning to Know God" dealt with subjects from the Old Testament and was the third in our series. This summer we are returning to the course "We Meet Jesus" which first appeared four years ago. This material has been greatly improved with workbooks and beautiful craft projects in all departments. We are considering adding a fifth department next year because of the difficulty of producing material suitable for a Primary department consisting of grades one through three. Last year we served 250 schools with 30,000 students.

Many churches have requested material for a continuing Bible school. This has been especially true of churches in Canada. In response to a request from the Christian Reformed Board of Home Missions we are presently producing a teacher's manual with lesson materials and suggested visual aids for a twenty-six week continuing Bible school. This follows the theme of our vacation Bible school material for this year and deals with events in the life and ministry of Christ. We hope to have this material available for use in our churches by late summer.

V. OVERTURE OF CLASSIS HAMILTON

Your committee received a special mandate from the Synod of 1965 in the form of the following overture which was adopted by Synod.

"Classis Hamilton overtures Synod to request the Committee on Education to consider:

1. To re-introduce the Heidelberg Catechism in full in the curriculum of our Catechetical instruction.

2. To study the feasibility of adopting a new translation of the Heidelberg Catechism for educational purposes, such as is published by the North American Area of the World Alliance of Reformed and Presbyterian Churches as the 400th Anniversary of the Heidelberg Catechism.

Grounds:

- a) The Catechism is the Confession of the Church to the Church.
- b) The study of the Heidelberg Catechism itself in our Catechism classes would be a great help to keep this Confession alive in the hearts and minds of our people.
- c) A new translation of the Heidelberg Catechism in the language of today would facilitate its understanding.
- d) The uniform practice of Catechism preaching in our Churches will benefit greatly from the introduction of the teaching of the Catechism itself in all our Churches."

In studying this overture, your committee considered it desirable to obtain the judgment of our ministers presently active in catechism teaching. A suitable questionnaire was prepared and distributed and an excellent return of 58.4% received. Many of our ministers offered helpful comments in completing their questionnaires, about 15% of them in extensive and detailed statement. There was a total of 359 responses to the questionnaire.

The first question asked in the questionnaire was: "Do you favor the use of the Heidelberg Catechism in full in the catechism curriculum?" To this question 168 responded affirmatively, 181 gave a negative response. Since the answers were close to being equally divided, your committee has taken this into consideration in planning the curriculum for grades 9 through 12 (see report on catechism materials above).

The second question asked, "Do you consider a new translation of the Heidelberg Catechism to be necessary?" This question received 201 affirmative answers and 134 negative answers. This indicates to your committee that there is widespread desire for a new translation. We recommend to Synod that a committee be mandated to study existing recent translations and if they cannot be recommended for adoption that a new translation be produced.

The third question addressed itself to the acceptability of the Revised Compendium of 1957. To this question 154 replies indicated that the 1957 version was acceptable for use in the catechism classroom; 145 indicated that the 1957 version was not acceptable. This response indicates to your committee that there is desire for a new version of the Compendium. In view of this we recommend to Synod that a committee be appointed to prepare a new version retaining the content of the 1957 version. That this committee address itself especially to producing a version which can be memorized more easily.

VI. LAYMAN'S HANDBOOK

We have received official request from the Christian Reformed Layman's League that we produce a layman's handbook to guide the Christian layman in his everyday Christian living. We are willing to comply

with this request since we believe this can be considered a part of the educational program of the church. However, we await Synod's judgment as to whether or not this should be included in our mandate.

VII. EDUCATION DEPARTMENT IN THE BANNER

Because of the importance of education as conducted by the church officially and by the church community, your committee recently requested the Christian Reformed Publication Committee for a department in *The Banner* dealing with the whole program of Christian nurture. We are grateful that the Publication Committee has granted space for this department to appear once a month. Our committee has offered to supervise the department. By means of contributions by various writers dealing with the multiple aspects of Christian nurture we hope to serve not only those actively engaged in teaching but also all those who have any responsibility in the field of Christian nurture.

VIII. FINANCIAL REPORT

The Synod of 1965 appropriated funds in the amount of \$38,661 to be raised by a synodical quota of 75¢ per family, these funds to be used by the committee to help meet its current expenses for the year 1966. The Committee on Education herewith submits its audited financial report for the year 1966.

Committee on Education
of the Christian Reformed Church,
Grand Rapids, Michigan

We have examined the balance sheet of the Committee on Education of the Christian Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan, as of December 31, 1966 and the statement of changes in fund equity for the year then ended. Our examination was made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, and accordingly included such tests of the accounting records and such other auditing procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.

In our opinion, the accompanying balance sheet and statement of changes in fund equity present fairly the financial position of the Committee on Education of the Christian Reformed Church at December 31, 1966, and the results of its operations for the year then ended, in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

Den Braber, Helmholtz & Lyzenga
Certified Public Accountants

Committee on Education of the Christian Reformed Church

Balance Sheet

December 31, 1966

		Assets	
Current			
Cash			\$ 7,492.60
Contracts receivable			404.00
Accounts receivable			1,377.42
Inventories - at cost:			
Catechism materials	\$18,971.05		
Vacation Bible School materials	33,974.19	52,945.24	
Prepaid expense			400.00
Total Assets			\$62,619.26

Fixed

Office equipment - at cost	\$ 1,929.36	
Less allowance for depreciation	389.76	1,539.60
Total assets		\$64,158.86

Liabilities and Fund Equity**Current**

Accounts payable	\$ 725.24	
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Long-term

Note payable - Resettlement Committee, Due February 12, 1969	10,000.00	
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Total Liabilities		\$10,725.24
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Fund Equity

Balance, December 31, 1966	53,433.62	
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Total Liabilities and Fund Equity		\$64,158.86
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Statement of Changes in Fund Equity

Year ended December 31, 1966

Balance - January 1, 1966	\$ 28,951.51	
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Additions

Sales	\$79,761.36	
Quota receipts	34,840.66	114,602.02

Total Available		\$143,553.53
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Deductions

Cost of sales	\$65,166.20	
Salaries and outside services	18,173.64	
Rent	1,351.50	
Office supplies	1,110.79	
Contract writers	900.00	
Advertising and promotion	745.41	
Insurance	709.09	
Travel	602.12	
Miscellaneous	408.00	
Interest	332.09	
Telephone	267.30	
Depreciation	175.94	
Payroll taxes	141.76	
Reference materials	36.07	90,119.91

Balance - December 31, 1966	\$ 53,433.62	
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X. BUDGET REQUEST

In view of our foreseeable financial needs we herewith submit a proposed budget covering anticipated expenditures for the fiscal year 1968, a copy of which is also being submitted to the Standing Advisory Budget Committee.

Salaries and Payroll Expenses	\$25,826.00
Outside Contracts and Services	21,000.00
Rent and Utilities	8,500.00
Production Costs	75,810.00

Total	\$131,136.00
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Anticipated Receipts	
Sales of VBS material	\$40,000.00
Sales of Catechism material	50,000.00
Quota Receipts	41,136.00
<hr/>	
Total	\$131,136.00

XI. MATTERS REQUIRING THE ACTION OF SYNOD

In conclusion, kindly note the following recommendations by your committee which await the action of Synod:

1. That Synod recognize Rev. M. Doornbos, our president, and Rev. W. Vander Haak, our editor, as spokesmen for the Committee on Education and that they be granted speaking privileges on matters pertaining to the work of the committee.

2. That Synod elect three persons from the nominations as presented to fill the expired terms of service on the committee.

3. That Synod mandate a committee to study existing recent translations of the Heidelberg Catechism particularly the one published by the North American Area of the World Alliance of Reformed and Presbyterian Churches for the 400th Anniversary of the Heidelberg Catechism for possible recommendation to Synod for adoption for use in our denomination. If no version presently existing is found acceptable, that the committee proceed to the production of a new translation to be submitted to Synod for approval.

4. That Synod appoint a committee to draft a new version of the 1957 version of the Compendium. That this committee address itself especially to producing a version that can be memorized more easily than the one now in use.

5. That Synod decide whether or not the production of a layman's handbook be included in the mandate of the committee.

6. That Synod appropriate by synodical quota a sum in the amount of \$41,136 (75¢ per family) for the continued operations of the Committee on Education.

Respectfully submitted,

The Committee on Education

- M. Doornbos, *President*
- A. Hoekema, *Vice-president*
- M. Snapper, *Secretary*
- B. Woldring, *Treasurer*
- H. Baker
- H. Dekker
- J. Eppinga
- B. Scholten
- G. Spykman
- T. Van Halsema

REPORT 10

THE LORD'S DAY ALLIANCE OF THE UNITED STATES

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

Our Executive Director, the Rev. Marion G. Bradwell, made many important contacts during the last year. He met with national leaders and denominational representatives of many churches throughout our country. There are more invitations than he is able to accept and the year 1967 will be one of following new leads and following through on former contacts. Two things have become apparent. The Alliance is unknown to many people and therefore, it is not able to minister to the needs of today as the urgency of our times demands. Secondly, there is a need of more personnel to meet the challenges of our day. Financial resources, however, are limited. We cannot engage another full-time worker at this time although a field representative is sorely needed. This need may be met on a part-time basis if we can obtain additional income. Our director must have the time to administer the whole program. He cannot do so effectively when he must be out of the office much of the time.

The challenge facing the Alliance has been met in part by active participation on the part of many Board members. Each member was assigned to at least one committee and these committees have done their home work. This is evident in the new programs which have been initiated.

In 1968 the Lord's Day Alliance will celebrate its 80th anniversary. To commemorate this occasion a contest is being sponsored with the cooperation of the Hymn Society of America. It is felt that there is a paucity of hymns which declare the blessings and joys of the Lord's Day. In order to supply this lack and to celebrate the anniversary, this project has been launched. A folder giving specifications for the project may be obtained from the Alliance office or The Hymn Society of America. The address of the Alliance is 71 West 23rd St., New York, N.Y. 10010 and that of the Hymn Society of America, 475 Riverside Dr., New York, N.Y. 10027.

Our Communications Committee is contacting various radio and television stations to obtain time for spot announcements encouraging people to keep the Lord's Day. Several stations have promised to use these announcements. Mrs. Billy Graham has consented to tape some of the announcements and others are also being contacted to do so. On Palm Sunday a special program called "Spiritual Relaxation" will be televised over a Philadelphia station. This has been arranged by Dr. Samuel Jeanes. Our Executive Director will be on the panel. This tape may be used for later promotion if it proves profitable to do so.

This television program is going to include the filmstrip "Spiritual Relaxation." More than 250 sets of this filmstrip have been distributed. There are sets still available at \$3 each. This film shows how Sunday can be a day of spiritual relaxation. It could be used in small groups to stimulate discussion on the blessings of the Lord's Day. It might be particularly helpful to our Home Missionaries.

The quarterly, *The Lord's Day Leader* is being more widely distributed and is featuring new departments. It was decided to send it to the President of the United States and other key government officials as well as the Governors of all of our States. Many tracts have been forwarded to churches and individuals upon request.

The Legislative Committee surveyed the various state legislatures to secure information on proposed Sunday legislation, making recommendations for action in nine states and the District of Columbia. It also studied the relationship of Sunday business to the rising cost of commodities and filed this report with the Subcommittee of the House of Representatives on the Rising Cost of food commodities, the President's Committee on Consumer Interests, the Federal Trade Commission, and the two major political parties. This report was also carried in part by the various news media in the East.

The Alliance has come to the assistance of a postal employee who was dropped from part time work because of his refusal to work on Sunday. In our protest to the Postmaster General, we claimed that the action was a violation of Section 703 of Public Law 88-352—the Civil Rights Act and also a contradiction of the Religious Guidelines of June 16, 1966 released by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. This case will be followed very carefully, for it is in this area that the Alliance can be of greatest service in our day. We must be able to protect those who for conscience sake will not desecrate the Lord's Day. If government employees can be dismissed because they will not work on the Lord's Day, industry may follow in discriminating against those who have objections on working on the day of rest.

The Alliance for the second year in a row experienced a drop in income from churches and individuals. If it were not for a sizeable bequest and proceeds from an insurance policy on the life of our former Director, the late Rev. Harry L. Bowlby, we would have ended the year with a deficit. New means must be found to increase our income if we are going to begin to meet the challenge of our day. We have balances which will enable us to operate for a few months if there should be a drastic drop in our income. As reported in previous years it is the proceeds from the Thomson Estate which enables the Alliance to carry on. Over the years the principal of this bequest has appreciated greatly through wise investment. However, we are not permitted by law to use the corpus of this bequest although we may reinvest it. We are now seeking advice on how we can reinvest part of it to bring us greater income. I mention this because it may appear that the Alliance has large assets. It must be noted that most of this is in restricted funds (Thomson Estate and Scholarship

Fund) and therefore not available for current operating expenses or expansion of our program.

As your representative on the Board of the Alliance, I have attended all of the meetings and attended various meetings and conferences as chairman of the Finance Committee. At the annual meeting I was again elected to that position for 1967.

The need for a national organization to work for the preservation of the Lord's Day is more urgent in 1967 than it was in 1888 when it was founded. Others are clamoring for their rights. The Lord's claim for His Day must be heard in our nation and the believer's response in obedience to the Lord must be protected. Synod is therefore requested:

1. To take note of the hymn project and encourage the membership of our churches to participate.
2. To encourage use of the filmstrip "*Spiritual Relaxation*" and the literature available from the Alliance office.
3. To recommend the Alliance as a cause worthy of the moral and financial support of our churches.

Respectfully submitted,
H. Hoekstra

REPORT 11

**CLOSER RELATIONS WITH THE
ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH****ESTEEMED BRETHREN:**

Your committee to confer with representatives of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in order to cultivate closer relationships, met with increased frequency this past year. In response to the decision of Synod of 1966, we did begin a bit of ground work in the area of defining and resolving some of the differences which we saw between the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and the Christian Reformed Church. Then on January 20, 1967, we met with the representatives of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and held a longer than average dialogue with them.

The action of Synod, relative to our request for a meeting of the church order committees of each denomination, was related to them. In turn, the action of the thirty-third General Assembly was reported to us. This assembly defined clearly the mandate saying that its committee should "work toward the ultimate goal of organic union between the Orthodox Presbyterian and Christian Reformed Churches on a scriptural basis." It was especially noted that the phrase "on a scriptural basis" was added by amendment and was also included in a similar decision re the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod.

In the course of the discussion of the day, it was ascertained that the Orthodox Presbyterian Church had other matters which would first have to be attended to before there could be any serious endeavor toward union of our two denominations. The matters specified were the adoption of a new Form of Government and Book of Discipline and further a merger with the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod. In view of this, your committee feels that it would be wise to hold our mandate in abeyance for several years and when the above mentioned actions have been accomplished, to then resume our meetings and possibly with an enlarged committee, proceed toward solving our differences with a view to union with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

It became apparent at our joint meeting, that the major differences lie in the area of church order and form of government. It was further noted that these matters are points of issue in most of the Reformed world. It was thought that a conference between the various churches affiliated with the Reformed Ecumenical Synod would be of advantage to all and would form a good foundation for later work toward organic union.

We call attention to the fact that the decision of Synod to publish a directory of the churches, has not been carried out. The reason for

this is that there was a question as to whose responsibility it was to fulfill this decision. Your committee would like to call attention to the fact that this small booklet listing the churches and the time of their worship services, may prove to be of value to the Home Mission Board and to the Back-to-God Hour, as well as to members of our own churches who are vacationing or traveling. Although our committee would need approximately 1,200 copies for its own use, Synod may consider publishing a larger number to offer to our boards, committees and constituency, at a minimal price.

We recommend that Synod take the following action:

1. That Synod request the Reformed Ecumenical Synod to call a regional conference on church order to be participated in by representatives of the Churches in the North American region on the grounds that (1) in the discussions of the committee basic questions of divergence in the matter of order between the continental reformed tradition and the presbyterian tradition of the British Isles have appeared; (2) recent New Testament and theological studies have shed new light on matters of church order; and (3) that a general conference on this subject conducted by the Reformed Ecumenical Synod could open the way to closer relationship and possible union of the particular churches represented.

(NOTE) An identical request has been sent to the General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

2. That the present committee be authorized to participate in this conference.

3. That Synod designate specifically who is to carry out the assignment of publishing the Directory of Churches.

4. That Synod authorize the publisher to send ten (10) free copies to each of the Orthodox Presbyterian Churches (110 churches).

5. That our chairman, the Reverend John T. Holwerda, be given the special consideration of representing this committee before Synod.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. John T. Holwerda
Rev. Jacob Hasper
Rev. Louis Dykstra
Rev. Herman Hoekstra
Mr. Peter Damsma

REPORT 12

CHAPLAIN COMMITTEE

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

The Chaplain Committee is privileged to report a blessed year of service on behalf of our denomination through our military and institutional Christian Reformed chaplains. The work and the opportunities are constantly expanding. Very encouraging reports are received regularly from our chaplains indicating that through them we have been able to make a significant impact and a contribution to the work of the King and His Kingdom in the world at large as well as in the strategic places at home and abroad.

Your Committee meets each month. Our main tasks are chaplain recruitment, endorsement, consultation, and administration. We seek to keep close contact regularly with our chaplains in the field, whether that field be foreign or in the United States. We also strive for a yearly visit to state-side chaplains when this is feasible.

We have had at least two meetings of representatives of our Committee with those of the Board of Home Missions, and of the Young Calvinist Federation, seeking to bring about as close cooperation as possible between the three Committees that are serving our chaplains and servicemen on behalf of the denomination. The Back to God Hour has also given us excellent cooperation and service, supplying us with devotional materials, as has also the Young Calvinist Federation.

"In view of the new organizational set-up, the Canadian Chaplain Committee is no longer functioning. There are openings for chaplains in mental institutions in the western provinces of Canada (Alberta, Saskatchewan, British Columbia). These chaplains are to be supported by the churches to which they belong and not by the government. At a recent meeting of the Canadian Council of Christian Reformed Churches of Canada, held in Winnipeg, this matter was discussed. The matter will be looked into by some of our western ministers."

I. MILITARY CHAPLAINCY

Christian Reformed ministers on active duty as U.S. military chaplains in March 1967 were as follows: (parentheses give the year of entering active duty)

Air Force

Bode, Harold—636th Combat Support Group, Box 24, APO San Francisco, California 96274 (Stationed in the Philippines) (1962)

Bronkema, Ralph W.—1713 A. Tenth St., Langley A.F.B., Virginia 23365 (1966)

Guikema, Henry—Office of the Chaplain, Box 395, 32nd Fighter Interceptor Sqdn., APO New York, New York 09292 (Due back from Europe in March 1967) (1962)

Kok, Louis—30-344 Cherry Drive, Apt. C., APO Seattle, Washington 98742 (Due back from Alaska in June 1967) (1962)

Army

Friend, Jan—374 Spear, Fort Bragg, North Carolina 28307 (1962)

Hemple, Bruce—Office of the Chaplain, Hq., 4th Inf. Div. Arty., APO San Francisco, California 96262 (Stationed in Viet Nam) (1959)

Hoogland, John—Advisory Team No. 75, 7th P.H. Vietnamese Inf. Div., APO San Francisco, California 96359 (Stationed in Viet Nam) (1959)

Konynenbelt, Marvin—H.H.C., 1st Bde., 1st Inf. Div. APO San Francisco, California 96345 (Stationed in Viet Nam) (1965)

Ouwinga, Harvey—Hq., 1st Msl. Bn., 67th Arty., APO New York, New York 09801 (Stationed in Germany) (1962)

Vruwink, Paul—13th Engr. Bn., 7th Inf., Div., APO San Francisco, California 96207 (Due back from Korea 1 March 1967 possibly to be transferred to Germany (1958-1960, 1966—)

Navy

Bergsma, Herbert—1009 Wilson Drive, Handsboro, Mississippi 39554 (Due to leave for Viet Nam in early 1967) (1966)

Brummel, Robert—Mosuppdet Bravo, Box 18 FPO San Francisco, California 96650 (1966)

Meyer, Galen—111 West Brookes, San Diego, California 92103 (1966)

Roon, Albert—NAV. COMM. STA. Box 36/R1, FPO New York, New York 09550 (Stationed in Puerto Rico) (1966)

Swierenga, Raymond—2333 "C" California Ave., Forrestal Village, Great Lakes, Illinois 60088 (Returned from Viet Nam November 1966) (1960)

This totals 15 active duty chaplains, an increase of three since the 1966 report. We have three new men in the Naval service. Galen Meyer was ordained and started Chaplain School in July of 1966. Robert Brummel was ordained June 6, 1966 and entered Chaplain School in September. Rev. Herbert Bergsma left the Covenant Church at Cutlerville and accepted a commission in the Navy in September of 1966. Rev. Ralph W. Bronkema was installed as Air Force Chaplain on May 8, 1966. We did lose one chaplain, Rev. Arlo Dahm who left the service with the Marine Corps January 31, 1967. After eight years of faithful service, we are indeed grateful for his contribution to this cause of the Lord. In the course of the past year, several of our men received outstanding recognition and honors. Reports that come to us indicate that our chaplains are well regarded by both officer, staff, and men, and highly esteemed in Washington official circles. For this we thank our God.

We are forging ahead, but there are still ten openings available to us in the chaplaincy. Your Committee has alerted the ministers of our churches to this need and are anticipating some response. We are indeed grateful for those who have volunteered their services in this great need and promising opportunity.

A very successful Chaplain Day was held at our Seminary on 20 October 1966. This was primarily to challenge the students with the chaplaincy program. We are planning another for 1967.

As of March 1967, 14 of our ministers are serving in the Military Reserve Chaplain assignments: four in the Air Force, five in the Army, and five in the Navy. In addition, two ministers are serving in the Civil Air Patrol. All these men are performing valuable service, part-time.

Chaplain Harvey A. Ouwinga is our coordinator for the Presbyterian-Reformed Retreat scheduled for June of this year at Berchtesgaden, Germany. Chaplain Vruwink will assist him if he is in Germany at that time. Our church supplies the main speaker for this year and your Committee has appointed our chairman, ex-chaplain Marinus Goote, for this task.

You will note from the listings that six of our chaplains will be serving on overseas duty this year, four of them in actual combat theaters, Chaplains Bergsma, Hemple, Hoogland, and Konynenbelt, in Viet Nam. We commend especially these men and their families for intercessory prayer to the congregations.

We would also like to remind Synod and the churches that our chaplains serve first of all the men of the units to which they are assigned. Our servicemen who are not in such units cannot benefit from our chaplain unless they themselves seek out these chaplains or if the chaplain is in the vicinity of our servicemen.

Reverends Harold Dekker and James C. Lont, our denominational representatives to the General Commission of Chaplains and Ministry to Armed Forces Personnel continue to give excellent aid and counsel to our Committee meetings.

All Chaplains send in quarterly reports. These in turn are edited and re-distributed to all chaplains that each may benefit from such personal contact with the others as to problems and experiences.

II. INSTITUTIONAL CHAPLAINCY

Heynen, Ralph—6850 S. Division Ave., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49508

Jansma, Theodore—644 Goffle Hill Road, Hawthorne, New Jersey 07506

Kaemingk, Frank—2300 S. Birch, Denver, Colorado 80222

Vanden Bosch, Thomas—1059 - 7th St., Ripon, California 95366

We were saddened by the loss of one of our chaplains, the Rev. George Vander Kooi, serving at the Kalamazoo State Hospital. The Lord Himself removed him from his post on 21 January 1967, after many years of faithful service, and a long period of suffering.

Rev. Adrian Van Andel of Minneapolis joined our ranks and was installed on 9 December 1966 at the Indianapolis church as chaplain at the Veterans Hospital at Marion, Indiana. We were happy to have him fill this strategic position.

Three men have completed their Institutional Clinical Training and are now fulfilling their parish requirements in various congregations. We hope that in due time they will be able to fill some great need in some institution. The Chaplain Committee is devoting special effort in this field as well as that of the military and is alert to other fields of service that are opening for the Christian ministry of our church in American life.

III. SPIRITUAL AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

We are sincerely appreciative of and thankful for the continued interest and prayers of the members of our congregations of our denomination on behalf of the work of the chaplaincy. These prayers and this interest are so essential!

Last year was the first time since the Synod of 1961 that the Chaplain Committee found it necessary to ask to be placed on the approved list for one or more offerings. Our enlarged responsibility in connection with the Institutional Chaplaincy and the acceleration of the military program in time of war make it necessary to repeat this request for 1968.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

A.) Representation at Synod—we request that the secretary of our committee be permitted to speak at Synod on behalf of the Chaplain Committee.

B.) Presentation of Chaplains—we request the privilege of introducing active duty chaplains present during Synod's sessions.

C.) Offerings—we request the Synod recommend the Chaplain Committee be placed on the approved list for one or more offerings for 1968 for the work of the chaplaincy of the Christian Reformed Church.

Grounds:

1. Our request of last year was the first since 1961.
2. Our present low balance makes it necessary.
3. Our responsibility has been increased in connection with the Institutional Chaplaincy and the acceleration of the military build-up.

D.) Nominations—Rev. C. M. Schoolland and Col. Herman Steenstra have completed their first three-year term of service on the Committee. The Chaplain Committee suggest the following nominations:

- | | |
|----------|--|
| Group I | Rev. Dewey Hoitenga (St. Joseph, Michigan) |
| | Rev. C. M. Schoolland (eligible for re-election) |
| Group II | Col. Herman Steenstra (eligible for re-election) |
| | Melvin J. Wierenga (G.R. Lee St. Church) |

V. FINANCIAL REPORT

The treasurer's annual statement and an auditor's report are attached.

Respectfully submitted,

Marinus Goote, Chairman	John Berkhof
Cornelius M. Schoolland, Secretary	Anthony De Jager
Robert J. Lyzenga, Treasurer	Ralph Heynen
Derke P. Bergsma	Herman Steenstra

To the Chaplain Committee of the Christian Reformed Church:

I have examined the financial report of the Chaplain Committee for the year ended December 31, 1966. My examination was made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, and accordingly included such tests of the accounting records and such other auditing procedures as I considered necessary in the circumstances, except that it was not feasible to make an independent verification of contribution and gift receipts.

In my opinion, the accompanying financial report presents fairly the financial position of the Chaplain Committee at December 31, 1966 and its recorded receipts and disbursements for the year ended December 31, 1966, on a cash basis of accounting.

Donald E. Pruis, C.P.A.

Feb. 21, 1967

CHAPLAIN COMMITTEE
OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH
FINANCIAL REPORT

Year ended December 31, 1966

BALANCE—January 1, 1966		\$ 6,972.89
RECEIPTS:		
Contributions and gifts.....	\$ 904.19	
Interest income	301.69	
TOTAL RECEIPTS		1,205.88
TOTAL AVAILABLE		\$ 8,178.77
DISBURSEMENTS:		
Travel and recruitment.....	\$ 1,486.92	
Moving	844.47	
General Commission dues	715.00	
Secretary	200.00	
Servicemen's retreat in Germany.....	300.00	
Training	158.00	
Clerical	185.25	
Postage and supplies.....	393.98	
Literature	180.62	
Miscellaneous	65.00	
Salary supplement allowance.....	44.82	
Servicemen's Fund—distribution of special gifts received	290.88	
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS		4,864.94
BALANCE—December 31, 1966.....		\$ 3,313.83
ENDING BALANCE CONSISTED OF:		
Checking account	\$ 967.53	
Savings account	2,346.30	
		\$ 3,313.83

REPORT 13

SPONSORSHIP OF FOREIGN STUDENTS

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

The committee for the Sponsorship of Foreign Students is pleased to present its report on the activities of the past year. Regular meetings have been held so that the business of the committee is carried out faithfully. As in previous years, the committee has continued its support for a number of students who are in attendance at Calvin College and Calvin Seminary. Some support has been continued in behalf of Daniel Anakaa (Nigeria) who is at present attending Calvin College. After Mr. Jin Tae Lee (Korea) was admitted to candidacy for the Master's degree in Theology, support was continued for him for the first semester of this year and subsequently also for the second semester. It is hoped that he will be able to complete all of the requirements for the degree by the end of this academic year. New grantees added to the number of those who are supported by the committee are Kwan Il Hwang (Korea) and Joshua Shimrumun Yakobu (Nigeria). Mr. Hwang has begun his work toward the Master's degree in Theology and he is making satisfactory progress. Mr. Yakobu will have been with us for one semester by June of 1967, during which time he started his course of study leading to the Bachelor of Divinity degree. Although an unfortunate accident delayed him in the beginning, he has now fully recovered and is making a good adjustment to the American academic scene.

For several others whose courses of study were completed, support has been discontinued. Their appreciation for the help received indicates the importance of the work in which your committee is engaged.

For the greater part of the year the committee has operated under the chairmanship of the Dean of Students of the Seminary, owing to the absence of the Academic Dean of the Seminary who is teaching in Nigeria. Because of his absence, the committee unanimously agreed to add Rev. Robert Recker in an advisory capacity, particularly in behalf of Nigerian students.

During the year many requests for financial aid are received by the secretary of your committee. By far the larger percentage of these is easily handled by referring them to the screening committees in Korea, Taiwan, and Nigeria. The help which these committees render is invaluable both for the Seminary and your committee. Their efforts are greatly appreciated and they make it possible for the committee to make the best use of the funds which have been entrusted to us.

Although the number of students receiving support is not high, it should be borne in mind that at least one other applicant has been

granted aid and will very likely be able to make use of it in September, 1967. In addition to this number, we hope that further grants can be made to eligible applicants in this coming year. Your committee wishes to express its appreciation to Synod for placing the "Sponsorship of Foreign Students" on the list of Denominational Causes for one or more offerings. As indicated by our financial statement, our reserves are relatively low and this inclusion is a matter of some urgency. Therefore, your committee requests that Synod again place this cause on the list for the coming year.

Your committee appreciates the faithful support which it has received in past years in behalf of this important work and we beg your continued prayers for this part of Christ's Kingdom.

Respectfully submitted,

Harold Dekker, Chairman
 Andrew Bandstra, Chairman pro-tem
 Henry Venema, Secretary
 Henry DeWit, Treasurer
 Alvin Huibregtse
 Philip Lucasse
 Robert Recker (Advisor)
 Nelson Vander Zee

SPONSORSHIP OF FOREIGN STUDENTS

Financial Statement

March 1, 1966 to February 28, 1967

CASH BALANCE—MARCH 1, 1966.....	\$8,178.32	
Contributions from Churches for the Year.....	1,174.32	
		<u>\$9,352.64</u>
Disbursements during the year—		
Jin Tae Lee	\$1,466.00	
Daniel Anaka	1,161.25	
Young Karl Choi	594.00	
David Kidal Kim	591.00	
Chun Il Cho	484.00	
Joshua S. Yakobo	106.90	
David K. Hwang or Kwanil Hwang	655.00	
Insurance and Miscellaneous Costs.....	67.65	
		<u>5,125.80</u>
CASH BALANCE—FEBRUARY 28, 1967.....		\$4,226.84

REPORT 14

IMMIGRATION COMMITTEE FOR CANADA

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

We are pleased to report to you again about the activities and prospects of the Immigration committee for Canada of the Christian Reformed Church.

1. *Membership.*

There has been no change in our system of representation and personnel.

Rev. P. J. Hoekstra, president, represents Classis Alberta South

Rev. G. Bouma, vice-president, represents Classis Chatham

Mr. J. VanderVliet, sec'y-treasurer, represents Classis Eastern Ontario

Rev. J. C. Derksen, represents Classis Hamilton

Mr. S. A. Gerber, represents Classis British Columbia

Mr. M. Mol, represents Classis Toronto

Mr. H. J. Ten Hove, represents Classis Alberta North

Mr. N. Veldhuizen, represents Classis Minnesota North

2. *Meetings.*

The work of the committee was such that it could be supervised by the Executive Board. Hence, the committee did not meet in full strength but the Board met in Toronto, Ont., in the spring and in the fall of the year.

3. *Summary of Work.*

In the year 1965: 2446 persons from the Netherlands entered Canada as immigrants. In 1966 the total number of immigrants was 3310. This was an increase of 36% over the previous year.

According to church affiliation they were divided as follows:

Christian Reformed 410
Reformed 756
Roman Catholic 1204

Others 8
No religion 671
Religion unknown 261

Noticeable in these figures is the number of people, who claimed to have no connection whatever with any church. Whereas some years ago their percentage of the total was almost negligible, now they form the third largest group. Through the good services of the Seaway Chaplain of Classis Eastern Ontario all the immigrants arriving by ship are met and their destination forwarded to the nearest congregation of either the Christian Reformed or the Reformed Church in Canada. This type of spiritual care has been arranged in Montreal in cooperation with the

local minister of the Reformed church. Evangelization committees have been encouraged to visit the unchurched immigrants upon arrival.

The committee, through the office of its secretary, performed the same task as it has done during the 20 years of its existence, that is to answer numerous letters of inquiry, not only from Holland, but also from Australia and Indonesia; advise organizations in Holland about general conditions in various parts of the country; inform our own congregations about expected arrivals, and arrange for help in finding living quarters and jobs through local contact men.

The committee maintained its connection with the Canadian-Netherlands Immigration Council, which organization is responsible for the placement of Dutch young farmers in Canada. This sound movement has brought temporary farm help to this country since 1953 in increasing numbers. Several of them during their stay in Canada have attended our church services, have shown interest in our Young Peoples' organizations, and in permanent settlement in Canada.

4. *Expectations for 1968.*

Although the fluctuating economics of our days make it difficult to submit long range predictions, it seems that Dutch immigration to Canada will continue to climb for some time and it would therefore be foolish to discontinue the work of the Immigration Committee, because it forms a vital link between the immigration officials in Holland and Canada on one side and our churches on the other side. Its services facilitate immigration itself and also the integration of the immigrants into church life.

The committee being convinced that its usefulness is in no wise exhausted, feels nevertheless, that it should be transferred to another authority within the church for supervision and consultation. The committee has in mind the newly formed Council of Canadian Christian Reformed churches, because of the fact that its work is done in Canada only and for the Canadian part of our denomination. This new connection would undoubtedly increase the interest of our people in Canada for the work the committee is doing and would make it easier to operate effectively.

The committee, of course, is most grateful for the warm interest Synod and our people in the United States have shown and the tremendous financial support they have given to our work when immigration from Holland to Canada was at its peak. However, at this junction, with a new Canadian Council in operation, the committee is convinced that Synod, being an international body, should be relieved of the responsibility for a purely Canadian institution.

5. *Finances.*

A financial report for the year 1966 is enclosed herewith. Due to illness of the treasurer an official statement of a public accountant is not

available at the time of writing but will be submitted later to the Stated Clerk of Synod.

6. Recommendation.

With reference to the Acts of Synod 1966, Art. 74, page 53 and 54, II Specific Matters of Canadian churches, the Committee recommends that Synod of 1967 grant permission to the Immigration Committee to contact the Council of Canadian Christian Reformed churches with a view to operate eventually under the auspices of said Council starting at a date to be determined by the Council and the Immigration Committee.

Grounds:

1. The work of the Committee is specifically Canadian;
2. The Council of Canadian Christian Reformed churches has now been established.

Humbly submitted,

P. J. Hoekstra, president

G. Bouma, vice-president

J. Vander Vliet, sec'y-treas.

FINANCIAL REPORT IMMIGRATION COMMITTEE

Statement of Receipts and Disbursements for the year
ended December 31, 1966

Receipts			
Donations	\$ 843.50		
Interest	89.77	\$	933.27
Disbursements			
Bank charges	\$ 2.55		
Postage	47.04		
Telephone and Telegraph	100.53		
Office supplies	8.65		
Membership CNIC-1965, 1966	50.00		
Guarantee Bond	25.00		
Auditing	30.00		
Yearbook—Chr. Ref. Church 1966	3.75		
Travelling expenses	224.10		
Wages April 1–Dec. 31, 1966	500.00		
Arrears in wages 1964-1965	850.00		1,841.62
			<hr/>
Excess of expenses over income		\$	908.35
Bank reconciliation			
Balance, January 1, 1966	\$2,416.58		
Add: Receipts during year	933.27		
			<hr/>
	\$3,349.85		
Less: Expenses	1,841.62		
			<hr/>
Balance, December 31, 1966	\$1,508.23		
Bank account balances, December 31, 1966			
Can. Imperial Bank of Commerce, current account.....	\$ 278.31		
Dutch Canadian Credit Union, savings account	1,229.92		
			<hr/>
	\$1,508.23		

J. Vander Vliet, Treasurer

REPORT 15

CONTACT COMMITTEE WITH THE CANADIAN
REFORMED CHURCHES

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

The Synod of 1964 appointed "a special committee to communicate with the Canadian Reformed Churches with a view to establishing a closer relationship with these Churches." The grounds for this decision were:

"1. We subscribe to the same Reformed Confessions yet are now living as distinct and separate communions.

"2. Several Classes have overtured Synod to approach these Churches.

"3. A request for communication has been received from these Churches." (Acts, 1964, p. 23)

At the Synod of 1965 your Committee reported that it was "awaiting a reply to a letter sent to the 1965 General Synod of the Canadian Reformed Churches." (Acts 1965, p. 20)

At the Synod of 1966 your Committee reported:

a. that our request for communication was acted on favorably;

b. that a committee was appointed by the Canadian Reformed Churches to meet with us;

c. that the first meeting with this committee was held on June 2, 1966;

d. that it was agreed in this joint meeting to proceed in line with the mandate given to the Committee of the Christian Reformed Churches. That mandate read as follows:

"To examine, together with the Contact Committee of the Christian Reformed Church, how their and our Churches are to enter into and to maintain together the unity of the Church in the unity of faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God on the foundation of the Apostles of the Lamb, and therefore to examine, together with the said Committee, the concrete situation, as it is also determined by the differences regarding the following points:

"a. The Christian Reformed Church and our Churches have adopted the same confessional forms as Forms of Unity: the Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confession, and the Canons of Dort.

"b. Besides the Christian Reformed Church has adopted: The Conclusions of Utrecht (1905-1908) and an official interpretation of them (1962); The Three Points of Kalamazoo (1924) and an official interpretation of them (1959-1960).

"Our Churches have not adopted any other declarations concerning the doctrine of the Church besides the Three Forms of Unity.

"c. The Christian Reformed Church maintains correspondence with the "synodical" Gereformeerde Kerken in The Netherlands. Our Churches maintain correspondence with the "liberated" Gereformeerde Kerken in The Netherlands.

"d. The Christian Reformed Church has adopted a new Church Order; our Churches do still abide by the Church Order of Dort. (Utrecht 1619-1905)." —see Acts 1966, pp. 54-55, 413-415

We are grateful to be able to tell you that we made progress in our contact with the Canadian Reformed brethren. A number of meetings were held, both separately and jointly. The chairmanship of the joint meetings is alternated between the committees. A mutual exchange of materials in the Acts of Synods of the two bodies took place. Regarding these materials we like to express our appreciation to the Stated Clerk of our Church for all his help. The joint meetings have proved to be fraternal and fruitful. We dare to say that we have been drawn closer together as a result of our discussions. That questions still remain and differences still obtain is obvious and was to be expected. We are, however, hopeful of a favorable outcome of the joint meetings still to be held.

This hope is based on the fact that the discussion on point "a" of the outline expressed in the above mentioned mandate did not produce any serious problems. Both churches are committed to the same credal forms.

Your Committee proposed to change the order of discussion on the points b, c, d, as follows: b, d, c. We deemed it wiser to first deal with matters of doctrine and church order in the concrete situation of both churches on this continent, before discussing the matter of correspondence with other churches overseas. This proposal was accepted, with the understanding that the discussion on matters of church order can involve remarks on the matter of correspondence.

In regard to the discussions about the Conclusions of Utrecht and the Three Points of Kalamazoo, it became evident that the Canadian Reformed brethren have definite scruples about these deliverances. They have also raised questions about their binding force. Certain statements in the decisions of Synod confuse them. We will call attention to this later in the report.

The Canadian Reformed Church has not accepted the deliverance of 1905-1908. Nor have they adopted any other declaration on specific points of doctrine besides the Three Forms of Unity. They question the wisdom of adopting official interpretations of specific points of doctrine, which tend to become regarded as credal statements. They state that church history has amply shown how easily such deliverances are elevated to a church dogma, to a binding credal statement, and thus become occasions to disrupt the unity of those who are united on the

basis of a common creed. Even when such declarations may have some value in a historical situation, they still fear the idea of binding the conscience in connection with official interpretations.

Because our communication with the Canadian Reformed Church confronts these brethren with certain deliverances, we believe it is well to listen to their fears and misgivings. And we can say that our Canadian Reformed brethren show every readiness to meet the confrontation with these deliverances. They manifest a sincere and earnest desire to seek closer contact with us. We are, therefore, required to take their fears, their objections, their questions, seriously, and to do our utmost to clarify our position in regard to the deliverances concerned, with a view to removing obstacles to Reformed unity.

We are not yet ready to report on specific misgivings and objections which the Canadian Reformed brethren have with respect to the Conclusions of Utrecht and the Three Points of 1924. A memorandum on the Conclusions of Utrecht has been submitted, but has not yet been discussed. A memorandum on the Three Points has been promised, but has not yet been presented. Only after these have been evaluated in our joint meetings will we be able to report on this.

There is another prior reason why we cannot yet report on these aspects of our discussion. In our general discussions on these deliverances there is one question which the Canadian Reformed brethren raise repeatedly, and concerning which we need Synod's clarification. That question concerns the nature of the binding force of these deliverances. They have asked us whether the Christian Reformed Church requires subscription to more than the Three Confessional Standards. Our answer was, "No." But then they ask what the specific meaning and purpose is of forwarding certain deliverances and resolutions to a minister of another denomination when he receives a call in the Christian Reformed Church, and informs him "that acceptance of the call implies his promise to abide by these deliverances in the exercise of his ministerial office in the Christian Reformed Church" (Acts of Synod, 1963, p. 22; quoted in Supplement to Church Order, p. 25).

(Just a brief comment in this connection. In the Supplement to the printed Revised Church Order the statement could be construed as having reference only to the resolutions of 1928/1951, on Worldly Amusements. But in the Acts of 1963 (p. 22) it is quite obvious that it refers to all three of the declarations mentioned.)

In our discussion of the question which was raised we referred to a statement in the letter of Synod to the Protestant Reformed Churches: "If we do not require submission in the sense of demanding total agreement with the Three Points; we recognize and bear with scruples which you may have, in the expectation that we together may come eventually to a better understanding of the truth; and not bar those who have certain misgivings or divergent interpretations" (Acts 1960, p. 114). Reference was also made to the fact that the Synod of 1959 stated that "the Three Points . . . were not intended to be a church dogma con-

cerning Common Grace" (Acts 1959, p. 111). We also stated that it was our judgment that the words "to abide by these deliverances" were not identical with "to subscribe to the Three Forms of Unity;" nor does that statement preclude the right of appeal against any of these deliverances in the ecclesiastical way (Church Order, Art. 29; also Acts 1962, Art. 144, I, C, 5, p. 108). We indicated that the same way is open and understood in connection with the observation of the 1960 Synod, "that you will agree not to agitate against official interpretations" (Acts 1960, p. 114). The brethren of the Canadian Reformed Church were not fully satisfied with this answer, and reformulated their question as follows: "What is the exact purpose of forwarding these deliverances and resolutions to a pastor-elect, considering the words 'that acceptance of the call implies his promise to *abide by* these deliverances in the exercise of his ministerial office in the Christian Reformed Church'? How does this stringent requirement harmonize with the statement in the letter to the Protestant Reformed Churches: 'If we do not require submission in the sense of demanding total agreement . . . etc.?'?" And further they referred to a decision of the 1962 Synod that the Conclusions of Utrecht "shall not be used as a test for membership or holding office in the Christian Reformed Church, nor as a test for admitting ministers to the Christian Reformed Church" (Acts 1962, p. 108). The second ground for that decision was: "This is in harmony with the precedent recent Synods have established in dealing with the Three Points of 1924." (Acts 1962, p. 108) Nevertheless the Synod of 1963 decided that incoming ministers must "abide by these deliverances in the exercise of their ministerial office" (Acts 1963, p. 22), which can only be understood as a test for admitting ministers to the Christian Reformed ministry.

From this we think it becomes quite obvious that there is reason for some confusion. Since a part of the Conclusions of Utrecht were at issue in the difficulties in the Netherlands, it is understandable that the Canadian Reformed brethren want to be altogether clear about what is meant by these decisions of our Synods. Synod has said that these Conclusions should not be made a test for admitting ministers into the Christian Reformed Church. At the same time Synod decided "not to set aside the Conclusions of Utrecht," and "to reaffirm that the adoption of these Conclusions was a declaration of agreement with these formulations, and advise that they be understood in the light of the study committee report" (Acts 1962, p. 108). A minister coming into the Christian Reformed Church must promise "to abide by these deliverances."

Not only do the Canadian Reformed brethren have difficulty with certain things in the report. They also ask whether these Conclusions are still a part of the "Colloquium Doctum," because in this report reference is made to a letter sent to the Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland, dated May 24, 1955, in which this statement occurs: "The decisions of 1908 belong to these doctrinal declarations. Furthermore, all ministers who come to us from non-sister churches are only admitted after a colloquium doctum is held with them" (Acts 1962, p. 141). Your

committee answered that it seems that 1908 is still included in the colloquium doctum. We used the word "seems," because the Synod of 1963 does not mention the Conclusions of Utrecht in the list of deliverances to be forwarded to a minister of another denomination when he receives a call in the Christian Reformed Church (Acts 1963, p. 22: Supplement to the printed Church Order, p. 25). The decision of 1962 does not state that the Conclusions are excluded from a colloquium doctum.

The Canadian Reformed brethren have observed that the position of the Christian Reformed Church is similar in regard to 1908 and 1924. With respect to both it is said, "We do not accede to the request to set them aside (Acts 1960, p. 114; Acts 1962, p. 108). Yet 1908 is not made a "test for holding office," and "total agreement" is not asked in regard to 1924. But while 1924 and 1959-1961 regarding the Three Points are listed in the decision of Synod, 1963 (p. 22), the listing omits 1908/1962, regarding the Conclusions of Utrecht.

As your committee we call the attention of Synod to the fact that the decision of 1963 (p. 22) is a modified version of the decision of the Synod of 1956, (Art. 65, (1), p. 38). For convenience, we place these two decisions together in this report.

"When one of our churches has decided to call a minister of de Geref-ormeerde Kerken in Nederland, it shall with the letter of call forward to him a transcript . . . of the following deliverances of our Synods (and then the specific deliverances are listed) and it shall inform him that acceptance of the call will be understood to imply his promise to abide by those deliverances in his exercise of the ministerial office in the Christian Reformed Church."
—(Acts, 1956, Art. 65, (1), p. 38)

"When a congregation decides to call a minister from another denomination, the consistory shall include with the call letter a transcript . . . of these deliverances (and then the specific deliverances are listed, but 1908 is omitted). The consistory shall inform the pastor-elect that acceptance of the call implies his promise to abide by these deliverances in the exercise of his ministerial office in the Christian Reformed Church."
—(Acts, 1963, Art. 44, C, 2, a, (6), p. 22)

Not only was the historical occasion for these two decisions quite different, but between 1956 and 1963 significant changes had taken place regarding the declarations of 1908 and 1924. Regarding the Conclusions of Utrecht it was said, these shall not be "a test for membership or holding office in the Christian Reformed Church," and with respect to the Three Points it was said, "if we bear with scruples . . . and do not demand total agreement."

To this we must still add that since 1963 the decision regarding the Church and the Film Arts has been taken (Acts, 1966, p. 32-36), which has introduced significant change regarding the church's stand on the question of Worldly Amusements.

We therefore ask, do not these decisions in the decade following 1956 require a review as to what is intended by the decision of 1956 (Art. 65, p. 38) and reaffirmed (with the omission of 1908) in 1963 (p. 22)?

It should be obvious that there is reason for some confusion, and that there is need for clarification as to just what the binding force of these deliverances is. Such clarification can serve to clear up certain points that have been raised by our Canadian Reformed brethren in our discussions with them. It will also help us in our further discussions with them, to facilitate a hopefully favorable outcome of working together toward a desired unity. After such clarification it will be possible to report about such misgivings as the Canadian Reformed brethren have about the Conclusions of Utrecht, and in regard to the Three Points of 1924. We come, therefore, with a request for clarification. We ask that Synod express itself on the following matters:

1. Synod has decided that the Conclusions of Utrecht "shall not be used as a test for membership or holding office in the Christian Reformed Church" (Acts, 1962, p. 108). At the same time Synod has decided "not to set aside the Conclusions" (Acts 1962, p. 108). Are we correct in assuming that they are no longer included in a Colloquium Doctum with ministers coming from another denomination? Or are they still included? They are not listed anymore among the deliverances to be included with the letter of call to a minister from another denomination (Acts, 1963, p. 22).

2. In connection with the decision reached regarding the Three Points of 1924, that led to the union with the Protestant Reformed Churches, Synod said, "if we do not require submission in the sense of demanding total agreement with the Three Points; we recognize and bear with scruples which you may have, in the expectation that we together may come eventually to a better understanding of the truth; and not bar those who have certain misgivings or divergent interpretations" (Acts, 1960, p. 114. Cf. also Acts 1961, p. 68-69). The letter addressed to the Protestant Reformed Churches (Acts, 1961, p. 68-70) clearly speaks of a Colloquium Doctum, and so the Three Points are included in the matters listed by the Synod of 1963, p. 22, to be sent to a minister called from another denomination. What are we to assume as to the exact intent of the forwarding of these deliverances? (Concretely in this connection we think of the decision of 1924, but the question has general reference to the entire matter of forwarding certain synodical deliverances.) Is it to acquaint the minister-elect from another denomination with the nature and content of the decision taken in connection with doctrinal issues, which have arisen in the past in the Christian Reformed Church; and to determine whether his coming into the Christian Reformed Church would occasion any serious conflict in his conscience regarding the position which the Christian Reformed Church has taken on specific issues, those dealt with in these deliverances? Or is it meant to determine whether the minister can *fully subscribe* to the content of the deliverances? In connection with the Three Points Synod said that

“total agreement” was not a requirement. Yet the Synod of 1963 still retained the expression “abide by.”

3. The phrase “his promise to abide by” first came into use in 1956 (Acts, 1956, p. 38) in connection with calling ministers from the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland. That whole statement, “it shall inform him that acceptance of the call implies his promise to abide by these deliverances in the exercise of his ministerial office in the Christian Reformed Church” was reaffirmed in 1963 (Acts, p. 22). However, not only was the occasion for doing so different from that of 1956, but between 1956 and 1963 significant modifications regarding both 1908 and 1924, referred to above, had taken place. What is now the precise value of the phrase “to abide by”? Article 29 of the Revised Church Order governs our thinking in regard to decisions by ecclesiastical assemblies. Does the statement, “his promise to abide by these deliverances in the exercise of the ministerial office in the Christian Reformed Church” have a holding character beyond the provisions of Article 29 of the Church Order? That is the impression of the Canadian Reformed brethren. For that reason we ask Synod to indicate what the precise value is of the phrase, “to abide by.” This will surely facilitate our further discussions. Assurance that there is no intention in that requirement to go beyond the provisions of Article 29 of the Church Order, and that there is no intention to bind the conscience beyond the Word of God, will serve to further continued fruitful discussion.

In conclusion we ask that Synod continue the Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

John C. Verbrugge, chairman

Peter M. Jonker

Dick Farenhorst

Nick B. Knoppers, secretary

REPORT 16

THE BACK TO GOD HOUR

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

Nineteen Sixty Six was a year of war, of violence, of racial conflict. Besides it witnessed the growth of a new religion: it was the year the League for Spiritual Discovery gained national attention. After the year was over the man chosen to represent the bewildering chaos was the *man under 25*. There is an unmistakable trace of apprehension mixed with the vitality that marks his youthful features. But who can deny that he figured mightily in 1966? He lugged mortars through the swamp, helped batter stores and loot them in Lawndale, Chicago, and hung on the lips of "Tim" Leary, false prophet of the LSD cult. To him and to his parents and to all who love and worry about him, our church spoke in 1966—through denominational radio and through the letters and literature that support the spoken word.

The Radio Committee invites all of you to share in thankfulness that it is still possible to elbow into the lives of those who are not predisposed to listen. Radio, humble radio, little transistor swinging from a string, this tool may not be overlooked as a denomination like ours seeks to penetrate beyond the frontiers of faith to those whose lives have not been formed by the rich heritage that has become our treasury. So the committee that controls our denomination's radio work and the staff that toils at making it come true has worked with a certain exhilaration during 1966. The committee is responsible to insure the continuing ministry of three major programs: *The Back to God Hour* in English, *Saatu-L-Islah* in Arabic, and *Ia Hora De La Reforma* in Spanish. This report will inform you of the present state of each of these programs.

I. RADIO BROADCASTING

A. *English Language Broadcast*

1. *Domestic Network*—During the year 1966, Griswold-Eshelman, the advertising firm that handles *The Back to God Hour* account, conducted a careful evaluation of the performance of all the stations that carry our program. Each Sunday, those who write in are asked to mention the station to which they have listened. A tally is kept and the responses that mention specific stations are credited to those stations. Using the annual cost of the station, it is possible to arrive at a cost per response figure. Though the figure is not absolute, since all writers do not mention the station to which they have listened, the cost per response enables the office to make an evaluation of the relative effectiveness of each station in the network. As a result of this study certain stations were dropped. Where exceptionally high cost per response figures prevailed, further

investigations were carried on. In some instances, the high cost figure could be explained by certain local conditions. For example, the highly Roman Catholic character of the audience in Montreal contributes to a relatively high cost per response figure for CKVL. Such factors are always taken into consideration before a final evaluation of a station is made. In any case, the denomination should know that such studies are being made so that we are insured that the highest possible audience is being reached in terms of dollars invested. Besides this special study, continued evaluation of station performance is a normal part of The Back to God Hour operation. In this connection, be assured that any comments individuals on the field can make to help us assess the effectiveness of our stations are considered very useful.

Today 316 stations carry our English program: 163 spot stations, 71 NBC stations, 57 Mutual stations, 7 Yankee network stations, and 18 Intermountain stations. Network contracts still provide substantial saving, but there is a gradual trend in the direction of more non-network contracts. Such contracts do not provide the same discount opportunities, but allow us to exercise greater selectivity within certain markets. Such selectivity tends to result in lower cost per response figures and therefore it appears that this trend will continue and perhaps even accelerate.

In spite of the fact that few new stations were added in 1966 the maintenance of our domestic network has been marked by substantial cost increases. Three factors contribute to this: 1) Normal cost increases brought on by general inflation, 2) Increased effectiveness of radio in general which justifies higher prices of advertising, and 3) Increased effectiveness of certain specific stations due to more aggressive management. Any one or a combination of these factors justifies increased broadcast prices. We are presented with these cost increases when contracts are renewed and there is little room for negotiation.

Increased costs should not be viewed entirely negatively since in many instances they signal increased effectiveness of the stations involved. It is unreasonable to expect that a station that exercises creative leadership within a growing market will be able to maintain cost stability over a period of years. At the same time, the spiraling costs of broadcasting indicate that our denomination must adjust its broadcasting budget upward from time to time in order to maintain its present level of broadcast ministry and expand it moderately.

2. *Foreign English Broadcasting*—The English program, *The Back to God Hour*, is playing an expanding role in our denomination's ministry overseas. The universal characteristics of the English language, combined with the industrial and cultural dominance of the West, make an English language program originating in the United States very useful in many parts of the world. Rev. Bassam Madany clears the English broadcasts for foreign transmission and frequently adjustments are made to remove dated, or specifically American material. The receipt of newspapers from the Arabic speaking world, from Australia, and from the Spanish speaking world, facilitate the editing of the English language tape. These newspapers frequently provide information that can be used to give the messages wider relevance.

The short-wave transmissions continue to play an important role in this world-wide English ministry. The short-wave facilities of HCJB in Quito, Ecuador, Trans World Radio in Monte Carlo, those of the Far East Broadcasting Company located in Manila, the Philippines, and ELWA in Monrovia, Liberia, insure the coverage of vast geographical distances. It is difficult for Americans and Canadians to appreciate the important role played by short wave today. We are overwhelmed with mass communications media: television, the newspaper, and radio. Often we don't know what to listen to or what to read. But in many parts of the world, short-wave radio remains the primary means of communication.

It is also possible today to use regular or medium wave in our foreign work. This increases our penetration of metropolitan areas. Four local stations carry the broadcast in Formosa, two in Korea, one in Panama, one in Costa Rica, and another in Enugu, Nigeria. Besides these relatively local stations we now use the extraordinary facilities of two of the most powerful regular wave stations in the world: TWR in Monte Carlo, and TWR in Bonaire, the Netherlands Antilles. The Monte Carlo station produces 400 kw and the Bonaire station, 500 kw. The Back to God Hour can be heard on Sunday evenings at 10:00 in Chicago coming from Bonaire, 2400 miles away. The Bonaire transmission has opened up the West Indies for us, as well as many areas in South America itself. The broadcast out of Monte Carlo now enables us to reach every European and Scandinavian city on ordinary radios. The first broadcast on the Monte Carlo station was January 2 of this year. The mail response was immediate and showed excellent coverage from Northern Ireland all the way down to Istanbul and Tel Aviv.

In addition to these foreign outlets for the English broadcast, the program also serves as the denominational radio broadcast for the Reformed churches in Australia and New Zealand. Presently, 11 stations carry the broadcast in Australia. In addition to subsidizing this extensive network in the amount of \$4500.00 annually, according to Synod's instructions, our office is also pleased to forward any gifts for Australia directly to their office. The Australian nation is presently wrestling with many problems that are very similar to ours. Furthermore, the hearty support of the Australian government of America's Vietnam policies create a rapport that makes products that originate in America highly acceptable there.

B. *Foreign Language Broadcasting*

1. *The Arabic Broadcast*—For the first time since the Arabic ministry began in 1958, the Rev. Mr. Bassam Madany was able to make a field trip in which he re-acquainted himself with the lands in which he has been working. Since the Arabic ministry has now been established for some time, it was possible for him to meet listeners and make valuable judgments regarding the coverage and penetration of his program and literature. The report of this field trip has been made available under the title, *Radio and the Arab World*, and is available from The Back to God Hour office.

This field trip established the necessity for increasing our activities in the Arabic language. Rev. Madany reports that North Africa and the Middle East are presently witnessing a massive struggle for the minds of men. Radio is playing an important role in this struggle. Within a 24 hour period there are now 300 hours of Arabic programing beamed to the Arabic world. These programs, originating from Cairo, Beirut, Jidda, and other communication centers, present propaganda for causes that are detrimental for the listeners. Compared to this overwhelming broadcasting activity, the volume of gospel proclamation seems completely inadequate.

After Rev. Madany returned to the states, the Radio Committee responded to the challenge of the Arabic speaking world by doubling the amount of hours for the transmission of our church's Arabic program. In addition to the regular daily transmission of the broadcast over ELWA, another series of doctrinal studies has been added. Furthermore, a new broadcast over the powerful regular wave facilities of Trans World Radio was beamed into North Africa. Compared to the vast need of this area, these expansions seem very minimal, but they have resulted in a doubling of our broadcast budget for the Arabic language.

The Arabic language program, *Saatu-L-Islah*, represents a highly complex form of missionary activity. Though it is directed to all the Arabic speaking peoples in the Middle East and North Africa, it is oriented primarily to the Muslims. Reaching Muslims involves a high degree of acquaintance with the Koran and with Muslim culture. Rev. Madany, a native of Beirut whose native language is Arabic, is uniquely equipped to carry on this work. In many respects this mission activity is a pioneer venture. Few guidelines exist. Rev. Madany reports that he attempts gradually to increase his listeners' appreciation of Jesus, the Messiah. The Koran talks about Jesus too and recognizes Him as the last great prophet before Mohammed. But the information given in the Koran is actually very scant. It is the missionary's task to build up such knowledge in his listeners so that they will be able to transcend the information concerning Christ given in the Koran. Recently a listener from Algeria indicated that this goal of the program is actually being realized in his life. He states how he had always admired Jesus, but he knew so little about Him. Through the broadcasts which patiently communicate the facts of Christ's life, death, and resurrection, he is getting to know who Jesus really is. Our prayer is that this man and others like him may be saved and freed from the shackles of the false faith of Mohammed.

2. *Spanish Broadcast*—Nineteen Sixty Six was the first year the Rev. Mr. Juan Boonstra worked full time establishing and developing our church's Spanish language ministry. It has been a year of remarkable growth, and we have discovered, as have other religious broadcasters, that the Latin-American countries present a field that is white for harvest. The 15-minute program *La Hora De La Reforma* is designed to complement much of the Christian mission work that is presently being carried on in Spanish speaking lands, work that is often characterized by sacrificial effort and exemplary zeal, but frequently lacks emphases upon many of the grand Biblical themes we have come to appreciate

as Reformed Christians. Furthermore, it is hoped that the program will prove interesting for individuals who, by virtue of advanced education, have been untouched by both traditional Roman Catholicism and the evangelical mission movement.

The possibilities for the development of a Spanish language network are practically unlimited because of the high efficiency and concentration of radio in South and Central America. In addition, there are many fine stations that are reaching important Spanish speaking markets in the United States. Consequently, much of Rev. Boonstra's time during the year has been spent making judgments concerning the structure of the Spanish language network. We are happy to report that progress is being made in selecting and obtaining stations which can provide our Spanish ministry with maximum coverage at the lowest cost.

For a complete listing of the Spanish stations, we invite members of our churches to secure the radio log of The Back to God Hour, or the special Spanish radio log which is suitable for distribution as a publicity piece. In this report we would like to call attention to several stations we feel are outstanding for several reasons. First of all, the exceptionally powerful medium wave facilities of Trans World Radio in Bonaire give *La Hora De La Reforma* broad coverage throughout the Caribbean and also within the northern areas of South America. Besides such stations which provide blanket coverage, it has been possible to add several important local stations. Among these are CB93 in Santiago, Chile, and CX16 in Montevideo, Uruguay. Both these stations return excellent response and are relatively low cost. Most importantly, since they are regular commercial stations, we know they are penetrating the cities of Santiago and Montevideo very effectively. Among the domestic stations carrying the Spanish program, WMIE in Miami and WADO in New York City are especially effective. Both these stations provide coverage within areas that contain hundreds of thousands of Spanish speaking people who prefer Spanish language programs.

The development of the Spanish language network has been marked by great care exercised in the selection of stations. The addition of stations has also been inhibited somewhat by negotiations and investigations into the procurement of radio time in certain Latin American cities considered exceptionally strategic. Therefore, funds have been held in reserve to a certain extent so that, when openings would become available in these cities, it will be possible to utilize them. This means that the present level of spending for radio time in the Spanish ministry should be expected to increase considerably during 1967 and 1968. Yet this contemplated increase in broadcast costs should not be viewed with reluctance, for it is simply another indication that the present moment is one that provides us with unprecedented opportunities for reaching the Spanish lands with radio.

3. *Other Foreign Broadcasting*—During 1966 the studio facilities at our denominational radio headquarters were used by the Rev. Mr. Peter Tong for the production of a series of Chinese language programs. These programs were produced at the request of our church's mission

in Taiwan for broadcast there, and the cost of production was borne by the Foreign Mission Board.

Throughout the first part of the year an investigation was also carried on in the possibilities of our organization's becoming involved with our church's radio work in Japan. After discussing the matter with Rev. Henry Bruinooge at length, the Radio Committee expressed its feeling of responsibility with respect to the proposed radio ministry and gave assurance of its willingness to cooperate in this venture. However, previous Synodical decisions did not allow our committee to exercise initiative in this kind of foreign language broadcasting. (See *Acts of Synod*, 1956, Art. 61, I, B, 5, a, b, c, d). Therefore, the Radio Committee is not active in our denomination's radio witness in Japan at this time.

II. RESPONSE TO THE RADIO MINISTRY

Response to broadcast work is dependent upon many factors. Programs that depend upon their listeners for support solicit letters and gifts over the air and consequently their response is generally high, relative to the broadcast dollar invested. Programs that have continual giveaway items, "come-ons" or "gimmicks," also manage to achieve high response figures. In addition, programs that emphasize sensational material or play on people's fears and uncertainties tend to achieve high mail volume. Our denominational ministry does not fall into any of these categories, but attempts to achieve a bona fide ministry over the radio. It is not the fund raising instrument of a larger organization. The program is an end in itself, and the members of our church contribute faithfully, not so that large amounts of money will be received from listeners, but so that men and women in need of the Savior may meet Him and understand His significance for their lives. Because of these goals, the ministers in the employ of the Radio Committee feel free to concentrate on the major themes of the Bible which are presented in a straightforward manner.

Keeping in mind the character of our church's radio ministry, the response to the broadcasts is deeply impressive and cause for thanksgiving to God. During the year 1966, 48,278 letters were received in connection with our English program. The response varies considerably from week to week, depending upon the subject being treated—some are more provocative and controversial than others. But each week the mail received in the office gives solid evidence that a massive audience is listening, is thinking, and is being changed by the Word of God that is being proclaimed. Of particular interest during the year 1966 was the growing response from Roman Catholics. Roman Catholic priests and nuns have even begun to send in contributions to the broadcast. One priest from Rochester, New York, sent in \$30.00 and told how he listens regularly while traveling to a town where he offers mass each Sunday morning. It has also been possible to carry on extended correspondence with young people in college, and with others who have serious intellectual difficulties with the Christian religion.

For those of the staff who work continually with the letters, there is a world-wide community of concerned men and women, and young

people too, who are capable of thinking seriously about the major themes of the Bible. The Bonaire transmission of *The Back to God Hour* has brought poignant, moving letters from people of minimal education, some of them teen-agers, who want to know more about the meaning of Christ for their lives. On the other hand, the new broadcast of the program to Europe has brought response from places as widely separated as Belfast, Ireland, Istanbul, Turkey, and Tel Aviv, Israel, and these letters also demonstrate the existence of common concerns and interest in the teaching of God's Word. Continual contact with the mail response cannot fail to impress one with the universal appeal of Reformed Christianity and acts as an incessant encouragement to persist in the proclamation of this message.

During 1966 we received 992 letters in response to the Arabic language ministry. Written in the complex and unhurried style of the Middle Easterner, many of these letters show not only how the listener has been affected by the broadcast, but how he has invited others to listen. In the Middle East and North Africa, radio is a communal institution and groups of people cluster around the radio to catch what is being said. Thus, we know that entire communities are being reached with the message.

With the addition of the Trans World Radio broadcasts of our Arabic program, the letter response from North Africa has been steadily increasing. This has been especially gratifying in the light of the largely Muslim characteristics of these lands. In such countries as Tunisia and Morocco, there is no Christian church and those who represent Christ are considered the enemies of the people. But our church's broadcast is being heard regularly and we know that it is being heard by thousands. Our denomination is the only church that is presently using this North African beam of Trans World Radio and so the responsibility for reaching the millions in those areas who do not know our Savior rests exclusively upon our shoulders.

The year 1966 has seen a growing response to the Spanish language ministry. By February 1967, there were 2,354 names on the mailing list. A glance over the mail reveals that many of the letters come from former Roman Catholic priests or students for the priesthood. Some of it comes as well from evangelical pastors who obviously have little theological education. Besides, the general tenor of the mail indicates the great need for this kind of broadcast.

III. LITERATURE

Each of the radio ministers carries on an extensive correspondence ministry. Though this is time-consuming, it is an important link that must be maintained between the pastors and the radio audience. Besides personal letters, radio messages are also made available in English, Spanish, and Arabic. These are in convenient booklet form and many of them are used in literature distribution work. During 1966, well over two million messages in English were mailed to listeners as well as tens of thousands in the other languages.

The Family Altar continues to be one of the most effective single ministries carried on by the Christian Reformed Church. Each month 181,000 are sent out from our office. More than 90% of the *Family Altar* subscribers are outside our denomination. Many are sent to other churches which distribute them to their congregations. Near the end of the year a special sample copy of *The Family Altar* was produced. This was written by the late Rev. Dr. Peter Eldersveld and is especially suitable to serve as an introduction to this publication. Quantities are available for those who would like to use it in evangelistic work.

When we consider the growing circulation of *The Family Altar*, it is obvious that writing it confronts our men with a heavy responsibility. Devotional writing is extremely demanding and difficult. It is hoped that the consistories whose ministers have been selected as *Family Altar* writers will encourage their pastor in this work and possibly provide him with time in which he will be able to devote himself to this work exclusively.

At the present time *The Family Altar* is also being published in Hindi and Malayalam. This is being carried out by the All India Prayer Fellowship.

The Arabic ministry is supported by an impressive variety of literature produced by Rev. Madany. At present, the Arabic literature consists of a book on *Family Worship* based on twelve different *Family Altar* booklets, booklets of individual sermons, and booklets of *Biblical Studies*. There are presently three booklets of *Biblical Studies: The Epistle to the Romans, The Epistle to the Hebrews* and *Biblical Studies in Galatians: Freedom in Christ*. Selections of these materials are sent to all who respond to the broadcast. As the biblical study booklets are produced, an Arabic commentary on the New Testament is gradually becoming available. This commentary constitutes an impressive and useful addition to the library of Arabic speaking people who are just becoming acquainted with the Christian faith.

During 1966, we experienced some difficulty in delivering Arabic literature to Egypt. This was undoubtedly a form of persecution. Postal authorities in Chicago have contacted Egyptian authorities, but we have been reminded through this situation of the way we depend upon foreign governments for the ultimate effectiveness of our literature work. Please pray that this hindrance to the gospel may be removed.

The Spanish language ministry is supported by printed copies of the radio messages. These are available in booklet form. A book of Christian doctrine is also distributed, *Curso Basico de la Doctrina Christiana*. Rev. Boonstra also distributes a Spanish language booklet of daily devotions that has been published by the Literature Committee of the Christian Reformed Church. Those who respond to the broadcast are sent the most recent series of messages and the course in Christian doctrine.

IV. PERSONNEL AND ADMINISTRATION

A. *The Radio Ministers*—The radio ministers during 1966 were Joel H. Nederhood, Bassam M. Madany, and Juan S. Boonstra. In addition, John H. Primus served as speaker of the English broadcast during the

months of July and August. These ministers carried on their duties in connection with the various aspects of our denomination's ministry discussed above. Dr. Joel Nederhood has discharged the duties of Radio Minister (see *Acts of Synod*, 1961,) as well as those duties which had been his previously and which remain an integral part of the position he now occupies. The Rev. Mr. Madany is the Associate Radio Minister for Arabic broadcasting and the Rev. Mr. Boonstra is the Associate Radio Minister for Spanish broadcasting. Each of these men has been given good health and safekeeping throughout the year and has been able to carry out his duties effectively. The work of the Rev. Dr. Primus also contributed significantly to the radio ministry.

During the year, our thoughts have often returned to the work of Dr. Peter Eldersveld. In 1966, many copies of a memorial record containing his last two sermons were distributed. The memorial book, *Nothing But the Gospel*, was also published. This book contains nineteen selected sermons of our late radio minister. The dedication of the Peter H. Eldersveld Memorial Hall on the campus of Calvin College was held November 24, 1966. Such events as these remind us all of the dedicated work he performed in the service of our denomination.

B. Radio Choir—During 1966, significant changes in the Radio Choir have been initiated. The number of choir members has been reduced from approximately 60 to approximately 35. Furthermore, choir members are being encouraged to remain with the choir throughout their entire college career, if possible. In former years, the Radio Choir was made up of freshmen primarily. It is hoped that this move will enable the choir to achieve an even higher level of performance than that attained in the past. Furthermore, the smaller size of the choir will increase its mobility and lessen travel expenses considerably. It is hoped that these changes will make it possible to use the choir more effectively in follow-up work and broadcast promotion. The taping schedule has also been modified to remove the pressures of weekly program preparation which has previously placed our choirs at a great disadvantage. Numbers are not taped until satisfactory quality has been achieved for each one.

These changes have already resulted in improvement in music quality. Their full effect, however, will not be realized until some years have passed. It is hoped that such measures as these will make the Radio Choir one of the outstanding choirs in the country, thus enhancing the effectiveness of our program.

These remarks are in no way meant to reflect unfavorably upon the choirs of the past. No doubt former choir members will be the first to agree that these changes represent improvements. Right here, we would like to thank all those who, through the years, have contributed to the musical portion of the program. We also deeply appreciate the continued dedication of Prof. James De Jonge and the cooperative spirit demonstrated by the music department of Calvin College.

C. Office Staff—The work of the denomination's international radio outreach is dependent upon the day-by-day efforts of our office person-

nel. The Radio Committee is very appreciative of the work of Mr. Donald Dykstra, the office manager, and Mrs. Lucile De Boer, who is deeply involved in the publication of *The Radio Pulpit* and *The Family Altar*. We also want to thank the following who have worked faithfully throughout the years: Messrs. W. Prince, J. Kuiper, K. White, and C. Klemp; and Mrs. W. Decker, Mrs. A. Kuiper, Mrs. V. Terpstra, Mrs. C. Haan, and Miss P. Van Beek. Mr. Marinus Wiegers, who worked for our broadcast for six years after retirement, passed away during the year. His saintly dedication to the cause of Christ was an inspiration to all who knew him.

V. FINANCES

The treasurer's report for 1966 and the proposed budget for 1968 are included with this report.

In presenting the proposed budget for 1968, the Radio Committee has chosen to show a deficit balance in order to indicate the extent of our need. This requires a word of explanation.

The proposed budget for 1968 represents a realistic projection of costs of broadcasting and related activities. A careful attempt was made to estimate cost increases and the cost of moderate expansion of coverage. Furthermore, it was recognized that our responsibilities in foreign broadcasting are becoming more pressing and allowances for increased foreign expenditures were made. In discussing our Spanish ministry, (section 1, B, 2, above) we have noted that expenditures up to the present have not reflected our entrance into certain major South American markets. In addition, we have indicated that our task in connection with Arabic broadcasting is very great indeed. (I. B. 1)

In the light of the growing importance of radio in terms of our church's overall mission strategy, we feel that the projections are even now almost embarrassingly moderate. During 1966 we have been confronted with increased station costs very frequently whenever contracts have come up for renewal. We have mentioned this in section I,A.1, above. Specifically, this has meant \$15,918.00 in additional broadcasting costs without adding a single new station in 1966. This is what it cost simply to retain what we already have.

In judging the income we can expect, realistic increases were projected in terms of current receipts. It should be remembered that the only certain element in our income is the quota receipts. The rest of our income is completely uncertain. This means that we must make our projections with great care.

In the light of the anticipated expenses for 1968 and the income we may expect, your committee has decided that it cannot ask for less than a quota increase of \$1.00. To ask for more is unrealistic in the light of our denomination's overall quota structure. This additional quota plus projected increases in our other receipts still leaves a deficit in 1968 of \$47,243.00.

Nevertheless, the committee has decided to show our financial situation in this realistic way. So far as the deficit is concerned, we assure the

denomination that every effort will be expended in making up this deficit in one way or another. If it appears, near the end of 1968, that the year will be concluded with a substantial deficit, adjustments will have to be made in the light of the situation that exists at that time.

In any case, it should be clear that an adjustment in quota receipts will be necessary for the year 1968. The unusual form our financial report takes is simply a realistic description of the needs of your denominational radio ministry. The blessings upon the work are reason for great thanksgiving. The opportunities to serve in this way are present now. We do not know what the future will bring.

VI. After surveying the year 1966, we give thanks to almighty God for the privilege He has given our church in connection with the denominational radio ministry. We thank Him for the talents, health, energy, and safekeeping He has given the members of The Back to God Hour staff. We thank Him for providing stations over which the many broadcasts may be heard and for providing peace throughout much of the world so that our literature could circulate freely. We commend our cause to the churches, requesting your prayers on our behalf, for each element of this broadcast ministry is entirely dependent upon God's sovereign control. May God preserve among us the enthusiasm, vigor, and spirit of sacrifice that will make it possible for our broadcast work to advance to meet the extraordinary opportunities of this exciting age.

THE BACK TO GOD HOUR

Financial Report—January 1, 1966 to December 31, 1966

Receipts:

Synodical Quotas	\$480,242.76	
Churches	64,063.01	
Organizations	8,929.69	
Individual Gifts	198,166.59	
Literature	9,444.16	
Foreign	44,697.49	
Station Sponsorship	17,533.00	
Public Meetings	4,426.75	
Legacies	39,314.74	
Funds Held in Trust.....	875.99	
Other Income	2,080.31	
		\$869,774.49
Sale of Real Estate.....		25,106.40
Total Receipts		\$894,880.89

Disbursements:

Broadcasting:		
Mutual, Yankee & IMN	\$ 76,232.19	
NBC	92,410.54	
Spot Stations	348,465.72	
	\$517,108.45	
Less Discounts Earned	29,889.77	487,218.68
Recording and Duplicating		23,362.08
Foreign		44,134.57

Salaries	73,763.41	
Committee Expense	3,190.75	
Administration and Promotion:		
Maintenance	1,785.13	
Improvements	1,288.29	
Transfer to Building Fund	7,950.00	
Supplies	7,766.33	
Equipment	8,746.28	
Utilities	5,602.39	
Travel	2,874.34	
Family Altar:		
Printing	58,891.60	
Postage	13,946.50	
Writers	1,300.00	
Sermons:		
Printing	22,633.84	
Postage	7,878.18	
Radio Bulletin	4,679.86	
Other Printing	5,796.75	
Radio Choir	6,255.43	
Ministers' Housing	5,289.00	
Publicity	6,479.14	
Literature and Records	6,186.05	
Insurance	1,714.20	
Social Security Expense	1,932.13	
Audit	785.20	
Canadian and Foreign Exchange	4,966.01	
Canadian Mailing Address	305.00	
Corporation Filing Fee	2.00	
Gratuities	660.55	
Other Expenses	35.40	
		\$817,419.09
Long-Term Mortgage Reduction.....		18,605.55
Treasury Bills		49,393.33
		\$885,417.97
Total Disbursements		\$ 41,460.08
Balance—December 31, 1965.....		9,462.92
		\$ 36,487.45
Balance—		
Pullman Bank—December 31, 1966.....		14,435.55
Balance—		
Bank of Montreal—December 31, 1966		

Martin Ozinga, Jr., Treasurer

THE BACK TO GOD HOUR BUILDING FUND

Financial Report—1966

Receipts:

Balance, January 1, 1966.....		\$ 193.27
General Fund	\$7,950.00	
Christian Ref. World Relief Com.....	2,700.00	
Garage Rent—Van Eck Property.....	600.00	
		11,250.00
Total Receipts		\$11,443.27

Disbursements:

Janitor's Salary	1,156.08	
Care of Sam Van Eck	4,170.64	
Maintenance	4,363.05	
Coal	1,266.60	
Insurance	117.90	
Scavenger Service	122.00	
Miscellaneous	29.24	
Total Disbursements		11,225.51
Balance, December 31, 1966		\$ 217.76

The Back to God Hour—Tentative Budget—1968**Estimated Receipts**

Synodical Quotas	\$548,757.00
Churches—Special offerings	70,000.00
Organizations	12,000.00
Individual Gifts	210,000.00
Foreign—Designated	50,000.00
Station Sponsorship	20,000.00
Other Income—Public Meetings, etc.....	7,000.00
	\$917,757.00

Disbursements**Broadcasting (net figures):**

Mutual, Yankee & IMN	\$ 80,000.00
NBC	95,000.00
Spot Stations	355,000.00
Recording and Duplicating	30,000.00
Foreign	95,000.00
Broadcasting Research and Program Development.....	2,000.00
Salaries	85,000.00
Committee Expense	4,000.00

Administration and Promotion:

Maintenance	2,000.00
Improvements	2,500.00
Transfer to Building Fund.....	5,000.00
Supplies	9,000.00
Equipment	9,000.00
Utilities	6,000.00
Travel	5,500.00

Family Altar:

Printing	65,000.00
Postage	16,000.00
Writers	1,500.00

Sermons:

Printing	30,000.00
Postage	9,500.00
Foreign Language Literature	15,000.00
Radio Bulletin	5,000.00
Other Printing	7,000.00
Radio Choir	6,500.00
Ministers' Housing	6,500.00
Publicity	8,000.00
Insurance	2,000.00
Social Security Expense	2,500.00

Christian Reformed Employees Pension Plan.....	4,000.00
Audit	800.00
Gratuities	700.00
	\$965,000.00
Additional Revenue Needed (Cf. V of Report).....	\$ 47,243.00

VII. MATTERS REQUIRING SYNODICAL ATTENTION

A. The committee requests that both Dr. J. Nederhood and Rev. E. Bradford be given the privilege of the floor when radio committee matters are discussed.

B. *Nominations*

The committee brings the following nominations for committee membership:

- (1) Chicago area—Rev. E. Bradford (incumbent)
Rev. D. Vander Brug
- (2) Eastern area—Mr. P. Heerema (incumbent)
Mr. Walter Hommes
- (3) Chicago area—Mr. M. Ozinga, Jr. (incumbent)
Mr. J. Bolt
- (4) Western Michigan—Rev. W. Vander Hoven (incumbent)
Rev. Wm. Stob

C. *Budget*

The Radio Committee requests that the proposed budget for 1968 and the quota of \$10.25 be adopted.

E. *Above quota needs*

The committee requests that Synod recommend The Back to God Hour for one or more offerings for above quota needs.

Respectfully submitted,

THE BACK TO GOD HOUR COMMITTEE

- Rev. E. Bradford, President
- Rev. W. Van Peursem, Vice-president
- Rev. L. Bazuin, Secretary
- Mr. M. Ozinga, Jr., Treasurer
- Rev. J. Botting
- Mr. P. Heerema
- Rev. W. Huyser
- Dr. D. Ribbens
- Mr. C. Schaap
- Mr. E. Tamminga
- Mr. S. Tigchelaar
- Rev. W. Vander Hoven
- Mr. J. Veltkamp

REPORT 17

THE LITURGICAL COMMITTEE

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

The Liturgical Committee was appointed by the Synod of 1964, given a broad, long-term mandate, and required to report to Synod every two years (*Acts*, 1964, p. 68). The present membership of the committee is: Prof. J. H. Stek, Chairman; Rev. J. Vriend, corresponding secretary; Prof. C. G. Kromminga, recording secretary; Rev. A. Hoksbergen; Rev. J. Schuurmann, Prof. C. Seerveld, Prof. L. Smedes, and Prof. N. Wolterstorff.

We are pleased to report good progress on the comprehensive study of our liturgical history and practices referred to in our report last year (cf. *Acts*, 1966, Supplement 28, p. 262; and Art. 84, VIII, p. 61). As we indicated at that time, we hope to present a full study report to the Synod of 1968. In connection with this study, we have sent questionnaires to all of the congregations. At present we have been able to make only a preliminary survey of the results. The committee wishes to take this opportunity to thank all those who patiently filled in the questionnaires and sent in other material relating to this inquiry.

Last year Synod encouraged us to make contact with the Committee on the Revision of the Liturgy of the Reformed Church in America (cf. *Acts*, 1966, Art. 84, III, B, 1, p. 59). We have taken concrete steps to conduct exploratory talks with this committee. We hope to benefit from its extensive studies in the area of Reformed liturgics.

The Synod of 1966 also committed to us for study and advice a matter originating in the Music Study Committee of the Publication Committee (cf. *Acts*, 1966, Art. 99, V, p. 72; and Suppl. 26, VI, p. 246). We herewith submit our analysis and advice.

In 1963 the Publication Committee of the Christian Reformed Church appointed a committee "to evaluate the need for and advisability of publishing music for organists and choirs in our churches." This committee concluded

. . . that a great need existed in our Christian Reformed Churches to develop this phase of our church life. The committee observed that the places and principles of church music should be clearly enunciated, our congregations, musicians, and pastors need education in the use and appreciation of good church music, creativity should be stimulated, more good church music should be made available, and the co-ordination of all phases of music in the worship service should be encouraged. (*Acts*, 1966, p. 246).

Judging that it was beyond the scope of the Publication Committee "to meet the needs of music in our denomination," but not willing that the recommendations of its own special study committee be ignored, the Publication Committee recommended that the Synod appoint a committee on Church Music to supply the desired materials.

Instead of endorsing this recommendation, the Synod of 1966 referred the request to the Liturgical Committee "for study and advice." The grounds adduced for this assignment were two:

1. "The need has been established by the preliminary study of the Publication Committee.
2. "The scope and responsibility of this study properly belongs to the Liturgical Committee." (*Acts*, 1966, p. 72)

Your Liturgical Committee strongly advises that Synod not establish, at this time, a Committee on Church Music. The Liturgical Committee has assumed it to be part of its task to provide the churches with advice on "the place and principles of church music." For not only is the committee convinced that a study of the place and principles of church music should not be conducted outside the context of a study of the entire worship service; but it is also convinced that a full study of the worship service must include a study of the place of music in the service. The committee also hopes, as a natural correlate of its advice concerning the place and principles of church music, to serve Synod with advice on how congregations, musicians, and pastors can be educated in the use and appreciation of good church music, how creativity can be stimulated, and how more good church music can be made available. Thus the work of a committee on Church Music would duplicate the work of your Liturgical Committee.

The Liturgical Committee expects, in the not distant future, to present some of its conclusions on these matters to Synod.

Respectfully submitted,

J. H. Stek, Chairman
A. Hoksbergen
J. Schuurmann
C. Seerveld
L. Smedes
J. Vriend, Corresponding Secretary
N. Wolterstorff
C. Kromminga, Secretary

REPORT 18

FUND FOR NEEDY CHURCHES

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

The Fund for Needy Churches Committee entrusted with the supervision of the collections for the pastor's salary subsidy, child allowance and mileage, with gratefulness to God for His blessings on the work of the past year, presents its annual report to the Synod of 1967.

I. PERSONNEL OF COMMITTEE

President—Mr. Henry P. Ottenhoff of Berwyn, Illinois

Vice-President—Mr. George Vande Werken of Westchester, Illinois

Treasurer—Mr. E. J. Beezhold of Palos Heights, Illinois

Vicar—Rev. Fred Van Houten of Cicero, Illinois

Secretary—Rev. L. W. Van Dellen of Hammond, Indiana

The former secretary, Rev. Ralph Wildschut, who accepted a call to the Goshen Christian Reformed Church of Goshen, New York, served as secretary of the committee from October 1963 to June of 1966. Our brother served on the committee since October of 1962 with great competence. We take this opportunity to thank him for his services. The Synodical Committee approved the appointment of Rev. L. W. Van Dellen, minister of the Hammond Christian Reformed Church, as replacement for Rev. Ralph Wildschut.

II. STEWARDSHIP OF FUNDS

As we have opportunity we minister "especially towards them that are of the household of faith." All applications are processed carefully and discussed by the entire committee. Amounts of aid vary with the need, as indicated by the information supplied by the applicants and recommendations of the Home Missions Committee of each Classis. We endeavor to adhere to the purposes and aims of the Fund and the mandates of Synod. This means that this fund is not to be used for paying off debts or expanding the facilities of the church or local Christian School. Debts and debt payments are carefully scrutinized by the F.N.C. Committee. Our primary function is to help pay the minister an adequate salary. We urge churches to become self-supporting, to be better stewards of the Lord by paying their quotas and to evangelize. Five churches voluntarily became self-supporting and eight others were declared self-supporting by our committee. Two churches were not granted aid because we felt that they should affiliate with a neighboring church, in line with the Synodical ruling: "Synod urges that congregations which have no promise of future growth merge with a neighboring congregation wherever possible and feasible." It should be noted that in certain

geographical areas great changes have been taking place, national lines are being broken, means of transportation are improved, farms are larger and there are fewer families in these areas. We feel that more churches could be strengthened by the merger of two weak churches into one strong congregation. We have urged some churches to either support one minister or become one congregation.

The largest amount of aid given in 1966 was \$4,559. Salary support was given to 128 congregations. Child allowance was granted to 114 congregations, with amounts ranging from \$62.48 to \$1600. Churches receiving mileage allowances numbered 57, for a total payment of \$15,529.23. Moving expenses aid was given to 18 congregations, for a total of \$6,841.06, with a low of \$63.60 and a high of \$1,025.00.

The committee wishes to emphasize the importance of receiving full information on the subsidy application forms and the supporting financial documents. Processing of the forms is often delayed because of insufficient information.

Accompanying this report, in their order are:

Schedule A, a statement of payments for salary subsidy, child allowance, and moving expense assistance.

Schedule B, a statement of cash receipts and disbursements, with report of Certified Public Accountant, Mr. John H. Evenhouse.

Schedule C, a statement of receipts from the classes showing quota requirements and quota receipts, with percentage of quota contributions.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS :

1. *Minimum Salary*—That ministers serving churches receiving aid from the F.N.C. receive a salary in 1968 of not less than \$5,000.

2. *Per Family Contribution*—That the per family contribution toward the minister's salary in congregations receiving aid from the F.N.C. in 1968 be not less than (and if possible, more than)

- a. \$81 per family in the United States;
- b. \$76 per family in Canada.

3. *Child Allowance*—That child allowance of \$200 be granted for every child up to 19 years of age, but excluding those through high school who have gainful employment.

4. *Mileage Allowance*—That mileage allowance, exclusive of the first 5000 miles on the field, be granted at 8¢ *per mile* according to the following schedule:

- a. For not more than 3500 miles in the United States;
- b. For not more than 5000 miles in Ontario and Quebec;
- c. For not more than 6500 miles in the Western Provinces and the Maritime Provinces of Canada.

5. *Special Cases*—The F.N.C. Committee and the Manhattan (N.Y.C.) Christian Reformed Church—*Acts of Synod* 1966, pages 84-85.

a. *Explanatory Statement*: Synod instructed the F.N.C. committee to provide for the special need of the Manhattan congregation by way

of exception to the present rules. The second recommendation was that Synod instruct the F.N.C. committee to recommend to the Synod of 1967 such changes in the F.N.C. rules as are necessary so that, in the future, just and adequate provision can be made for similar cases of exceptional need, should such cases arise.

b. *Action taken*: The F.N.C. committee has carefully studied the problem presented by Classis Hudson and the Manhattan Christian Reformed Church of New York City and has made the following decisions:

(1) The F.N.C. committee provided for the present need of the Manhattan Christian Reformed Church for the year 1967.

(2) The F.N.C. committee will give careful consideration to exceptional cases of need, according to the following rule: "Special conditions in the church, or in the minister's home, or *in the area*, may warrant special consideration. If so, the F.N.C. committee must be fully informed about them on page three of the application, or by letter."

(3) It is mandatory that the church in a special need or area set forth its abnormal situation in detail and the amount requested.

(4) In compliance with the mandate of Synod the F.N.C. committee feels that its rules are sufficiently elastic to cover such exceptional cases.

6. *Stated Supply*—We recommend that rule VI, page 9, "Allowances For Seminary Students For Summer Field Work," in Policies and Procedures of The Fund For Needy Churches, be amended to read:

a. that we add to the above title "and for *Stated Supplies*." The full title reads: "ALLOWANCES FOR SEMINARY STUDENTS FOR SUMMER FIELD WORK AND FOR STATED SUPPLIES."

b. that we add the following phrase to the first explanatory sentence: "If a seminary student has charge of the work in a church for the summer months, *or if a stated supply is engaged*." The full sentence reads: "If a seminary student has charge of the work in a church for the summer months, *or if a stated supply is engaged*, the church is allowed assistance only for one quarter of the yearly allowance."

c. *Basis*: We have been receiving several requests from churches for aid for Stated Supply and we have no ruling to cover the same.

7. *Quota for 1968*—We recommend that the per family quota be not less than \$5.50 (The approximate additional income, based on 59,000 families and 90% received on quota, is \$13,500.)

Bases:

a. <i>Anticipated Budget—1967</i>	<i>Anticipated Income—1967</i>
Salary support	\$191,000
Child Allowance	64,000
Moving Expense	7,000
Mileage	15,500
Net Operating Cost	500
	<hr/>
	\$278,000
	<hr/>
	\$270,000 (90% of quota)

b. Since anticipated income is \$8,000 less than our expected budget, plus the demands for student supplies, stated supplies, special cases, mileage increases and moving expenses for candidates in hardship cases, we are compelled to ask a 25¢ per family increase.

8. *Quota Payments*—That Synod urge all the congregations to do their utmost in contributing *the full amount* of the F.N.C. quota in order that all may share in this denominational ministry of mercy, remitting quota payments *quarterly or more frequently*, lest there be insufficient funds on hand to meet the requests for aid to needy churches.

Note—Before the first six months of last year were over, the treasurer had paid out about \$128,000 and had received only \$50,000 in quota payments, indicating the need of a substantial operating fund at the beginning of the year.

9. *Representation at Synod*—We recommend that the secretary of the F.N.C. committee, the Rev. L. W. Van Dellen, and the treasurer of the F.N.C. committee, Mr. E. J. Beezhold, be consulted on matters pertaining to the F.N.C. when considered by Synod or advisory committees of Synod and that they be given the privilege of the floor; or, in the event that these men cannot attend, that another member of the F.N.C. committee be heard and given the privilege of the floor.

IV. GENERAL INFORMATION AND EXPLANATION

1. The F.N.C. committee has performed its synodically assigned task as economically and efficiently as possible, the net operating cost of the committee for 1966 being only \$500 on a total disbursement of \$277,358.57 in the United States and Canada.

2. The 1966 Quota *required* from Canadian Churches was—\$64,755.00
 received was— 43,677.64
 percentage received was—71.56%

The 1966 Quota *required* from U.S. Churches was —\$230,290.00
 received was — 227,281.91
 percentage received was—97.56%

3. The total aid given from 1959 to 1966 in Salary Grants, Child Allowances, Mileage and Moving Assistance amounted to \$2,003,226.

4. The committee urges cooperation by F.N.C. committees of the Classes in examination of applications and mileage totals in order to prevent escalation in the annual quotas.

5. Your committee, from time to time, deals with special or exceptional cases and at times, these cases reach the attention of Synod because of their abnormal nature. We regard these cases irregular and therefore feel that they should not become precedent or a norm for regular practice.

Respectfully submitted,
 The Fund for Needy Churches Committee
 Lubbert W. Van Dellen, Secretary

FUND FOR NEEDY CHURCHES, INC.

Schedule A

Subsidy Payments for Year Ended January 31, 1967

Classis	Total	Salary Subsidy	Child Allowance	Mileage	Moving
Alberta North					
Barrhead-Westlock ..\$	1,280.00	\$ 1,280.00	\$		
Edson	2,806.67	1,940.00	716.67	150.00	
Grande Prairie	1,074.00	834.00	110.00	130.00	
Ottewell	1,017.30	296.00	562.50	158.80	
Peers	1,688.00	1,688.00			
Alberta South					
Brooks	2,800.00	2,200.00	600.00		
Burdett	3,540.00	2,300.00	800.00	440.00	
Medicine Hat	2,366.66	1,900.00	466.66		
Regina	2,115.11	1,727.61	387.50		
Saskatoon	1,300.00	700.00	600.00		
Taber-Vauxhall	392.80	96.00		296.80	
British Columbia					
Agassiz-Chilliwack ..	1,240.00		1,200.00	40.00	
Burnaby	1,812.00	1,812.00			
Duncan	1,000.00		1,000.00		
Houston	750.00	750.00			
Ladner	1,200.00		1,200.00		
Langley	1,347.20	300.00	600.00	447.20	
Port Alberni	1,350.00	750.00	600.00		
Surrey	640.00		400.00	240.00	
Telkwa	3,315.00	2,515.00	800.00		
Terrace	2,716.25	1,966.25	750.00		
Cadillac					
Atwood	1,629.14	1,437.50	191.64		
McBain	675.00	275.00	400.00		
California South					
Bellflower-Grace	3,560.00	2,760.00	800.00		
Central California					
Palo Alto	3,436.00	2,556.00	600.00	280.00	
Sacramento	3,930.00	1,875.00	750.00	280.00	1,025.00
Walnut Creek	2,130.00	1,200.00	650.00	280.00	
Chatham					
Blenheim	1,128.00	750.00	300.00	78.00	
Blyth	1,300.00	500.00	600.00	200.00	
Dresden	2,194.00	1,500.00	400.00	294.00	
Exeter	2,225.00	1,744.00		276.00	205.00
Forest	1,516.67	1,166.67	350.00		
Ingersoll	1,150.00	750.00	400.00		
Wallaceburg	1,040.26	375.32	601.34		63.60
Chicago North					
Winfield	3,418.33	2,583.33	500.00		335.00
Chicago South					
Crown Point	3,855.00	2,775.00	800.00	280.00	
Gary-Beacon Light ..	2,061.00	1,461.00	600.00		
Indianapolis-Devington	1,385.08	693.75			691.33
Oak Forest-Hope	1,921.50	1,241.50	400.00	280.00	
Peace	1,218.31	766.75	56.50		395.06

Classis	Total	Salary Subsidy	Child Allowance	Mileage	Moving
Eastern Ontario					
Cobourg	1,700.00	900.00	400.00	400.00	
Cornwall	1,225.00	1,133.34	91.66		
Halifax	3,969.36	3,376.00	400.00	193.36	
Kempville	700.00	700.00			
Kentville	1,705.04	1,200.00	200.00	305.04	
Lindsay	1,700.00	700.00	600.00	400.00	
Ottawa East-Naven	1,008.06	616.22	224.42		167.42
Pembroke	2,408.00	1,608.00	400.00	400.00	
Renfrew	2,284.00	2,084.00	200.00		
Truro	1,911.33	1,344.66	66.67		500.00
Florida					
Fort Lauderdale	800.00	800.00			
Miami	3,080.00	2,200.00	600.00	280.00	
St. Petersburg	668.52	475.00		193.52	
Grand Rapids East					
Caledonia	1,680.00	500.00	900.00	280.00	
Grand Rapids-Grace	4,075.00	3,475.00	600.00		
Middleville	3,236.00	2,556.00	400.00	280.00	
Portland	1,200.00	1,200.00			
Grand Rapids West					
Cedar Springs	3,730.00	2,650.00	800.00	280.00	
Grandville					
Ivanrest	2,400.00	1,200.00	1,200.00		
Hackensack					
Broomall-Trinity	3,405.00	2,000.00	1,125.00	280.00	
Englewood	2,596.67	2,596.67			
Franklin Lakes	2,380.00	1,500.00	600.00	280.00	
Monsey	709.74	566.66			143.08
Paterson-Madison Ave.	1,750.00	1,600.00	150.00		
Pompton Plains	2,250.00	1,450.00	800.00		
Terra Ceia	1,641.50	1,241.50	400.00		
Wanamasa	500.00	500.00			
Hamilton					
Dunville	1,466.68		1,066.68	400.00	
Galt-Maranatha	2,350.00	750.00	1,600.00		
Lucknow	2,944.00	2,424.00	400.00	120.00	
Niagara Falls	492.00	192.00	300.00		
Simcoe	2,400.00	1,200.00	800.00	400.00	
Stratford	2,766.74	2,016.00	350.00	285.68	115.06
Welland Junction	1,600.00		1,200.00	400.00	
York	1,812.45	1,150.00	133.33	378.48	150.64
Holland					
Calvary	1,569.25	1,169.25	400.00		
Hudson					
Framingham	2,847.75	2,167.75	400.00	280.00	
Manhattan	3,344.00	2,264.00	800.00	280.00	
North Haledon	1,180.00	500.00	600.00	80.00	
Paramus	4,220.00	3,140.00	800.00	280.00	

Classis	Total	Salary Subsidy	Child Allowance	Mileage	Moving
Kalamazoo					
Decatur	2,325.00	1,725.00	600.00		
Faith	973.50	810.50	163.00		
Knollwood	1,325.00	925.00	400.00		
Northern Heights	2,214.45	1,278.00	600.00		336.45
South Bend	4,559.00	3,359.00	1,200.00		
Lake Erie					
Olentangy-Columbus	1,521.67	693.90	527.77		300.00
Flint	2,600.00	1,400.00	1,200.00		
Inkster-Cherry Hill	2,592.72	1,826.00	486.72	280.00	
Maple Heights	2,980.00	1,700.00	1,000.00	280.00	
Roseville	962.49	845.83	116.66		
Saginaw	1,900.00	1,700.00	200.00		
Minnesota North					
Bejou	600.00	600.00			
Brandon	250.00		250.00		
Clara City	3,073.52	2,400.00	673.52		
Crookston	890.00	890.00			
Emo	453.00	453.00			
Hancock	2,410.00	2,100.00	310.00		
Ogilvie	496.67	391.67	105.00		
Port Arthur	2,695.50	1,608.00	687.50	400.00	
Willmar	75.00		75.00		
Transcona	583.33		583.33		
Minnesota South					
Bemis	666.67	666.67			
Estelline	2,400.00	2,400.00			
Mountain Lake	1,566.31	1,150.00			416.31
Tyler	858.00	858.00			
Muskegon					
Fruitport	789.00	639.00	150.00		
Grace	2,600.00	1,800.00	800.00		
North Central Iowa					
Ackley	625.84		400.00	225.84	
Britt	3,480.00	2,200.00	1,000.00	280.00	
Iowa Falls	1,350.00	1,050.00	300.00		
Waterloo	2,138.35	1,708.50	62.48		367.38
Orange City					
Bigelow	2,019.90	1,387.50	100.00		532.40
Hartley	3,577.68	2,725.00	400.00		452.68
LeMars	2,658.00	2,275.00	383.00		
Sioux City	2,960.00	2,350.00	400.00	210.00	
Pacific Northwest					
Bellingham	2,070.00	1,390.00	400.00	280.00	
Portland	2,579.84	1,900.00	600.00	79.84	
Seattle	2,843.00	1,483.00	1,200.00	160.00	

Classis	Total	Salary Subsidy	Child Allowance	Mileage	Moving
Pella					
Cedar	1,400.00	1,400.00			
Tracy	1,907.00	1,594.50	312.50		
Rocky Mountain					
Alamosa	1,600.00	1,400.00	200.00		
Albuquerque	3,671.00	2,191.00	1,200.00	280.00	
Colorado Springs	3,225.05	2,545.05	400.00	280.00	
Denver-Fairview	3,052.00	1,972.00	800.00	280.00	
Denver-Trinity	775.00	475.00	300.00		
Orangewood	3,609.60	2,410.00	1,000.00	199.60	
Salt Lake City	2,608.00	1,608.00	1,000.00		
Tucson-Bethel	1,679.23	1,034.58			644.65
Sioux Center					
Holland Center	3,100.00	2,300.00	800.00		
Hull-Hope	1,800.00	1,000.00	800.00		
Prairie Lane	2,065.90	1,499.50	566.40		
Valentine-Lakeview ..	3,630.40	2,800.00	400.00	430.40	
Toronto					
Alliston	2,484.00	2,084.00		400.00	
Collingwood	3,364.67	2,628.00	600.00	136.67	
Orangeville	3,600.00	2,000.00	1,200.00	400.00	
Orrilia	1,596.75	696.75	600.00	300.00	
Wisconsin					
Biramwood	896.15	771.15	125.00		
Madison	1,400.00	1,200.00	200.00		
	<u>\$277,358.57</u>	<u>\$190,909.83</u>	<u>\$64,078.45</u>	<u>\$15,529.23</u>	<u>\$6,841.06</u>

February 24, 1967

To the Board of Directors
Fund for Needy Churches, Inc.

I have examined the accompanying statements of cash receipts and disbursements of the Fund for Needy Churches, Inc., for the year ended January 31, 1967. My examination was made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and accordingly included such tests of the accounting records and such other auditing procedures as I considered necessary in the circumstances.

I have also examined Schedule Bond Number 24198-03-38-66, executed by the United States Fidelity and Guaranty Company of Baltimore, Maryland, providing fidelity bond coverage in the amount of \$25,000 on Mr. Egbert J. Beezhold, Treasurer of the Fund for Needy Churches, Inc. The premium for this policy has been paid in advance to provide coverage to February 6, 1969.

In my opinion, the accompanying statements present fairly the fund balance of the Fund for Needy Churches, Inc. on January 31, 1967, and its cash receipts and disbursements for the year then ended, in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

John H. Evenhouse, C.P.A.

Schedule B
United States Accounts
Statement of Cash Receipts and Disbursements
For the Year Ended January 31, 1967
(In U.S. Dollars)

United States Fund Balance, February 1, 1966.....\$ 77,181.14

Receipts:

Quota payments from classical treasurers.....\$226,487.83
 Christian Reformed Chapel—Ferrisburg, Vermont.... 85.60
 Interest on savings account..... 1,519.00

Total receipts 228,092.43
 Total funds to be accounted for.....\$305,273.57

Disbursements:

Salary subsidy payments.....\$130,205.01
 Child allowance payments 38,280.19
 Moving 5,639.34
 Mileage 7,459.20
 Fidelity bond premium..... 156.25
 Stationery and supplies 162.30
 Audit expense 80.00
 Honorariums 1,000.00
 Committee expense 399.63
 Secretarial expense 189.00
 Postage 103.40
 Interest expense 72.91
 Transfers to Canadian account 62,500.00

Total disbursements 246,247.23

United States Fund Balance, January 31, 1967.....\$ 59,026.34

Cash Accounts:

First National Bank of Evergreen Park.....\$ 23,801.34
 Tri-City Savings & Loan Association..... 15,000.00
 Palos Savings & Loan Association 10,225.00
 State Bank of Clearing..... 10,000.00

\$ 59,026.34

Canadian Account
Statement of Cash Receipts and Disbursements
For the Year Ended January 31, 1967
(In Canadian Dollars)

Canadian Fund Balance, February 1, 1966.....\$ 7,288.17

Receipts:

Quota payments from classical treasurers.....\$ 44,471.72
 Transfer from United States account
 (includes Canadian exchange gain of
 \$4,737.50) 67,237.50

Total receipts 111,709.22

Total funds to be accounted for.....\$118,997.39

Disbursements:

Salary subsidy payments	\$ 60,704.82
Child allowance payments	25,798.26
Moving	1,201.72
Mileage	8,070.03
Total disbursements	95,774.83
Canadian Fund Balance, January 31, 1967.....	\$ 23,222.56
Cash Account—Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce.....	\$ 23,222.56

Schedule C

Classis	1966 Families	Required Quotas	Received Quotas	Full Quota Percent of
Alberta North	1,525	\$ 7,625.00	\$ 5,467.23	71.7
Alberta South	885	4,425.00	3,357.34	75.8
British Columbia	1,509	7,545.00	6,542.68	86.7
Cadillac	632	3,160.00	3,085.00	97.6
California South	2,296	11,480.00	10,654.25	92.8
Central California	933	4,665.00	4,738.75	101.6
Chatham	2,022	10,110.00	7,086.38	70.0
Chicago North	1,999	9,995.00	9,976.75	99.8
Chicago South	3,286	16,430.00	16,537.29	100.6
Eastern Ontario	2,067	10,335.00	7,861.13	75.9
Florida	329	1,645.00	1,278.75	77.7
Grand Rapids East	3,744	18,720.00	18,668.75	99.7
Grand Rapids South	2,687	13,435.00	12,772.65	95.0
Grand Rapids West	1,969	9,845.00	10,054.75	102.1
Grandville	2,759	13,795.00	14,333.26	103.9
Hackensack	1,271	6,355.00	5,337.92	83.9
Hamilton	2,609	13,045.00	7,411.36	56.7
Holland	2,993	14,965.00	14,633.75	97.7
Hudson	1,909	9,545.00	9,552.50	100.1
Kalamazoo	1,713	8,565.00	8,345.00	97.4
Lake Eric	1,077	5,385.00	5,176.25	96.1
Minnesota North U.S.A.	1,184	5,920.00	5,319.33	89.8
Minnesota North Canada	396	1,980.00	1,646.54	83.1
Minnesota South	831	4,155.00	3,978.27	95.7
Muskegon	1,917	9,585.00	9,674.77	100.9
North Central Iowa	802	4,010.00	4,347.02	108.4
Orange City	1,261	6,305.00	6,305.00	100.0
Pacific Northwest	2,101	10,505.00	10,470.93	99.6
Pella	1,433	7,165.00	7,113.75	99.2
Rocky Mountain	1,270	6,350.00	5,901.83	92.9
Sioux Center	1,853	9,265.00	9,121.31	98.5
Toronto	1,938	9,690.00	5,099.06	52.6
Wisconsin	1,249	6,245.00	6,305.00	100.2
Zeeland	2,560	12,800.00	12,805.00	100.0
	<u>59,009</u>	<u>\$295,045.00</u>	<u>\$270,959.55</u>	<u>91.8%</u>

REPORT 19

CANADIAN RELIEF FUND

ESTEEMED BRETHERN:

We are pleased to report to you again regarding the activities of the Canadian Relief Fund.

During 1966 there was not a great deal of activity in our Fund: 9 churches remembered us with a collection of a gift, and 4 requests for financial aid were granted.

During the latter part of the year some voices were heard whether the existence of the Canadian Relief Fund can be justified any longer in view of Synod's decision last year to increase its mandate to C.R.W.R.C. to include supplying financial aids to needy churches within our denomination. We are earnestly considering this matter and will be consulting diaconates and Deacons' Conferences in this regard.

We hereby request Synod to keep the Fund in operation for another year, at which time we hope to be able to make a firm recommendation as to its future.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Receipts	Disbursements
Balance, Jan. 1, 1966.....\$3,473.23	Relief to churches.....\$1,410.50
Collections and gifts..... 554.10	Administration expenses..... 6.70
Bank Interest 81.30	Balance, Dec. 31, 1966..... 2,691.43
Total\$4,108.63	Total\$4,108.63

The annual audit was made by two elders, one from each congregation in Chatham, on March 9, 1967.

Respectfully submitted,

C. Vreugdenhill, Sec'y-Treas.

REPORT 20

THE LORD'S DAY ALLIANCE OF CANADA

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

The year 1966 has been one of much unrest around the day of rest. The turmoil to which this sentence refers, is not meant here as an indication of the ever increasing desecration of the Lord's day, especially in the larger cities and in the resort areas,—no, this unrest was experienced by those who are concerned about the Sunday as the weekly day of rest, the first day of the week, which is God's day rather than man's day. Moreover, this restlessness regarding the Sunday was widely spread since it manifested itself on at least three continents. In Australia the Synod of the Reformed Churches there will have to deal with a protest or gravamen against the Westminster Confession, which departs from the presupposition that the Sabbath is a creation ordinance. In Europe the Synod of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (*De Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland*) accepted eighteen statements as guidelines for the congregations and the members regarding the problems of Sunday-observance. Number six of these guidelines states that Sunday is a constant reminder of the fact that man has been created in the image of God to be His partner in the covenant. Regulation eight warns as to the observance of this day against the dangers of both normlessness and intolerant legalism. Furthermore these guiding principles maintain that not all Sunday labour can simply be forbidden, hence the churches are advised to provide special pastoral care for those who must work on Sunday and for their families. Finally, with regard to our own continent, the reports about the Lord's Day Alliance both in the U.S.A. and in Canada in the Acts of the previous Synod, mentioned a number of problems with which these organizations must concern themselves presently.

Last year we informed the churches that in Canada the Lord's Day Alliance had appointed a Planning Committee with a rather extensive mandate, which requested an appraisal of the role which the Alliance should play in the rapidly changing cultural and industrial outlook of our country, an appraisal also of the name of the association and of the desirability to advocate once again changes in the ill-fated Lord's Day Act.

This Planning Committee reported to a special meeting of the Executive Committees of both the Dominion Board and the Ontario Branch. The meeting was held in the Roman Catholic Regis College, which in fact is a Jesuit Seminary, on December the 7th, 1966. It was an interesting and at times frightening experience to be visitors and guests in this theological school. After the meeting we had dinner with the students and we were impressed by the austere setting of the meal and by the good quality of the food.

However, we had come for the report of the Planning Committee and this was like a cold shower (in December) for the Reformed "wing": the representatives of the Christian Labour Association in Canada and your delegation, the Rev. L. Slofstra and myself. Later on we discovered that others too were disturbed about the report. It recommended that the Alliance gradually be changed into "a Christian co-operative society concerned with the times and uses of leisure." Several new names were suggested such as "The Worship and Leisure Alliance of Canada" or "Canadian Council for the Christian Use of Leisure."

As representatives of the Christian Reformed Church we wrote a Brief in which we submitted to the Alliance the following objections:

1. Our main criticism is that in this name any reference to a special day, Sunday or the Lord's Day, is omitted. This to us, is definitely too poor. We are of the opinion that this new name is unacceptable and, as a matter of fact, is just as much out of order as an amendment which destroys the meaning of the main motion.

2. We also object to the term "uses of leisure" in the new name. To decide on such uses would lead the Association to a thorny path of legalism, which it just has tried to leave. We feel that the Planning Committee at this point should have been more specific by enumerating which uses of leisure are meant, or should have omitted this part altogether. The Alliance wants to defend and protect a weekly day of rest, which can be used for several purposes besides that of public worship. We feel that it does not belong to the province of the Alliance to state which of such *uses of leisure* are legitimate and which not.

As basis for continuing cooperation between the churches in the Alliance we stated: The ways in which people may spend their Sunday may be quite different, yet all who cooperate and participate in the work of the Alliance agree that they wish to maintain, support, protect and defend the Sunday as a special day, marked by the interruption of the normal labour-rhythm and to be enjoyed by as many as possible in order that this day by its special character and observance may provide many opportunities for worship, thought, leisure, relaxation and social, humanitarian or other activities.

We concluded our Brief with a friendly, but pertinent warning:

Brethren and Friends, we would like to be able to continue to cooperate with you in the Lord's Day Alliance. This, however, it seems to us, will only be possible if enough of the original purpose be retained by the Alliance, that is, if it decides that it will continue to be concerned with the Lord's DAY, with Sunday (and for other groups perhaps Saturday) as a day of rest, which provides the opportunity for public worship.

We were very happy to see that also the CLAC protested along the same lines. Their submission concluded with the following observation:

We appreciate that the Lord's Day Alliance wants to be a Christian organization. As such it must continue to remind the Government of its positive task, namely, to protect the citizens against a totally unnecessary

commercialization of the Sunday. Sunday should remain the common day of rest. However, the Government must allow people the freedom of choice as to how they wish to spend this day of rest. The way in which people spend their leisure time (Sunday included) cannot be prescribed by any one.

Working in an organization as the Lord's Day Alliance one meets a cross section of what calls itself the Christian church of today. One realizes that historically the approach of the Alliance often mistakenly was directed towards the defense of a law which left much to be desired and which never really obtained full status of legal maturity. One discovers also that presently the organization is weakened by many inroads of secularism and by a "coming of age" which risks both the presence of the Living God and the reality of the existence of the church as Christ's body. The distinction between the adjectives Christian and humanistic has become very flowing and thin. Because of all this, much more is needed in order to call Canada back to God especially in its centennial year, than this Alliance. Yet, we must try to secure even this small voice as one of our auxiliaries for doing the Lord's work.

With this in mind your representatives waited anxiously for the annual meeting which took place on February 7th and this time was attended by 31 delegates from all over our country. What would happen? Would our Brief have had any influence? No wonder that we felt greatly relieved when we listened to the new report of the Planning Committee which clearly stated that plans for the radical changes proposed in December had been given up. The committee had come to the conclusion that the organization should remain what it is and should retain its traditional name. Under this name the organization should now be incorporated, which had never been done as yet. Instead of becoming an arm of the Canadian Council of Churches, the new proposal called for "some formal relationship" with this organization. Finally the problematics of leisure and its possible (though less likely) use for worship, was solved by the proposal of a subsidiary organization to seek: the active cooperation of people in other groups who, though reluctant to join with the Lord's Day Alliance as such, would doubtless wish to work for the realization of its Christian and humanitarian aims.

This means that for the time being, at least, the Alliance will continue to speak for the churches and the Christians in Canada in their concern about the increasing desecration of the Lord's Day. For this reason we again recommend the organization for support from the Christian Reformed Churches in Canada. The financial report shows that the income of the Alliance is declining and that without its legacies the organization would scarcely have been able to end in the black; it is a warning sign on the wall that the dead seem to keep the Alliance alive. The financial report has been submitted to the standing budget committee for appraisal.

During 1966 Classis British Columbia followed the example of Classis Eastern Ontario and addressed the membership of its churches with a

“Statement on the Preservation of the Sunday as a Day of Rest.” This statement too shows the difficulty of the distinction between the Old Testamentic Sabbath and the Christian Lord’s Day. Classis Alberta North informed us of the appointment of the Rev. P. De Bruyne as a classical representative for the work of the Alliance. This classis may very well be the only one which still has such an appointee.

In the Alliance itself we were able to broaden the Reformed wing, by nominating the Canadian Reformed Church for membership in the Ontario Branch. This proposal was readily adopted.

Respectfully submitted,

Lambert Slofstra

Remkes Kooistra, reporter

REPORT 21

CALVIN COLLEGE CAMPUS SALE COMMITTEE

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

The Campus Sale Committee was instituted by the Synod of 1959 with the mandate to function with the Board of Trustees in negotiating the terms and sale of the Calvin Campus.

Subsequent Synods, including the Synod of 1966 (see Art. 120, IV, B, p. 102) have adopted the recommendation "That Synod authorize the Campus Sale Committee to continue to seek out and cultivate prospective purchasers for the Franklin Street Campus under the provisions and stipulations laid down by previous Synods."

Your committee has engaged in various efforts to sell the Franklin Campus during 1966. To date no firm offer has been presented by the various religious or educational groups with whom we have had conversations.

Last year, the Legislature of the State of Michigan appropriated funds for use by the Grand Rapids Board of Education to study and research possible utilization of Calvin's Franklin Street Campus for public education. We have had several meetings with this committee during the past months. Final recommendations to the Grand Rapids Board of Education have not, as yet, been made. At this time we do not know the outcome of this research. However, the complete and thorough study that is being made by this committee should be of great worth to Calvin College and Seminary in subsequent efforts to dispose of the Franklin Street Campus.

Meanwhile, the old campus continues to be invaluable in providing the necessary facilities which a constantly increasing enrollment of students imposes upon Calvin. At the present time the classrooms on the Franklin Street Campus are utilized to maximum capacity.

The Campus Sale Committee again recommends that:

1. We continue to seek out and cultivate prospective purchasers for our Franklin Street Campus under the provisions and stipulations laid down by successive Synods.

2. The Synod of 1967 continue the Committee with the present personnel for the year 1967-68, since the members are thoroughly familiar with all the details involved in the sale of the Franklin Street Campus.

Respectfully submitted,

Julius Franklin Mellema

Jerry De Nooyer

Marvin Muller

Louis Van Ess

Richard Evenhouse

William Spoelhof

Henry De Wit

Sydney T. Youngsma, *Sec'y*

REPORT 22

BACK TO GOD TRACT COMMITTEE

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

Your Back To God Tract Committee hereby presents its annual report to Synod.

I. PERSONNEL AND ADMINISTRATION

A. *Personnel* — Rev. G. Postma, pres.; Rev. J. Eppinga, vice-pres.; Rev. A. Jongsma, sec'y; Mr. B. Cheadle, treas.; Rev. G. Van Oyen; Rev. G. Klouw; Mr. A. Bytwork; Mr. N. Baylor; Mr. G. Malda; Mr. R. Hoekstra.

Mr. B. Cheadle was elected at the last Synodical meeting to fill the unexpired term of Mr. R. Broene who resigned because of the press of personal business.

Rev. G. Klouw was appointed by the Synodical Committee subsequent to the 1966 Synodical meeting. Rv. Klouw replaces Rev. A. Hoogstrate who resigned by reason of moving to the state of Illinois.

Rev. G. Postma is completing his years of service on the committee. According to the synodical rules concerning tenure of office he is not eligible for re-election. We recognize his services with gratitude.

Mr. G. Malda has also contributed much to the cause of the tract ministry. He is eligible for re-election for a three-year term.

B. *Administration* — The committee works by means of sub-committees and meets once each month in the discharge of its task in the denominational building. We again desire to express our appreciation to the Christian Reformed Publishing House which prints and distributes our tracts. We are indebted to Mr. Peter Meeuwssen and his staff who perform a worthy service in handling our inventory and record of sales.

II. ACTIVITIES

A. During the past year a total of 1,128,197 tracts were distributed. In the promotional program a total of 12,800 tracts were distributed free. Our Wayside Chapels also received 40,000 tracts at no cost to them. The SWIM Program continues to expand and each year the offer for free tracts for the use of the SWIM Program is gratefully accepted. This past year more than 152,000 tracts were given free to the SWIMMERS. Furthermore, we are on record for the provision of a stipulated amount of free materials for Evangelism Conferences, the Home Missions Conference, and the Ministers' Institute. Other denominational boards are

also granted free tracts upon request. The total free distribution number for 1966 was over 200,000.

B. The Committee has continued its re-evaluation of the entire line of tracts. Some tracts have received new covers and a few old tracts have been discontinued.

C. New tracts added to the line in 1966 total 10, with the following titles:

- No. 260—The Bible and Faith Healing
- No. 261—Christ, Who Is He?
- No. 262—Is Your God Dead?
- No. 363—Thanksgiving
- No. 264—Young Lady Fight for Your Rights
- No. 265—What Is A Christian?
- No. 266—The Bible: Passbook or Handbook?
- No. 267—Young Man, Can You Face It?
- No. 268—Alcohol Is Not the Answer
- No. 269—When Loss Becomes Gain
- No. 270—On Talking to One's Self (Thanksgiving)

D. Because of the military buildup due to the war, the committee has offered free tracts to our chaplains and to the assistant chaplains also. Correspondence with them seeks to determine the type of tract that is needful and helpful.

E. In the work of promotion, the committee has offered a complete listing of our tracts to any of our churches requesting them. New tracts and reprinted tracts are to be sent to keep the file current. Many churches have already responded to our offer.

III. FINANCES

A. The treasurer's report for the year 1966 is attached to this report.

B. Since we are not a profit organization and actually publish our tracts at a loss, we are grateful for the financial support of our churches and acknowledge the need for their continual support.

IV. MATTERS REQUIRING SYNODICAL ACTION

A. The committee requests Synod to again recommend this cause to our churches for one or more offerings.

B. Due to the moving of the Rev. A. Hoogstrate, the synodical committee, upon request, approved the appointment of Rev. G. Klouw. We request Synod's approval on this appointment.

C. *Nominations.* Two members are to be elected (one from each group)

Group I —Mr. G. Malda (eligible for re-election)

Mr. P. Vander Kamp

Group II—Rev. P. Vermaire

Rev. W. Timmer

Respectfully submitted,

Back To God Tract Committee

Rev. Allan H. Jongsma, Sec'y

BACK TO GOD TRACT COMMITTEE

Statement of Cash Receipts and Disbursements Year ended December 31, 1966

Balance — January 1, 1966

Old Kent Bank and Trust Co.:

Demand deposit	\$ 2,316.22	
Savings account	5,868.13	
Time certificate	3,000.00	\$11,184.35

Receipts

Contributions, sales and other	\$20,641.24	
Interest income	430.13	21,071.37
		<u>\$32,255.72</u>

Disbursements

Clerical and distribution	\$ 7,573.38	
Printing and engraving	7,379.69	
Postage	1,453.08	
Art work	560.00	
Writing tracts	465.00	
Travel	434.86	
Honoraria	265.00	
Miscellaneous	139.37	
Advertising	127.36	
Insurance bond	25.00	
Supplies	19.14	18,441.88

Balance — December 31, 1966 \$13,813.84

Balance at December 31, 1966 consisted of:

Old Kent Bank and Trust Co.:

Demand deposit	\$ 4,515.58
Savings account	4,298.26
Time certificate	5,000.00
	<u>\$13,813.84</u>

B. Cheadle, Treas.

REPORT 23

PUBLICATION COMMITTEE

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

Your Publication Committee is pleased to submit its annual report indicating many of its activities and presenting matters which call for synodical action.

I. *Committee Membership*

The Publication Committee usually meets on the first Thursday of each month. Its main sub-committees, the Editorial and Business committees, meet once a month or more as duties demand. The editorial committee consists of the ministerial members of our committee: the Revs. Wm. D. Buursma, president, Henry De Mots, Siebert Kramer, secretary, and John C. Medendorp. The business committee consists of Messrs. Gordon Buter, Joseph Daverman, Jack Dekker, Theodore Hoekstra, and Roy H. Jurgens Jr.

Three of the members have completed their three-year terms. They are Rev. S. Kramer and Messrs. Joseph Daverman and Jack Dekker. All three are eligible for election to another three-year term.

To fill the above vacancies the following nominations are submitted to Synod:

For a *three-year term* (one to be elected)

Rev. Siebert Kramer (incumbent)

Rev. Paul L. Vermaire

For a *three-year term* (one to be elected)

Mr. Joseph T. Daverman (incumbent)

Mr. Clarence P. Kooi

For a *three-year term* (one to be elected)

Mr. Jack J. Dekker (incumbent)

Mr. James K. Haveman

II. *Editorial Matters*

A. With gratitude to God we can report that Rev. John Vander Ploeg, the Editor-in-chief of *The Banner* and Rev. Wm. Haverkamp, the Editor-in-chief of *De Wachter* have been able to carry on in health and with diligence. Every month the editors meet in consultation with the Editorial Committee regarding plans, appointments, policies, and problems regarding their work as editors of our denominational weeklies. Mr. Peter Meeuwssen our Business Manager, meets periodically with our Business Committee. His work is greatly appreciated.

The two-year term of the Rev. Wm. Haverkamp as Editor-in-chief of *De Wachter* expires this year and your committee submits the name

of Rev. Wm. Haverkamp who is to be appointed for a two-year term.

B. *The Reader's Survey* which the committee conducted during the past year was studied and the changes in the format and content of *The Banner* will reflect some of the findings of this survey. It was satisfying to note that *The Banner* as a whole is appreciated by our people.

C. The Synod of 1966 gave your committee the following mandate: "That Synod instruct the Publication Committee to initiate a study of the restructuring of the editorial work of *The Banner* with a view to possible implementation of the same in 1970."

Your committee has given this mandate consideration during the past year and therefore can report that such study has been initiated. At next year's Synod a recommendation should be forthcoming.

D. Another sub-committee which has considerable work is the Yearbook Committee. The appearance of the Yearbook is in itself a testimony to the work of this committee with the help of the office staff of the Publishing House.

E. *De Wachter*: For some time we have been experiencing financial loss and have found it necessary to subsidize the cost of producing *De Wachter*. Because of this your committee has been studying possible ways and means to reduce the cost of manufacturing. This study has convinced us that there is no practical way for us to make sufficient savings in the production of the publication without reducing its size or quality.

Therefore, we are recommending to Synod that the Publication Committee be granted permission to publish *De Wachter* as a bi-weekly (every other week).

The annual cost to produce 3,800 copies of *De Wachter* on a weekly basis is approximately \$30,000.00 or \$7.50 per copy per year.

The subscription list is declining to a point where we have less than 3,800 paid subscribers. The total income from subscriptions and advertising for 1966 was less than \$15,000.00, so it was necessary for us to subsidize *De Wachter* to the extent of an additional \$15,000.00.

Since 1960 we have been compelled to subsidize *De Wachter* to the extent of \$84,419.34. By converting to a bi-weekly and assuming continuance of the present number of subscriptions at the \$4.00 per year subscription rate, we could reduce our annual cost by approximately \$12,000.00. The savings would be realized in the following categories:

Material	\$ 1,200
Labor	4,200
Manufacturing expense	3,800
Contributors	1,200
Mailing expense	1,000
Postage	600
	<hr/>
Total	\$12,000

Even then we would be subsidizing *De Wachter* to the extent of \$3,000.00 to \$5,000.00 annually.

At present we have

80 foreign subscriptions
1650 U.S. subscriptions
2010 Canadian subscriptions
<hr style="width: 20%; margin: 0 auto;"/>
3740 total subscriptions

Of the 3740 subscribers, 1160 also receive *The Banner*, leaving the balance of 2580 subscribers to *De Wachter* who not do receive *The Banner*.

De Wachter Recommendation

We request Synod to authorize our Committee to publish "*De Wachter*" as a bi-weekly magazine.

Grounds: The increasing annual financial loss because of declining subscriptions and virtually no demand for advertising.

III. *Building Addition*

The addition to the Denominational Building is completed. The staffs of both the Foreign and Home Mission Boards have occupied the new facilities.

The C.R.W.R.C., Committee on Education, The Sunday School Committee and Dr. R. J. Danhof, Stated Clerk, now have more adequate space in the original building.

We acknowledge with thanks the splendid service performed by both the James Haveman and Daverman Associates architectural and engineering firms; Mr. Lester Herrema Construction Co., general contractor; Mr. Ted Herrema Plumbing and Heating, mechanical contractor; and Mr. Albert Van Dyke, electrical contractor. The owners of all of these firms are members of the C.R.C. The contracts were awarded to the lowest bidders. These men have exhibited a special interest in this project of their church.

The 1965 Synod adopted a \$1.00 (per family per year) quota for a period of three years. Receipts from this quota for 1966 amounted to \$49,068.62.

In our report to Synod of 1966 we stated that the cost would be approximately, \$250,000, and that we had consulted with and sought advice of the Budget Committee before beginning construction. We are alerting Synod and the Budget Committee to the fact that the \$1.00 quota for three years is not sufficient to cover the costs.

IV. *Business Activities*

At the request of the Study Committee and in accordance with Synod's decision we have printed and distributed the provisionally approved *Forms for Ordination of Ministers*.

The committee on The Church and The Film Arts has consulted with us and we are in the process of producing a brochure for distribution to our churches.

We stand ready to produce *The Directory of Churches* authorized by the 1966 Synod. We are waiting for instructions from the Committee, which requested the directory.

Currently we are mailing 42,700 copies of *The Banner* to readers in United States, Canada and around the world. Servicemen are receiving 1,790 of these copies. In addition copies are being sent to the student dormitories of Calvin, Dordt, Trinity Colleges, and The Reformed Bible Institute.

The Christian Reformed Publishing House is celebrating it's 50th Anniversary during the current year 1967. Throughout these years we have been blessed with constant growth. We now have 36 full-time and several part-time employees to serve the publishing needs of our denomination.

The accompanying financial report reflects in greater detail the scope of the business activities of the Christian Reformed Publishing House in 1966.

V. Matters Requiring Action by Synod

1. We request Synod to authorize our chairman, Rev. Wm. D. Buursma and our secretary, Rev. Siebert Kramer to represent our committee before Synod.

2. Synod must elect three to membership in our committee.

3. Synod to appoint Editor-in-chief for *De Wachter*.

4. Synod should consider our recommendation to make *De Wachter* a bi-weekly publication.

5. Synod should renew the quota for building addition.

Humbly submitted,

Rev. Siebert Kramer, Sec'y

Balance Sheet

The Publication Committee of the Christian Reformed Church Inc.
Grand Rapids, Michigan
December 31, 1966

ASSETS

Current

Cash on deposit	\$ 85,679	
Accounts receivable	52,678	
Inventories	75,968	
Other	17,100	\$ 231,425

Building Addition under construction

Cash	\$ 9,746	
Construction costs (including interest)	168,408	178,154

Other			
New equipment fund investment	\$ 20,000		
Rental property — net	9,136		
Inventory — supplies	6,583		35,719
<hr/>			
Property, plant and equipment (at cost)			
Land, building and improvements,			
machinery and equipment	\$904,871		
Less — allowance for depreciation.....	252,133	\$652,738	
<hr/>			
In process of installation —			
air conditioning and machinery		145,967	798,705
			<hr/>
			\$1,244,003

LIABILITIES

Current			
Accounts payable	\$ 95,823		
Accrued expenses	14,131	\$ 109,954	
<hr/>			
Deferred income			129,347
Reserved for pension			3,369
<hr/>			
Building Addition — source of funds			
Mortgage payable	\$125,000		
Synodical quotas	32,054		
Other	21,100		178,154
			<hr/>

CAPITAL

From Operations	\$720,522		
Contributed	102,657		823,179
			<hr/>
			\$1,244,003

NOTES TO BALANCE SHEET

The Publication Committee of the Christian Reformed Church, Inc.
December 31, 1966

NOTE A—

During 1966, construction commenced on an addition to the denominational part of the building and installation of air conditioning in the entire building which was still under construction and in the process of installation at December 21, 1966. Contracts totaling \$245,300, exclusive of engineering and architect fees, carpeting and certain other costs, were awarded of which \$168,408, including engineering and architect fees, interest and other costs, had been paid at December 31, 1966. Total cost of the project is estimated at \$290,000.* A real estate mortgage commitment for \$250,000 was received during July, 1966 from the Union Bank and Trust Company of which \$125,000 had been received at December 31, 1966. The mortgage requires payment of the loan over a five-year period plus interest at 5½%. The Synod of the Christian Reformed Church has approved a family quota of \$1 per year for three years which is expected to provide \$150,000. \$32,056 had been received from the Synodical Treasurer at December 31, 1966. Other funds deposited in the building addition bank account

*\$250,000 for the building project, \$40,000 for Christian Reformed Publishing House's cost of air conditioning.

at December 31, 1966 were \$20,000 from the Publishing House and \$1,100 from Home Missions, which amounts are a portion of their share of the air conditioning and carpeting, respectively.

NOTE B

The Corporation has a retirement plan for its employees which provides for retirement at age 65. Past service costs to be funded over a ten-year period were \$29,079 at the effective date of the plan, May 1, 1962. The charge to income of \$7,007 during 1966 included a portion of the past-service cost. The unfunded past-service cost at December 31, 1966 was approximately \$17,500.

STATEMENT OF INCOME

Year ended December 31, 1966

Income		
Subscriptions and sales		\$699,405
Costs		
Merchandise for resale	\$ 59,269	
Material	217,063	
Labor	94,125	
Manufacturing expense	100,467	
Contributors	18,160	
Mailing costs	41,788	\$530,872
		<hr/>
Gross margin		\$168,533
General and Administrative		
Direct (clerical-editorial-managerial)	\$ 92,138	
Indirect (depreciation-insurance-office supplies- postage-utilities)	\$ 47,833	\$139,971
		<hr/>
Operating income		\$ 28,562
Other income — net		\$ 5,591
		<hr/>
Net income		\$ 34,153

February 28, 1967

To the Publication Committee of
the Christian Reformed Church, Inc.
Grand Rapids, Michigan

We have examined the balance sheet of The Publication Committee of the Christian Reformed Church, Inc., Grand Rapids, Michigan, as of December 31, 1966, and the related statement of income for the year then ended. Our examination was made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, and accordingly included such tests of the accounting records and such other auditing procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.

In our opinion, the accompanying balance sheet and statement of income present fairly the financial position of The Publication Committee of the Christian Reformed Church, Inc. at December 31, 1966, and the results of its operations for the year then ended, in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

K. G. HUNGERFORD & CO.

Certified Public Accountants

REPORT 24

THE DELEGATION OF DEACONS TO MAJOR ASSEMBLIES

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

INTRODUCTION

The committee to study the delegation of deacons to major assemblies, originally appointed in 1963, reported to the Synod of 1966. That Synod referred the report to the churches for study, encouraged the churches to send their reactions to the committee, and recommitted the matter to the study committee for further consideration in the light of five related questions. (Cf. *Acts of Synod 1966*, pp. 22, 23.)

Your committee has reconsidered the problem in the light of the responses from the churches and the five questions formulated by the synod. On the basis of this study your committee resubmits to the Synod of 1967 its report with a supplement (Section V).

HISTORY:

Classis Chatham presented an overture to the Synod of 1962 asking the synod to "consider the admittance of deacons to classical and synodical meetings as official delegates and make this a general rule for major assemblies in the denomination" (*Acts of Synod, 1962, Overture 32 B*, p. 496). The synod of 1962 rejected this overture on the ground that "insufficient Scripture evidence had been adduced to warrant such a change in the Church Order."

In 1963 Classis Chatham again presented the overture with an extensive report (*Acts of Synod 1963, Overture 17*, pp. 443-446). The synod appointed this committee to study the overture and its grounds.

THE MANDATE

The mandate given the committee by the synod of 1963 is broad rather than explicit. It is

II. C. 2. That Synod appoint a committee to study the matter and report to Synod 1965.*

Grounds:

- a. The matter is worthy of study by men competent in church polity.
- b. This will give assurance that this important matter will be before Synod two years hence (*Acts of Synod, 1963, p. 117*).

*The committee appointed at the synod of 1963 was not called into session during the year preceding the synod of 1964. The synod of 1964 reconstituted the committee and we began our work after the synod of 1964. Therefore our report is being submitted to the synod of 1966.

Since the synod of 1962 rejected this overture on the grounds that insufficient Scriptural grounds had been adduced, and since the advisory committee of synod also reported to synod that in their judgment "some of the conclusions reached regarding the delegating of deacons to major assemblies, rest not on direct evidence from Scripture but are inferential," (Acts of Synod, 1963, p. 116), we begin our study with the consideration of the biblical references to the offices of elder and deacon and their respective tasks.

I. BIBLICAL REFERENCES

A. *Scriptural References to the Office of Deacon*

There are only two undisputed references to the office of deacon in the New Testament: Philippians 1:1—"Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus that are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons. . . ." and I Timothy 3:3-13 "Deacons in like manner must be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them serve as deacons, if they be blameless. Women in like manner, must be grave, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things. Let deacons be husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For they that have served well as deacons gain to themselves a good standing, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus."

The first of these only mentions the deacons in a greeting to the church at Philippi with no description of their ministry. Little more can be inferred from this than that the deacons had a distinct office in the Philippian church along with the bishops. The six verses in I Timothy present the qualifications for the office of deacon with no direct statement of their duties. Perhaps some implications as to the nature of their ministry can be drawn from the qualifications mentioned as is done explicitly in verses four and five in relation to the office of bishop. Paul says that the reason why a bishop must rule his own house well is that if he does not know how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God? Perhaps, since the deacon too must rule his own house well, the same conclusion can be drawn: he also shall "take care of the church of God." Most of the other qualifications—that deacons must be grave, temperate, not given to filthy lucre, of good reputation, etc.—are of little help in distinguishing between the office of deacon and the office of elder since these are qualifications for both offices. The only qualifications mentioned for the office of deacon that have no direct counterpart in the list for elder are "holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience" and "let these also first be proved; then let them serve as deacons, if they be blameless." The first of these says that before a man can serve as deacon he must believe the gospel sincerely and without reservation. Perhaps it can be concluded that he must so believe since his task as deacon is in some way a ministry of the gospel. As van Oosterzee, Meyer, and others have pointed out the second is actually a qualification of both elders and deacons: these too, i.e., not only the

bishops but also the deacons, are first to be proved. See also Titus 1:9, where a similar qualification is stated for elders.

The inferences from qualifications stated to task implied are limited and give little aid in differentiating the task of deacon from the task of the elder in the church.

One Scripture passage that has been advanced as a description of the task of deacon is Acts 6:1-6. For centuries some have questioned whether Acts 6 contain the record of the institution of the diaconal office. The seven men appointed to provide the food for the daily distribution to the Hellenist widows are not specifically designated as deacons. These seven can be designated as deacons only if one already has a concept of the office of deacons to which their ministry conforms. However the New Testament gives no explicit description of the task of deacons. Even though one accept the seven of Acts 6 as deacons, no great advance has been made in the quest for a biblical description of the task and authority of deacons. Acts 6 describes, at most, the origin of the office and not its full development. No exegete would limit the ministering office of deacon to serving the widows' tables, although this indicates in a general way an area of work assigned to them. Therefore this passage is not of conclusive value for the question before us.

B. Scriptural Givens: Office of Elder in Relation to the Office of Deacon

Since it is not the mandate of this committee to attempt a full description of the office of deacon, but only to study the legitimacy and advisability of delegating deacons to major assemblies, a second exegetical approach is possible. A study of the office of elder can be made to see whether the authority and task granted this office necessarily precludes participation by deacons in the assemblies of the church. The duties which the New Testament assigns to the elders are threefold: government, instruction, and pastoral care.

I Timothy 5:17 "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and teaching."

Titus 1:7-9 "For the bishop must be blameless . . . holding to the faithful word which is according to the teaching, that he may be able both to exhort in the sound doctrine, and to convict gainsayers."

I Timothy 3:4, 5 The bishop must be "one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (but if a man knoweth not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)"

I Peter 5:1-5 "The elders therefore among you I exhort . . . : Tend the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight, not of constraint, but willingly, according to the will of God: nor yet for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind, neither as lording it over the charge allotted to you, but making yourselves ensamples to the flock. . . . Likewise, ye younger, be subject unto the elder. Yea, all of you gird yourselves with humility, to serve one another."

James 5:14 "Is any among you sick? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord."

Acts 20:28 "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood."

It is with the first of these functions, government, that we are most concerned. What is the extent and nature of the ruling function of the bishop or elder. The title bishop (episkopos) was an official title among the Greeks and was used to designate commissioners appointed to regulate a new colony. They were overseers or supervisors to see that the orders of the king or emperor were carried out. The word elder (presbuteros) has a Jewish origin. In every synagogue there was council of elders who presided over the congregation and directed its affairs (cf. J. B. Lightfoot, *Epistle to the Philippians*, MacMillan & Co., 1913, pp. 95, 96). The origin of both of these titles suggests the governmental function of this office. The role of the elder in the Jerusalem conference (Acts 15) confirms that elders held this responsibility in the early church together with the apostles.

What is the nature of this supervisory authority of the elder? I Timothy 5:17 uses a word (proistēmi) that is usually translated "rule": "let the elders that rule well . . ." This same word is used in I Timothy 3:4, 5: "one that ruleth well his own house . . ."

Arndt and Gingrich in *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* give the following meanings of this word:

1. to be at the head of, rule, direct, manage, conduct.
2. be concerned about, care for, give aid.

See also Thayer's *Greek-English Lexicon*.

This word contains the concepts both of authority for leadership and of service. The emphasis in a specific context may be upon either the authority or the responsibility, but the two are not exclusive. Paul's usage of this word in Titus 3:8 emphasizes the second meaning: "be careful to *maintain* (to apply oneself to, to engage in) good works." See also Titus 3:14 with the same usage.

In other passages the emphasis seems to be on the first meaning, to manage, rule, or direct. I Timothy 3:5 says "if a man knoweth not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?" Paul uses *proistēmi*: to speak of the headship of a man in his own family, but he uses another word *epimeleomai* "to take care of" to define the relationship of the elder to the church. The context suggests that he is not drawing a sharp distinction between these two responsibilities (i.e. that an elder *rules* his house but *takes care* of the church). Rather, Paul is pointing out the parallel between the two relationships. In short, he is using the second word "take care of" as a near synonym of the first word, "rule." The concept of ruling or directing includes the concept of service or ministry.

Proistēmi is used in three other New Testaments texts. I Thess. 5:12 "But we beseech you, brethren, to know them that labor among you, and *are over* you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them exceedingly highly in love for their work's sake."

I Timothy 5:17 "Let the elders that *rule* well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and in teaching."

Romans 12:8 "or he that exhorteth, to his exhorting: he that giveth, let him do it with liberality; he that *ruleth*, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness."

The context of each of these three usages is that of service or ministry. Arndt and Gingrich suggest that because of the context of both I Thess. 5:12 and Romans 12:8 the proper translation may be the second meaning "take care of" rather than the first "rule" or "direct."

What then is the meaning of this function of the elder conveyed by the word *proistémi*? Although this word is often translated as "rule," both the word study and the context of the passages in which it is used show that the authority of the one who so "rules" is inseparably bound with his responsibility to serve. He has the responsibility and the authority to be concerned about those of whom he is head and to give them aid.

C. Scriptural Givens Concerning Office in the Church

A further study of the whole complex of Greek words used to designate "office" is also helpful in defining the governmental authority of the office of elder. (See Arndt and Gingrich and Thayer.)

Arché and *archón* are common Greek words for office. These words designate office in the sense of precedence, being at the head of, or ruling with an undertone of legality. These terms are used in the New Testament for Jewish and Gentile authorities (Luke 12:11, 20:20 and Titus 3:1) and for Christ himself (Col. 1:18 and Rev. 1:5). Both words are also used to denote demonic powers (Rom. 8:38, I Cor. 15:24, Eph. 1:21, etc.) These words are never used to designate the office of elder or any other office in the New Testament church.

Timé is sometimes used to denote office, but then office in the sense of a position of dignity. Hebrews 5:4 is the only New Testament usage of this word in the sense of an honorable position and then it refers to the high priestly dignity which is now Christ's.

Telos is also used to denote office, with the stress on the complete power of the office. The New Testament nowhere uses the word in this sense.

Two words are used in the New Testament for office in the church. *Leitourgia* is office in the sense of a more or less voluntary service undertaken by the citizen in behalf of his community. The New Testament uses this word for office in reference both to the Roman officials (Rom. 13:6) and the Jewish priests (Luke 1:23) as well as the service given by Jesus Christ (Hebrews 8:6) and the service of the whole church (Rom. 15:27). It is not used for the special offices of the New Testament church.

The word most commonly used in the New Testament for office in the church is *diakonia* meaning service or ministry. This term is not limited in its reference to the special ministry of the deacon. It is also used to designate the office of apostle (e.g. I Tim. 1:12, Acts 1:17, Acts 20:24) evangelist (II Tim. 4:5) and of minister of the gospel (II Cor. 5:18-20). It is even used of Christ (Rom. 15:8) and for all his people (John 12:26). It is the definitive New Testament word for office. See also I Cor. 12:4-6: that Paul is speaking of office in the

church when he uses the word *diakonia* in verse 4 is evident from verses 27-31. This is *the* New Testament word for office and the basic idea it conveys is service in Christ's name. Its original (etymological) meaning is that of an inferior position of a servant not that of a superior position or of authority of a ruler.

In a few passages the word *oikonomia* "stewardship" is used (cf. I Cor. 9:17 and Col. 1:25). Titus 1:7 uses it to describe the office of bishop: "the bishop . . . as God's steward . . ." This term stresses the office-bearer's relationship to God rather than his relationship to the people whom he serves.

It should not be concluded from this word study that the New Testament says nothing about the authority of the special offices or ministries of the church. For example, Paul speaks of his authority as an apostle (e.g. II Cor. 10:8, 13:10). It can, however, be concluded that in view of the large number of Greek terms available to designate office the choice of *diakonia* (as well as *leitourgia* and *oikonomia* in a few instances) is significant. The basic New Testament concept of office is that of a special ministry or service assigned by the Holy Spirit through the calling of the church. When this ministry is assigned to a person, he also receives the authority necessary to discharge this responsibility. The authority of any office does not exist independent of the responsibility to serve; nor is the responsibility given without authority. Hebrews 13:17 expresses this interdependence very clearly: "Obey them that have rule over you (*égoumenois*), and submit to them: for they watch in behalf of your souls, as they that shall give account . . ." Their service of watching in behalf of your souls is the reason given for the required obedience. The same relationship is expressed in Hebrews 13:7, although less clearly. I Peter 5:2 and 3, quoted above, begins with an injunction to serve "tend the flock," then speaks of the authority of the office "exercising the oversight," and then warns that the authority of the office-bearer must not be used as a naked display of power "neither as lording it over the charge allotted to you" but the authority is exercised through serving in the ministry assigned, "but making yourselves ensamples to the flock."

This interdependence of authority and service in the New Testament concept of office in the church is important for the question before us. In the mind of the church the two are sometimes separated: the elder is one who exercises authority and the deacon is one who serves. The New Testament envisions all offices in the church as assigned service (ministry) including the requisite authority to fulfill that assignment.

Whatever obedience, respect, or honor is due an office-bearer in the church is due him because of the ministry assigned him and in which he is engaged. See I Thess. 5:12, 13; I Tim. 5:17, and I Tim. 3:13.

This concept of office is the reverse of the office of secular government. Jesus made this clear in his instruction to the disciples after the request for pre-eminence by the mother of the sons of Zebedee, "Ye know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them and their great ones exercise authority over them. Not so shall it be among you; but whosoever would become great among you shall be your minister (*diakonos*—

servant); and whosoever would be first among you shall be your servant (*doulos—slaves*).” Matt. 20:25-27

It cannot, therefore, be concluded that elders have an authority because of their position which precludes any diaconal authority in the church. This conclusion is neither new nor strange in light of the Reformed creeds and the Church Order. The creeds and the Church Order assign some governmental responsibilities and authority to deacons and permit or even require a much wider governmental responsibility in certain circumstances. The Church Order* requires deacons to exercise a decisive governmental authority along with the elder in those tasks: the election and calling of ministers (Articles 4 and 35), granting permission to a minister to accept a call from another church (Article 16), the election of other elders and deacons (Article 4), and participation in mutual supervision over their fellow office-bearers: i.e. *Censura Morum* (Article 36b).

In Article 35 the Church Order explicitly requires that deacons shall participate in all the functions of the consistory when the number of elders is less than four. Also, they may exercise their office in all the functions of the consistory by local decision whatever the size of the church. The authors and adopters of the Church Order were not of the opinion that deacons must be excluded from governmental or supervisory functions because of some special authority of the office of elder.

Although the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, immediately after the Reformation, did distinguish between the offices in the Church, they did not separate them. The offices of elder and deacon were integrated by them, at least under certain conditions. Deacons were repeatedly considered assistant elders. At the Conference of Wesel (1568) it was, for instance, decided that ministers and elders were to constitute the council of the church. However, three years after that, at the Synod of Emden (1571) it was decided that the consistory was to consist of ministers, elders and deacons (Art. VI). And three years after that, the Synod of Dort (1574) explains this sixth article of the Synod of Emden in such a way that elders and deacons may meet separately to attend to their work, but in churches with few elders the deacons may be made part of the council (Art. IV). It is remarkable that Art. XII of the Synod of Middelburg (1581) mentions office-bearers “which serve both the office of elder and deacon.” It seems to be evident that our Fathers, though they did distinguish between the offices of elder and deacon, never intended to separate these offices as definitely as is done by us at the present time. According to them deacons were to share the responsibility of the government of the church and it appears that they did not object to consider them, at least under certain circumstances, assistant elders. For a more extensive review of this matter Dr. A. D. R. Polman, *Onze Nederlandsche Geloofsbelijdenis*, Vol. IV, pp. 22-29, should be consulted.

Moreover, these views of the Fathers also explain Article 30 of the

*The references are to the newly adopted Church Order, but on this point it is in substantial agreement with the Church Order of Dordt.

Belgic Confession, which states that "We believe that this true Church must be governed by that spiritual polity which our Lord has taught us in His Word" proceeds to define the government of the local church through the three offices of minister, elder, and deacons who together "form the council of the Church . . ."

D. *Conclusions.*

If deacons also have a special authority in the church by virtue of their special ministry, why is there no mention of their supervisory responsibility in the New Testament? Scripture does not assign this task to the deacons but neither does it explicitly assign any other task to them with the possible exception of serving the tables of widows. It is evident that although the diaconal office may have been the first instituted in the church after the office of apostle, the office of elder was the first to develop and to be accepted widely as part of the organizational structure of the church. The book of Acts nowhere mentions deacons in any of the churches although elders seem to be common to all the churches. In the book of Acts elders fulfilled the tasks that later were assigned to the office of deacon. The Church at Antioch received the monies collected for aid to the Jerusalem churches and sent it to the elders of Jerusalem, Acts 11:30. Also, the New Testament speaks *specifically* of deacons as office-bearers only in the epistles to Timothy and Titus. These were some of the last written, near the end of the New Testament period.

If, as the evidence seems to suggest, the office of deacon as part of the organizational structure of the church developed late in the New Testament period, the assignment of the governmental function to the elders with no mention made of the deacons would be natural, but it would not necessarily imply that deacons should have no authority or supervisory function in the church when that office later developed.

Similar conclusions can be made regarding the account of the Jerusalem conference or synod in Acts 15. Elders and apostles but no deacons were sent to Jerusalem to decide a matter common to all the churches. First, there is no evidence that any of the churches had deacons as special office-bearers. All the tasks of the ministry including the receiving of collections seems to have been done by the elders. Secondly, Acts 15 describes, at most, the origin of broader assemblies and not their later development, so caution must be exercised lest the conclusions drawn from it be too broad. The question before the Jerusalem assembly was in an area of responsibility specifically assigned to the elders (Titus 1:7-9). However, it cannot be concluded that later assemblies did not consider matters that were the province of the diaconal office and included these representatives.

After consideration of the Scriptural evidence, we come to the conclusion similar to that of the committee reporting to the Rotterdam synod of the Gereformeerde Kerken: much *explicit* Scriptural evidence can not be given since in these matters Holy Scripture offers hardly any specific data. Indeed, this is not the purpose of Holy Scriptures. The apostles and evangelists have given us only general principles, and these should be sufficient for us.

II. THEOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE MINISTRY AND OFFICES OF THE CHURCH

Another approach possible is the study of the scriptural teaching concerning the total ministry of the church and of the question whether the present structural organization of the church is adequate to fulfill the demands of this ministry.

Our starting point, therefore, should be that Christ has assigned to his church a ministry, that all offices in the church are by divine assignment, and that through the Holy Spirit some members are specially qualified and called for differing tasks so that the whole mission of the church might be fulfilled. This is the teaching of I Corinthians 12:4-11, Romans 12:3-8, and 27-30, and Ephesians 4:12, 16.

In the early history of the New Testament the whole ministry was assigned to the apostles. Later, at Pentecost and as the church developed institutionally, the whole ministry was assigned on the one hand to the whole congregation, for every member was commanded to warn and admonish, to provide for the poor, and to give a good account of the hope that it is in them, and on the other hand some were singled out by gifts of the Spirit and by His calling for special tasks or offices.

What is the ministry of the church? The church shares the anointing of Christ and therefore His three-fold office or task. The Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day XII, summarizes the teaching of the Holy Scripture in these words: Jesus is called the Christ because "He is anointed with the Holy Spirit, to be our chief Prophet and Teacher . . . and our only High Priest . . . and our eternal King." The ministry that the church is to perform is a continuation of the three-fold ministry of Christ, although His ministry was and is unique. The church participates in this threefold ministry of Christ because each Christian is "a member of Christ by faith and thus a partaker in his anointing." Therefore, each Christian individually and the church as a body has the responsibility and authority to "confess His name, present (themselves) a living sacrifice of thankfulness to Him, and with a free and good conscience fight against sin and the devil in this life, and hereafter reign with Him eternally over all creatures."

The Reformed Churches generally have seen a reflection of this three-fold office of Christ-Church in the three special offices of the church: minister, elder, and deacon. The office of the minister of the Word and sacraments reflects primarily, although not exclusively, the prophetic aspect of the church's ministry. The office of the deacon reflects primarily the priestly aspect of the church's ministry. The office of elder reflects primarily the kingly aspect of the ministry of the church. However, none of these special offices of the church can be limited to one aspect of this three-fold office. For example, the ordained elder must also present himself as a living sacrifice in his ministry (the priestly aspect) and he governs and leads the church only by the Word (the prophetic aspect). Each of the offices of the church must be seen as representative of the whole Christ.

Now the crucial question: Do the three offices of the church as they are presently developed and regulated fulfill the three-fold ministry which

Christ assigns to the church? Does the task and authority of the three offices of the church, as defined in the Church Order and the liturgical formularies of the Christian Reformed Church, adequately carry out the three-fold office of Christ. More specifically, does the office of deacon fulfill the priestly aspect of the ministry of the church when it is limited in its function to one of the three assemblies of the church?

The Unity, Distinctiveness, and Equality of the Three Offices

The Reformed churches have always maintained the unity, the distinctiveness, and the equality (parity) of the three special offices of the church. The equality of the offices was stressed in the early church orders. No office was permitted to "lord it over" any other office. The priestly office of the church was not thought to be of less importance than the prophetic or the kingly, nor was the authority of the church exercised through only one of the offices. Each office must function adequately if the whole ministry of the church is to be carried out.

The unity of the offices is an equally important truth. The offices are basically one in Jesus Christ. The offices of the church arise out of this one redemptive office of Christ. All offices in the church are basically the one office of the church's witness to the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. No description of the distinctiveness of the offices may obliterate the fact that all the offices of the church are ministries of the gospel.

However, the three offices of the church are distinctive, particularly in the task assigned to each. There is a division of labor within the church determined by the gifts and calling of the Holy Spirit. This division is necessary for the total welfare and the total ministry of the church.

The Apostle Paul expounds these three themes in I Corinthians 12, Romans 12, and Ephesians 14. Any consideration of the role of deacons in the total ministry of the church must, therefore, take into consideration the unity, the distinctiveness, and the equality of the offices of the church.

Our creedal standards envision the task of the office-bearers—including deacons—quite exclusively in terms of their responsibilities within the local congregation (see Belgic Confession Art. XXX and XXXI). The Church Order limits the deacon's exercise of his office to the one assembly of the congregation, the consistory. Therefore, it is important that we study the role that has been assigned to the deacon in the local consistory for some indication of the whole diaconal ministry of the church.

Article 35 of the new Church Order, which does not depart in any substantial way from the former Church Order, says that the consistory is composed of all the office-bearers and is responsible for the general government of the church. A distinction *may* be made between the general consistory, to which all office-bearers belong, and the restricted consistory, in which the deacons do not participate, when the number of elders is at least four. When such a distinction is made, the supervision and discipline of the congregation shall be vested in the restricted consistory. The work of Christian mercy shall be the task of the deacons. All other matters belong to the general consistory.

In short, the deacons share in the responsibility for the general gov-

ernment of the church and may be included in all the acts and work of the consistory. This article of the church order emphasizes the unity of the offices as well as defining the distinctive tasks of each office. The deacons represent the priestly aspect of the office or ministry of the church and therefore must exercise their responsibilities and authority in the deliberations of the consistory. Neither can the deacons fulfill their task of the priestly aspect of the ministry of the church apart from the elders and ministers. Therefore, they "shall render account of their work to the general consistory."

This careful regulation to maintain the balance between the unity, distinctiveness, and equality of the offices in relation to both the task and the authority of the offices does not obtain, however, in the other assemblies of the church. In the classis and the synod the kingly and the prophetic aspects of the church's ministry are represented but not the priestly, except indirectly through the office of elder or minister. Concretely, this means that when many matters which are distinctively the responsibility of the diaconal office are considered at major assemblies, the other two offices of the church must function in its stead. For example, the classical and denominational budgets, much of the work of foreign missions, particularly the hospitals and relief work, and the determination of an approved list of agencies and institutions for offerings are decided without provision for the deacons to exercise their office. Also, the synod, without any diaconal participation, appoints, administers, and controls committees for the Canadian Relief Fund, the Christian Reformed World Relief Fund, the Church Help Fund, Fund for Needy Churches (called in their report, Acts of Synod, 1965, p. 88 ". . . this denominational ministry of mercy . . ."), Christian Reformed Resettlement Service, and the Ministers Pension and Relief Fund.

Not only are these distinctive diaconal tasks performed by the other offices at major assemblies, but every deliberation concerning the ministry of the church has a priestly as well as a prophetic or kingly aspect. Every act of the ministry of the church of Christ must "confess His Name," be an act in which the church "presents (herself) a living sacrifice of thanksgiving to Him," and an act in which the church "with a free and good conscience fight(s) against sin and the devil in this life." (See Lord's Day XII). Again, at the major assemblies the priestly aspect of the church's ministry is represented not through the deacons, as is true in the consistory, but through the other two offices of the church.

The question must be asked whether such regulation preserves the unity, equality, and distinctiveness of the three offices of the church. The task of the deacons is certainly as important to the ministry of a group of churches acting in concert as it is to the ministry of a local congregation.

Before recommending any course of action to synod our committee thought it well to study the reports and decisions of our sister church in the Netherlands on this question.

III. DIAGONAL REPRESENTATIVES IN THE GEREFORMEERDE KERKEN

The decision to delegate deacons to major assemblies, by the Gereformeerde Kerken of the Netherlands, has been made only after several

general synods interested themselves in this matter. In fact it has passed through a lengthy history embracing the years 1949 to 1964. Your committee has read and considered all the material pertaining to this matter and found in the Acts of those synods. To reproduce all of it in this report would require a great many pages of print: it would entail a considerable amount of repetition; and it would include at least some elements which pertain only to conditions in the Netherlands Churches. However, since the committee assumes that synod will, to an extent, be interested in the developments in the Netherlands, it has thought it feasible to produce a brief digest of the various decisions made throughout the process of arriving at the final resolutions of 1964.

The history of the process began at the synod of the Netherlands Churches in 1949. The decision then made was exceedingly important, since the Gereformeerde Kerken at that time took a step in the direction of delegating deacons to major assemblies from which they did not return, and from which it would have been most difficult to return. The step was in that sense decisive. The synod of 1949 decided to appoint a committee to study the matter of the place of deacons in consistories of local churches not only, but likewise to study the delegation of these office-bearers to the major assemblies of the denomination. However, in addition, it made an important concession even at that early date. It decided to allow the classes to seat a deacon, properly delegated, together with a minister and an elder, at such meetings of the classes at which diaconal matters were to be decided. The right to vote of such a delegated deacon was, however, restricted to diaconal matters. The mandate of such a deacon delegate was, therefore, very limited. Matters pertaining to the offices of minister and elder were excluded. But the step made in that direction was nevertheless significant.

The following synod distinguished between the full (*brede*) consistory and the restricted (*smalle*) consistory. These are, however, according to the decision and in agreement with the Church Order, to be merged in small churches, which merger is to be regular in all churches in which the number of elders is no more than three. The "restricted" consistory is to consist of the minister and elders, and matters pertaining to the discipline and to the supervision of the congregation are to be assigned to this consistory. The "full" consistory is to be composed of the minister, the elders and the deacons. All matters pertaining to the general guidance or management (*leiding*) of the congregation are to be assigned to this consistory.

Besides ministers and elders, deacons are also to be delegated to classical meetings, however, only in the event of and for as long as matters pertaining to the services of mercy are to be disposed of. Only in those cases the delegated deacons shall have the right to vote. In like manner it was decided that, besides the ministers and elders, deacons shall be delegated to synods, however, with the same restrictions as their delegation to the meetings of the classes. It was, moreover, decided that only *one* deacon for each consistory was to be delegated to the classis, and likewise only one deacon for each classis to the synods.

The decisions of the Netherlands Synod of 1958 are considered impor-

tant. They not only enlarge the mandate of the delegated deacons, making it more comprehensive, but later synods will refer to the resolutions of 1958 as a "declaration of principle" (*principe uitspraak*). The synod decided that in major assemblies the delegated deacons are to have a share in deliberating on and deciding not only matters pertaining to the services of mercy, but likewise in matters which concern the general guidance or management (*leiding*) of the church. However, the following exceptions were made: the deacons delegated are not to be involved in such matters as pertain to the supervision (*opzicht*) of the church, and neither in such as pertain to the confession and to the service of the Word (*Woorddienst*) of the church.

However, this resolution was not made final by the Synod of 1958, but rather tentative. Synod decided, before making it final and binding, to present it to the churches and to await especially the reaction of the particular synods to it.

The synod following that of 1958 decided to postpone action in regard to the "tentative" resolutions. This postponement was made for the purpose of allowing more time for the particular synods and the classes to produce their reactions to the "declaration of principle" (*principe uitspraak*) made in 1958.

However, some of these bodies did submit their reactions. But synod declared that there did not appear to be a unanimity of opinion concerning two of the "exceptions" made in the resolution of 1958; namely, in regard to matters pertaining to the confession of the church and the administration of the Word (*Woorddienst*). For that reason the synod appointed a committee to consider the possibility of making the "tentative" resolutions of 1958 definite and final by deleting those two "exceptions."

The Synod of 1963-'64 decided definitely (so that its decision must be considered final and binding) that deacons delegated to major assemblies, shall share in deliberating upon and deciding all matters presented to synod, with the exception, however, of such as pertain to the supervision (*opzicht*) and discipline (*tucht*) of the church. Hence the confession of the church and the service or administration of the Word (*Woorddienst*) are therefore included in the mandate of delegated deacons.

In connection with this final decision the synod also decided to make such changes in the Church Order as would provide that (1) each consistory shall delegate one minister, one elder and one deacon to classis; (2) each classis shall delegate *two* ministers, *two* elders and *one* deacon to the particular synods; (3) each particular synod shall delegate two ministers, *two* elders, and *one* deacon to the general synod.

Observations:

First we desire to observe that the decision of the Netherlands Synod of 1963-'64 is the result of long deliberation. However, after reading all that is contained in regard to this subject in the Acts of the Synods of 1949 to 1963-'64 one cannot escape the impression that unanimity has hardly been attained and that for that reason it may be doubted that the matter has been settled permanently.

In addition we remark that there is evident inconsistency in the resolu-

tions adopted by the Netherlands Churches in 1964. The inconsistency we discover in these resolutions is especially that these Churches apparently intend to proceed from the acknowledged principle of the parity of the offices in Christ's Church, yet fail to apply this principle in delegating all office-bearers, without distinction, to major assemblies.

The credentials which entitle delegated office-bearers a seat in major assemblies must read differently with ministers and elders on the one hand, and deacons on the other. While the credentials of ministers and elders are doubtless unlimited and comprehensive, those of deacons delegated must be restricted and exclude a mandate to act in certain specified work of major assemblies.

Moreover, it is stated in the resolutions of 1964 that deacons are not to act in matters which pertain to the supervision (*opzicht*) and discipline (*tucht*) of the church or churches. These are doubtless considered to belong exclusively to the domain of ministers and elders, so that deacons should not help deliberate and decide such matters. But apparently inconsistently ministers and elders do help deliberate and decide matters which may be said to belong definitely to the domain of deacons. Why should the one office-bearer, delegated to a major assembly, have a comprehensive mandate, while another receives a limited mandate?

Moreover, there is a discrepancy in the number of deacons delegated and the number of ministers and elders. Delegation by classes and particular synod is 4 to 1, so that deacons are ever in the minority and can easily be "outvoted" by the other office-bearers.

For considerations such as stated above, your committee cannot recommend to synod to follow the course set by the Gereformeerde Kerken and to adopt identical or similar resolutions in regard to the delegation of deacons to major assemblies.

IV. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

A. Your committee is of the opinion that some development of the role of deacon in the ministry of the church is necessary if the church is to fulfill her total ministry. The diaconal office has not developed within the church as fully as the other two offices. Too often the function of deacons has been limited to the collection and administration of funds and few other tasks. Over the past few decades separate meetings for elders and deacons have become increasingly prevalent and the function of deacons has become increasingly more limited. Too often the diaconate is considered a proving ground and training period for the office of elder instead of an office in its own right with its own essential contribution to the church's total ministry.

At the same time there has been a growing concern for a diaconal ministry beyond the local congregation on a national and a world-wide scale. However, with this developing awareness of the scope of the service of deacons there has not been a commensurate awareness of the authority-leadership aspect of the diaconal office.

We recognize that a change in the delegation of deacons to major assemblies will not of itself correct this situation. Any decisive change will

have to be effected in the local congregation. The deacons must be given a more effective and decisive role in the work of the local consistory. Careful adherence to Article 35 of the new Church Order should aid materially on this score.

However, the following considerations lead your committee to the conclusion that some change should be made in our present method of delegation to major assemblies: (a) the Biblical recognition of the authority of all ecclesiastical office, including that of deacons; (b) the importance of the priestly aspect of the church's ministry as represented primarily by the deacons; (c) the large number of matters considered at the major assemblies which are primarily the concern of deacons; and (d) the recognized principles of the equality and unity of the office.

B. Your committee cannot recommend the long and difficult course followed by the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, beginning with token representation and a severely limited mandate. Once recognition has been given to the legitimacy and importance of diaconal representation at major assemblies, consistency demands the equality of representation and function. Any half-way house will only prolong the process.

C. Your committee has also concluded that we cannot recommend an accelerated development of parallel diaconal organizations on the classical and synodical levels as a solution to this problem. Clearly some change in the delegation of authority and the area of service would be necessary if the present diaconal structure were to realize its potential.

A conference with officers and members of the board of the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee revealed many limitations to its effective ministry. These are in a large measure the result of its present structure as defined by its constitution. Some of these limitations are:

1. The inability of deacons' conferences to make prompt decisions and take expeditious action, since there has been no delegation of authority and function relative to the wider ministry of mercy. All matters must be referred to local diaconates for approval and implementation.
2. The lack of uniformity in conference practices hinders the CRWRC in fulfilling its mandate. Some conferences are functioning primarily as "educational" agencies, others as broader assemblies for a classical diaconal ministry.

However, the development of classical diaconal conferences and of the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee into a type of major diaconal assemblies parallel to classis and synod would result in dual ecclesiastical assemblies within one church body. Such a possible development has been aptly described as a "two-headed monster."

Independent diaconal conference would make conflicts between the decisions and courses of action of these conferences and those of classes and synods not only possible but probable. This would not only be undesirable but definitely objectionable since the church would in that way be moving in opposite directions.

V. SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL TO THE SYNOD OF 1967

A. *The Response of the Churches*

The Synod of 1966 commended the entire report of this committee (*Acts of Synod 1966*, pp. 23 and 112-128) to the churches for study and encouraged them to send their reactions to the committee. Sixty-five responses were received.

These responses were divided almost evenly between those concurring with the report and those disagreeing with it. Thirty-one were generally favorable and thirty-four generally took exception to it.

More significantly, perhaps, the responses can be separated into the following four categories:

- 1) Those who were unqualifiedly in agreement with the report and recommendations.
- 2) Those who were generally in agreement but with some qualifications or limitations.
- 3) Those who were unqualifiedly in opposition to the report and its recommendations.
- 4) Those who generally disagreed with the report and/or its recommendations but recognized definite problems that must be faced in the present method of delegation to major assemblies.

A substantial majority of the responses fell into categories 2) and 4) with only relatively few in either category 1) or 3).

The following general conclusions can also be drawn from a survey of the response received:

- 1) The responses indicated a widespread recognition of the need for some type of delegation of deacons to major assemblies (found in categories 1, 2, and 4 above). There was also a concurrent hesitation to adopt equal representation with identical mandates.
- 2) The responses indicated a general concern about the possibility of losing the distinctiveness of the offices. This was often expressed in terms of a fear of making deacons into elders.
- 3) Thirdly, the question about the real nature of major assemblies was frequently raised. Is a major assembly purely judicial and regulatory or is it the Church-in-action: deliberating upon, planning, and deciding its whole prophetic, priestly, and kingly ministry?

Each of these questions and observations is considered in more detail in the next section of this report: the answers to the five questions addressed to the committee by the Synod of 1966.

B. *Additional Questions Raised by the Synod of 1966*

The Synod of 1966 recommitted the matter to this committee for further consideration in the light of questions such as the five listed below (Cf. *Acts of Synod, 1966*, p. 23). Your committee has studied each of these with the questions and observations made by the churches and presents the following material.

- "a. Is the nature of the major assemblies characterized by a represen-

tation of all the offices and does it, therefore, demand the delegation of deacons?"

"e. Does the principle that no office-bearer may 'lord it over' another (C.O. Art. 95) demand *equal* representation of deacons with ministers and elders at major assemblies?"

The two questions "a" and "e" are closely related. Both of them assume—or imply that our committee assumes—that major assemblies are constituted by delegates representing certain offices in the church. This is an incorrect assumption.

The question is not which offices are represented at major assemblies, but how and by whom are churches or groups of churches represented at major assemblies? An ecclesiastical office, Biblically understood, is to be performed but not represented.

The question that faces the church is not who represents the office of deacon but who is performing the office of deacon at major assemblies? Much of the ministry of the church defined as diaconal on the local level is performed by elders and ministers at classis and synod. According to Article 28b of the Church Order major assemblies handle two distinct types of matters: those referred by a lower assembly for adjudication and secondly those which concern the churches in common. In this second category falls that ministry which churches perform cooperatively as a classis or denomination since it is ordinarily beyond the resources of an individual church (e.g. missions and world relief) and those matters which affect the local ministry of each and all of the local churches together (e.g. the formulation of creeds, the adoption of liturgical forms, and the approval of a list of recommended offerings.)

These matters of the common ministry of the churches go far beyond the tasks of discipline and adjudication. These are matters of the general government of the churches with regard to her total common or cooperative ministry. In short, major assemblies do have a judiciary function but they also represent the Church-in-action regulating, setting policy, and determining her cooperative and common ministry.

If major assemblies were only the former, adjudicatory bodies concerned with discipline and supervision in the limited sense of section "c" of Article 35 of the Church Order, then the work of major assemblies could rightly be assigned to elders and ministers alone. *However, a major assembly resembles the general consistory rather than the restricted consistory in its function. It is responsible for the general government of the churches in all matters of their ministry which they undertake cooperatively or in common.*

At present deacons are excluded from fulfilling their proper function at the broader levels of the church's deliberative assemblies. If the distinctiveness of the offices is to be maintained, deacons should participate in this general government of the church's cooperative and common ministry.

Question "e" raises an additional problem: does the principle that no office bearer may "lord over it" another (C.O. Art. 95) demand *equal* representation? Equal representation with identical mandate is no ab-

solute necessity: that is, it is not essential to the existence of the church. The unity of the offices has long been understood to mean that in exceptional circumstances one office may perform the task of another. Therefore in small churches and in other circumstances deacons are regarded as "helping elders" and in emergencies elders sometimes do the task of a deacon.

However, the quality of the offices *and their distinctiveness* prohibits the regular, systematic, unnecessary take-over of the function of one office by another. For example, at the Synod of 1965 the deacons of the Christian Reformed Church through the CRWRC requested synod to participate in the Rennies Mill Student Aid Program in Hongkong (Cf. *Acts of Synod* 1965, p. 261 and pp. 54 and 55). The Synod, composed only of ministers and elders, refused the request. *Whatever the intention of Synod, in actual effect two officers of the church did "lord it over" the other office.*

The delegation of deacons with a limited mandate has been suggested by several consistories responding to our report. A limited mandate would allow deacons to participate in all matters at classis and synod which concern their office. There are several objections, both of principle and practice to this proposal. On each specific issue how can the distinction be made and who shall make it? Except perhaps for matters of discipline and doctrine, which questions do not have a diaconal aspect? Is it the prerogative of one office or two offices to decide whether the third should participate or not?

Also, the agendas of classes or of synods cannot be neatly divided into diaconal matters and non-diaconal matters. The Gereformeerde Kerken in the Netherlands wrestled with this problem for nearly ten years and finally concluded that deacons should participate in all matters except those of discipline and supervision (*tucht en opzicht*). Hence even the confession of the church and the service of the Word (*Woorddienst*) were included in the mandate of delegated deacons.

Although this may appear to be a feasible solution, it would mean that the diaconal delegates would have to wait around for the entire session of synod for those matters which concern them since synods do not take up matters on their agenda in any systematic way. The Dutch churches have found this plan to be unworkable. Because of the distances involved for our denomination, this plan would be even more unworkable.

It should also be noted that if deacons do not participate in the deliberation of matters strictly the concern of elders, consistency would demand that elders should not participate in the deliberation of matters which are strictly the concern of deacons. One office should never crowd out another, particularly not in a regular, systematic, and unnecessary way. *If the distinctiveness of the offices must be safeguarded for the one it must be safeguarded for both.*

"b. Which authority is inherent in ecclesiastical office as such, and in that of the deacons especially?"

Again this question seems to make an invalid assumption. There is no authority inherent in ecclesiastical office in the sense of a position of

power or dignity conferred upon a certain person, whether elder, deacon, or minister. (See above, I. *Biblical References*, C. *Scriptural Givens Concerning Office in the Church*.) All authority resides in Christ, the Head of the Church. This authority is never transferred to any persons in the church. Ordination to office does not confer upon a deacon, minister, or elder a certain kind of *indelible authority* for a certain area of life.

The authority of the church is and remains the authority of Christ which He exercises through the ministry of the church in the Word and deed: that is, through the service of elders, deacons, and ministers.

The New Testament concept of office is that of a ministering task assigned to a person qualified by the Spirit: "if a man seeketh the *office* of a bishop, he desireth a *good work*," I Tim. 3:1.

The power exercised by the elder or the deacon is not a power inherent in a position, but an authority assigned by Christ to perform the task given him.

The authority of the Church is the authority to minister in the name of Christ through the Word and deed. The elder or deacon exercises this authority by his service (Matt. 20:25, 26) and by his example (I Pet. 5:3), not by being called "rabbi" or "master" (Matt. 23:8, 10). Because he ministers as a humble servant and slave, his fellow believers are called to give him respect and obedience (I Thess. 5:13 ". . . esteem them exceedingly highly for their work's sake" and I Tim. 3:13 "for they that have served well as deacons gain to themselves a good standing . . .").

Authority in the church is joined inseparably to service. Prof. Louis Berkhof has summarized it well: "It is abundantly evident from scripture that the power of the Church is no independent and sovereign power, Matt. 20:25, 26; 23:8, 10; II Cor. 10:4, 5; I Pet. 5:3, but a *diaconia leitourgia*, a ministerial power, Acts 4:29, 30; 20:24; Rom. 1:1 . . . (*Systematic Theology*, Eerdmans, 1953, p. 594).

"c. How will the distinctiveness of the offices be maintained if deacons should be delegated to major assemblies with identical mandates and credentials along with elders and ministers?"

It is precisely a concern for the distinctiveness of the offices that leads your committee to recommend the delegation of deacons to major assemblies. The distinction between the offices of minister, elder and deacon is not safeguarded when elders and ministers discuss and decide diaconal matters without the participation of deacons: for example the request of the GRWRC to work in Hongkong, cited above. The same is true for many other matters which are not specifically diaconal in character but which have a diaconal aspect as well as a prophetic or other aspect: for example, the foreign mission work in Nigeria and the home mission work in Harlem and on the Indian field. Included in this work is the administration of hospitals, training schools, drug and alcohol rehabilitation centers, leprosy settlements, orphanages, etc.

This is larger problem in theory than in practice.

(1) In our present method of delegation the distinction between the office of elder and the office of minister is maintained even though they

are delegated to major assemblies with identical mandates and credentials. Within the assembly no formal distinction is made but only an informal recognition of the peculiar tasks and abilities of each.

(2) The true distinction among the offices is maintained not primarily by their differing functions at major assemblies but in the local congregation. The offices are offices in the local church. Their primary function is there and the distinction will be most apparent there.

(3) The primary function of the offices of the church is not in its deliberative assemblies and therefore the distinctiveness is not expressed primarily there. The deliberative assemblies plan and determine the ministry of the church, but the real ministry of an elder, a deacon, or a minister is in the distribution of benevolence, family visiting calls, the proclamation of the Word, etc. Here the offices and their distinctiveness come to full expression, not in who votes on what.

(4) It should also be noted that the distinctiveness of the offices is presently maintained in local consistories, even though deacons share in all the general government of the Church (C.O. Art. 35).

In conclusion, the distinctiveness of the offices is threatened by our present method of delegation. The distinctiveness is adequately expressed and safeguarded in the differing functions of the various offices in the local congregation. And finally, the distinctiveness of the offices should not be stressed so that it threatens the unity of the offices. This unity is apparent in the integration of the offices in Christ. This integration is so prominent that the Church does not speak of three offices in Christ, but one with three aspects.

"d. Is it possible to draw some conclusions from the Old Testament idea of office to that of the New Testament?"

Just as the O.T. offices are related to Christ's office and point to the fullness of His office, so the N.T. offices are derived from Christ's three-fold office and express the totality of His office.

The essence of office is the same in both the Old and the New Testaments: God assigns tasks to be performed in His name for the coming of His Kingdom. In practice the offices of prophet, priest, and king in the Old Testament were very different from the New Testament offices.

These offices were fulfilled in Christ, the great prophet, our only high priest, and our eternal king. The New Testament offices rose out of the office of Christ, not out of the Old Testament offices.

Although some similarities can be found in the collector of alms functioning for synagogues and in the institution of the elders of Israel, there are no exact models in the Old Testament for the offices of the New Testament church. Under the direction of the Holy Spirit the content of the terms used to describe the offices of the church and the tasks of these offices were formed. (See Kittel, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. II, pp. 91ff.)

C. *Further Observations Concerning Questions Raised by Responding Churches*

1. The committee observes that consistories reacting adversely to the 1966 report of this committee commonly proceed from the assumption that the place of deacons in our churches already fulfills the demands of Scripture and is normal and regular, needing no change or further development.

The committee wishes to point out that for many years Reformed theologians have acknowledged that the office of deacon is underdeveloped. We submit just a few references to show that a) the problem has long been recognized and b) the solution proposed by this committee has been advanced by many leaders of the Reformed Churches long ago.

Dr. Herman Bavinck analyzed the problem in the fourth volume of his *Dogmatiek* (2nd edition, p. 496) and advocated the delegation of deacons to major assemblies. Dr. F. L. Rutgers agreed that this plan would be practical and suggested that the reason it had not been employed earlier in the history of the Reformed Churches was that the civil authorities would not permit it since they wanted to reserve the control of the care for the poor for themselves. (Cf. *Kerkelijke Adviezen*, I, p. 210). Dr. Abraham Kuyper recognized the same problem and already in 1884 was of the opinion that the diaconal office "ought to be interwoven in the ruling organism of the Churches (that is, of Classes and Synods)," (*Tractaat van de Reformatie der Kerken*, p. 21).

Biesterveld, van Lonkhuijzen, and Rudolph in their work entitled *Het Diaconaat* also recognize that the diaconal office has not been developed beyond its local ministry and that some form of diaconal participation on the broader levels of the church must be developed. (Hilversum, 1907, pp. 371-398).

Prof. W. Heyns in his *Handbook for Elders and Deacons* published in 1928 includes an entire chapter calling for the further development of the diaconate (Eerdmans, pp. 334-353). In a section entitled "Unsatisfactory condition of the diaconate" he commends the Reformed Churches for having restored the diaconate but deplores the fact that it was restored "only as a local institution" (p. 334).

Heyns also makes the observation that although Reformed Churches have repudiated the independent system of church government, our diaconate in its present form has a position in full harmony with the independent system of church polity and contrary to the Reformed system (p. 352).

The recognition of this problem and attempted solutions have an even longer history. In the Reformed Church of France from the very beginning deacons were considered essential members of the consistory; so much so that the delegation to major assemblies consisted of the minister accompanied by one or two elders or deacons. The Gallican (French) Confession of 1559 in Article 29 assigned a governmental function to the office of deacon. This indicates that Calvin was already thinking in this direction since he played a large role in the organization of these churches and reviewed and approved the Gallican Confession.

One final example, the Synod of Groningen in 1899 wrestled with this problem and advised against the organization of diaconal conferences

with official ecclesiastical representation and power to act, since this would result in two separate ecclesiastical structures and would exclude the other two offices from their role in the diaconal ministry of the church. However, this synod came no further in a solution to the problem.

2. The committee also wishes to observe that many of the adverse responses refer to the delegation of apostles and elders to the assembly in Jerusalem (Acts 15) and assume that this decides the matter.

The committee submits that this is an unwarranted Biblicistic use of Scripture. Indeed, Acts 15 gives us a pattern for major assemblies from which some principles can be drawn. But to affirm that it provides precise, detailed regulations and an exhaustive picture of major assemblies is to create problems rather than solve them. If the delegation of apostles and elders to the Jerusalem assembly determines who may represent the churches, where are our apostles today? Following the same approach to Scripture, the conclusion would have to be drawn that major assemblies may deal only with matters of doctrine, since that is all the Jerusalem assembly considered.

It must be reaffirmed that the three permanent offices of the church did not appear on the scene simultaneously. Patterns for church life did not drop down full-blown from heaven any more than did doctrinal formulations.

Dr. Klaas Dijk, a recognized theologian in the area of church polity, exhaustively studied the Scriptural givens on the development of offices in the church. (Cf. *De Eenheid der ambten*, 1949, and *De dienst der Kerken*, 1952, especially pp. 225-261.) He concludes that the office of the elder was the first permanent office. The other two offices developed out of it as a kind of specialization. On the one side the ministry of mercy developed into the specialized office of deacon and on the other side the ministry of teaching developed into the office of a teaching elder or minister.

Unless it be remembered that the three offices became distinct only late in the New Testament writings (the pastoral epistles), we shall misunderstand and misuse the Scriptures.

Therefore your committee recommends that:

I. Synod declare that, in the light of Scripture and the Reformed confessions, it judges that there are no lawful objections to the delegation of deacons to the major assemblies of the church.

Ground:

Neither Scripture nor the Reformed confessions speak specifically on this matter. This argument from silence has, indeed, been used to defend the position that therefore deacons are to be prohibited from serving in any official capacity outside of the local congregation. This conclusion we deem to be unwarranted in the light of our study of (a) the necessity and uniqueness of each office instituted by Christ through the apostles for His New Testament church, (b) the interdependence of service and authority indicated in the New Testament concept of office.

II. Synod decide to refer the following recommendations to the churches for their consideration prior to any final decision.

A. That Synod decide that *one* minister, *one* elder and also *one* deacon be delegated to classes and to synods, and that these three office-bearers shall be delegated with identical mandates and credentials.

Ground:

1. The unity and distinctiveness of the offices in Christ, of which the offices in the church are reflections, demands that the deacons shall not only function in the local congregation and consistory, but likewise in the major assemblies of the church.

2. The principle that no office-bearer may "lord it over" another, expressed in the Church Order (Revised) Art. 95, demands equal representation of deacons with ministers and elders at major assemblies.

3. This arrangement will bring the work of the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee, now more or less dangling, in proper relation to the major assemblies and will put the position of the CRWRC on par with other synodical agencies, such as the Board of Trustees of Calvin College and Seminary and the Boards of Missions.

B. That Synod decide, in agreement with recommendation "1" above, to change the reading of Articles 40 and 45 of the (Revised) Church Order as follows:

1. Article 40-a "The Consistory of each church shall delegate one minister, one elder and one deacon to the classis. If a church is without a minister, or the minister is prevented from attending, either two elders and one deacon, or two deacons and one elder shall be delegated.

2. Article 45 "The Synod is the assembly representing the churches of all classes. Each Classis shall delegate one minister, one elder and one deacon to the Synod."

(Remark: Though the number of delegates to classis would by the change suggested in recommendation "2" be increased by one-third; the number of delegates to synods would be decreased by one-fourth. Your committee does not consider the change in the case of classes objectionable, and the change as it would pertain to synods must be considered advantageous, since it would make synodical gatherings less cumbersome.)

C. That Synod urge all the churches, but especially the larger churches, to acknowledge and to reactivate the office of deacon on the local level and according to Biblical principles.

Grounds:

1. Especially in larger churches, in which elders and deacons meet separately, the office of deacon has doubtless deteriorated, so that in the mind of the congregation, if not in fact, the work of this office pertains almost exclusively to the physical and temporal aspects of the existence of the church.

2. If deacons are to function properly in major assemblies they should be acquainted with various aspects of the work of the church on the local level.

III. Synod refer the above recommendations (under II) to the synod of 1968 for final decision.

1. The changes proposed in the recommendations above involve an important change in the structure and/or organization of the major assemblies of the church. This should not be made without proper consideration by the church as a whole.

2. Hence, the entire church, and especially the consistories and the classes, should be given ample opportunity to consider the changes recommended and, if deemed necessary, to report reaction to Synod.

IV. That the reporter of this committee, Dr. Melvin Hugen, be permitted to represent the committee before Synod and its advisory committee.

Respectfully submitted,

N. J. Monsma, chairman

M. D. Hugen, secretary

H. Baker

J. De Jager

P. Y. De Jong

J. Geuzebroek

REPORT 25

THE BOARD OF HOME MISSIONS

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

I. INTRODUCTION

The first and most important part of this report is a profound gratitude to God for His abundant blessing given to the home missions work of the church. No one can review the events of 1966 without being moved to express thanksgiving to God for the amazing things which He has done. The gospel which we were privileged to proclaim has brought in a harvest of souls by the power of His Spirit. For every opportunity there have been men and women who came forward to give themselves without reservation in the work of the Lord. The resources with which the work was promoted were not lacking.

We are grateful to the churches and every member within the churches for their prayers, day and night, on behalf of the mission to Canada and the United States. We are thankful for loving concern for the spread of the gospel which was evident in letters and in personal responses to the forward thrust of this part of the Lord's army. We thank God for the image of the church with its tenacious loyalty to the Word of God and its stubborn allegiance to the historic Christian faith. We thank God for people, great and small, who gave sacrificially and prayerfully for the spiritual revival of this our Judea.

With this report we would like to share with you the excitement of our task as God's agents in the building of the Church on the urban frontier in Canada and the United States. In every field we have had the privilege of partnership in the proclamation of the gospel to those who have never heard it before. In every field we have been privileged to witness the power of God at work in the hearts of men as people came forward for instruction and thereafter made profession of faith. There is no joy which can compare to the delight of those who see the heritage which they had enjoyed all their life in the Church, become the exciting new possession of a seeking people. God is at work in our lands. Where there was nothing, God is making something. Where there was no faith, God has brought forth abundant life. The lost are being gathered in. People without a church background are being added to the church rolls. Furthermore, those who come into the church are hungry for the truth and eager to learn all they can. They are also taking their place in the community in which they live. Recently one of the members of a mission church was selected as "The Religious Young Man Of The Year" in a large city.

With this report we would share with you our concern for the survival of Canada and the United States. In the U.S.A. the population has

reached 198 million and one person is added to that figure every 13 seconds.* In the U.S.A. there are more than 100 million unchurched people and this figure is growing by one person every 21 seconds. There are other characteristics which mark our lands. 75% of the people live in the cities and the rapid urbanization of our countries is making a tremendous impact on life in general and on the church in particular. The problems of the inner city are symptoms of a society which is spiritually sick. We must address ourselves to that society where the sickness is most evident. The church can no longer afford to open its doors and wait for the people to come. It must go out and establish contact with men in the streets and the market places of the land. Our land is characterized by an abysmal dearth of religious knowledge. We are fast becoming a nation of religious illiterates. Another mark of our times is the continuing deterioration of Protestantism. The churches have lost their message and are giving stones for bread. Less than 20% of registered church people are in church on Sunday morning and less than 5% on Sunday evening.** In the state of Hawaii, it is reported less than 1% of the population is classified as evangelical Christian.

A prominent evangelist who has been traveling in the U.S.A. and Canada for many years says, "The people of our land are empty, lonely, guilty, afraid of death." Among students alone there is a suicide every half hour and an attempted suicide every 15 minutes. We may not ignore the challenge of the campus. These young people are leaders of tomorrow. They will be the consultants to business, industry and government. The answer to the difficulty lies in: (1) the authoritative proclamation of the gospel, (2) the living of a holy life in the community of men, (3) a consuming love for man, (4) a compassionate social concern, (5) and a contagious excitement regarding the gospel of Jesus Christ.

This task is especially ours as a Christian Reformed Church: (1) God uses the small and the weak agencies of this earth to set the world upside down (or rather right side up). (2) The Christian Reformed Church is one of the few churches which has a remarkable loyalty unanimity and heritage.

The challenge which faces the church today is greater than any in the history of Christianity. The last stand of Christianity is here in Canada and the U.S.A. The question which faces the church is one of survival, because that nation which forsakes its God will perish. Looking at the whole matter selfishly, we would like to think that this would be the kind of a land where our children and grandchildren can grow up in freedom and in faith, but it is not guaranteed. It will be that kind of a place only if the church which is true to the faith will undertake to increase its efforts and by the power of God undertake to do the impossible—rebuild the spiritual foundations in Canada and the United States.

To this end we solicit your prayers and your support for the work of our church as it attacks the bastions of godlessness within our lands.

*Christian Science Monitor, Feb. 10, 1967, page 1.

**Dr. Billy Graham, Address in Miami, Dec. 6, 1966.

II. ADMINISTRATIVE AND BOARD PERSONNEL—1966

A. The Board of Home Missions is pleased to welcome Mr. Martin Hamstra who will fill the office of Church Relations. There has been a tragic lack of information available to our church people. They have a right to know what their prayers and their gifts are accomplishing in this mission to America. Mr. Hamstra will have more than a full-time job in filling that need.

- Executive Secretary—Rev. Marvin C. Baarman
- Field Secretary—Rev. Nelson Vanderzee
- Assistant Field Secretary—Mr. David Bosscher
- Minister of Evangelism—Rev. Wesley Smedes
- Treasurer - Business Manager—Mr. Gerard J. Borst
- Church Relations—Mr. Martin Hamstra
- Office Manager - Accountant—Mr. Donald Zwier

B. Board Members

Classis	Delegates	Alternates
Alberta North.....	Rev. Aric Leegwater.....	Rev. J. Van Hemert
Alberta South.....	Mr. Jack Havinga.....	Mr. D. Timmermans
British Columbia.....	Rev. B. Den Herder.....	Rev. J. Zwaanstra
Cadillac.....	Rev. W. J. Dykstra*.....	Rev. Alfred Hannink
Central California.....	Rev. B. Den Ouden.....	Rev. Frank De Jong
California South.....	Rev. T. Hofman.....	Rev. O. Duistermars
Chatham.....	Rev. N. Numan*.....	Rev. Carl Tuyl
Chicago North.....	Rev. John Draisma*.....	Rev. J. P. Boonstra
Chicago South.....	Rev. Harvey Baas*.....	Rev. Gerrit De Young
Eastern Ontario.....	Rev. Dirk Habermehl.....	Rev. H. Uittenbosch
Florida.....	Rev. Donald Wisse.....	Rev. S. De Waal
Grand Rapids East.....	Rev. Lawrence Veltkamp*.....	Rev. Marvin Beelen
Grand Rapids South.....	Rev. Jack Vander Laan*.....	Rev. L. Bossenbroek
Grand Rapids West.....	Rev. Nelson Veltman*.....	Rev. Paul Vermaire
Grandville.....	Rev. Edward Knott*.....	Rev. Harvey Bultje
Hackensack.....	Rev. W. Boer.....	Rev. D. Griffioen
Hamilton.....	Rev. D. C. Los.....	
Holland.....	Rev. W. Hofman*.....	Rev. G. Klouw
Hudson.....	Rev. R. Opperwall.....	Rev. James Kok
Illiana.....	Rev. J. Sprik*.....	Rev. E. Dykema
Kalamazoo.....	Rev. Wm. Huyser*.....	Rev. Ronald Peterson
Lake Eric.....	Rev. G. Vanderhill*.....	Rev. Wayne Gritter
Minnesota North.....	Rev. Peter Vis.....	Rev. R. Graves
Minnesota South.....	Rev. Henry Bajema.....	Rev. A. Van Schouwen
Muskegon.....	Rev. E. Boer*.....	Rev. Wm. Brink
Northcentral Iowa.....	Rev. F. Einfeld.....	Rev. John Riemersma
Orange City.....	Rev. C. C. Spoor.....	Rev. K. R. Slager
Pacific.....	Rev. Bernard Byma.....	Rev. John W. Maas
Pella.....	Rev. J. E. Versluys.....	Rev. T. Brouwer
Rocky Mountain.....	Rev. T. Verseput.....	Rev. Al Ver Burg
Sioux Center.....	Rev. John T. Ebbers.....	Rev. James Huizenga
Toronto.....	Dr. R. Kooistra.....	Rev. J. J. H. Hofland
Wisconsin.....	Rev. T. C. Vanden Heuvel.....	Rev. J. Entingh
Zeeland.....	Rev. H. C. Van Wyk, Jr.*.....	Rev. H. G. Arnold

Members at Large

Classis	Delegates	Alternates
Central U.S.A.....	Mr. Jack Van Eerden*	Mr. Theo H. Monsma
	Mr. John Simerink*	
	Mr. Harold Soper*	Dr. Robert Plekker
	Mr. J. Spalink*	Mr. M. Medema
	Mr. Peter Van Putten*	Mr. Jay Volkers
Western Canada.....	Mr. M. Kwantes.....	
Western U.S.A.....	Mr. Harold Camping.....	Mr. John Vande Beek
Eastern Canada.....	Mr. Harry Van Velle.....	Mr. George Witvoet
Eastern U.S.A.....	Mr. Peter Damsma.....	Mr. J. Wynbeek

C. Officers of the Board

Rev. Nelson Veltman, President, Rev. L. Veltkamp, Vice-president, Mr. Jack Van Eerden, Assistant Treasurer.

D. Sub Committees of the Board

1. Church Extension Committee: Revs. N. Veltman, L. Veltkamp, Jack Van der Laan.

2. Evangelism Committee: Revs. E. Boer, Wm. Huyser, Wm. Dykstra, G. Vanderhill. Campus Ministry Sub-Committee — Evangelism Committee members plus Revs. A. Hoksbergen, D. Postema, L. Sweetman, Dr. S. Dykstra, Mr. D. Huisman.

3. Finance Committee: Rev. E. Knott, Mr. H. Soper, Mr. Jack Van Eerden, Mr. J. J. Simerink, Mr. J. Spalink, Mr. P. Van Putten.

4. Indian Committee: Revs. W. Brink, W. Hofman, H. C. Van Wyk.

5. Special Fields Committee: Revs. J. Draisma, H. Sprik, H. Baas, Dr. R. Plekker.

6. Personnel Committee: Executive Secretary, Field Secretary, Assistant Field Secretary, Minister of Evangelism, Treasurer.

Vander Vlies Memorial Missionary Training Fund Sub-Committee: Rev. M. C. Baarman, Mr. G. J. Borst, Mr. P. Elve, Mr. H. De Witt.

III. REGULAR URBAN MISSION, U.S.A.

A. Changes in Personnel:

1. Departures from the staff

a. Rev. Ralph Bronkema left the field of Orlando, Florida, to take a position as chaplain in the U.S. Air Force.

b. Rev. Frank De Jong, veteran home missionary serving Fresno, California, obtained emeritation in September of 1966, having served the cause of Home Missions for approximately 25 years. We thank God for the excellent services of Rev. De Jong and pray that the Lord may grant him many blessings in his retirement.

c. Rev. Geoge Lau was granted a leave of absence from the Crenshaw Church in Los Angeles, California, to pursue a course of study at Calvin Seminary.

d. Rev. Bernard Mulder accepted a call to Dorr, Michigan, and left the field at Poughkeepsie, New York.

e. Rev. Adrian Van Anandel accepted an appointment to the Veterans Administration Hospital Chaplaincy and left the field at South St. Paul, Minnesota.

f. Rev. Duane Vander Brug accepted the call to serve the Inner City field at Lawndale, Chicago, under Classis Chicago North, and left the field at Richton Park, Illinois.

g. Rev. Roger Van Harn accepted the call to serve the church at Columbus, Ohio, and left the field at Indian Harbour Beach, Florida.

*Indicates members of the Executive Committee

2. *Accretions to the staff*

- a. Rev. Alan A. Arkema accepted the call to serve the home mission field at East Islip, New York.
- b. Rev. Ren Broekhuizen accepted the call to serve the field at Washington, Pennsylvania.
- c. Rev. Wayne De Young accepted the call to serve the field at Fairbanks, Alaska.
- d. Rev. Jacob Hekman accepted the call to serve the field at Hayward, California.
- e. Rev. Gerrit Rientjes accepted the call to serve the field at Wanamassa, New Jersey.
- f. Rev. Donald Van Beek accepted the call to serve the field at South St. Paul, Minnesota.
- g. Rev. Donald Van Gent accepted the call to serve the field at South Salt Lake City, Utah.
- h. Rev. Duane Visser accepted the call to serve the field at Fresno, California.

3. *Transfers*

- a. Rev. Fred Bultman was transferred from East Islip to the new field at Syracuse, New York.
- b. Rev. John W. Dykstra was transferred from Toadlena, New Mexico, to the field at Dayton, Ohio.
- c. Rev. Gerald P. Hubers was transferred from Riverside, California, to Indian Harbour Beach, Florida.
- d. Rev. Jay C. Vander Ark was transferred from Hayward, California, to Boulder, Colorado.
- e. Rev. Richard Wezeman was transferred from Fairbanks, Alaska to Orlando, Florida.

4. *Stated Supplies*

- a. Rev. Mike Vander Pol completed one year as Stated Supply in Honolulu, Hawaii, with the cooperation of the Board of Foreign Missions (delay in route to Taiwan).
- b. Rev. Dr. Ralph Bronkema served as Stated Supply in Vernon, B.C., Canada
- c. Rev. C. Holtrop served at Stated Supply in Grande Prairie, Alta., Canada.
- d. Rev. Elton Holtrop served as Stated Supply in Hayward, California.
- e. Rev. William Van de Kieft served as Stated Supply in Honolulu, Hawaii.

B. *Fields, U.S.A.*

The statistics contained in this report are computed as of December 31, 1966. AM worship service is the average attendance for the year.

1. **Akron, Ohio:** Rev. Henry T. Karsten, missionary pastor. Opened 1963. Families 16. Sunday School 75. Vacation Bible School 226. AM Worship Service 67. The highlight of this year was the completion of their new church building and parsonage.

2. **Anchorage, Alaska:** Rev. William Heynen, missionary pastor. Opened 1953. Families 22. Vacation Bible School 225. Sunday School 107. AM Worship Service 150. Catechism 40. Adults preparing for membership 8. Community Bible Class 30. The Anchorage Church held its own evangelistic crusade. More than one half of the families of the church are engaged in evangelism visitation calling. Bible classes are held in several homes. Completion of the church building is going on as funds and laborers are available. An active program for young people is in progress. Many community families attend regularly.

3. **Binghamton, New York:** Rev. Peter Vermaat, missionary pastor. Opened 1964. Families 12. Sunday School 30, Vacation Bible School. 126. Adults preparing for membership 4. AM Worship Service 46. It is worthy of note that this group has grown in numbers and in strength even though they are meeting in temporary quarters. The goal for 1967 is the construction of a church building and a new thrust into the community with the gospel. It is significant that only 12 of the children enrolled in D.V.B.S. were from Christian Reformed homes.

4. **Boca Raton, Florida:** Rev. John Schuring, missionary pastor. Opened 1963. Families 12. AM Worship Service 60. Sunday School 38. Vacation Bible School 40. Catechism 13. Adults preparing for membership 4. Community Bible Class 24. The Boca Raton Church has a regular radio program. Rev. Schuring serves as chaplain to the student body of the Atlantic University in Boca Raton. In view for 1967 is the construction of a church building. The group in Boca Raton serves a large number of winter visitors. The church and its pastor have made a remarkable impression on the community.

5. **Boulder, Colorado:** Rev. Jay C. Vander Ark, missionary pastor. Opened 1960. Families 20. Sunday School 75. Vacation Bible School 110. Catechism 24. Community Bible Class 18. AM Worship Service 76. The church is located advantageously for a ministry to the University campus. The goals for 1967 include a modification to the parsonage and a ministry to develop internal strength in the congregation.

6. **Champaign, Illinois:** Rev. Boelo Boelens, missionary pastor. Opened 1956. Families 16. Sunday School 15. Campus discussion groups. The Champaign Church has a dual ministry to the University and to the community. During the regular school term the church building is used to its maximum capacity. The missionary pastor has many opportunities to address the community by means of television and radio. The work on campus has been remarkably successful.

7. **Chula Vista, California:** Rev. A. Paul Veenstra, missionary pastor. Opened 1960. Families 36. Sunday School 158. Vacation Bible School 400. Community Bible Class 17. Adults preparing for membership 7. Catechism 68. AM Worship Service 145. The Chula Vista Church has held its own evangelistic crusade. More than 300 were active in visitation evangelism program. A regular feature of the church program is the visitor's Sunday. The church was organized in 1962. Church and parsonage were built in 1964. The next step will be that of calling church status.

8. **Dayton, Ohio:** Rev. John Dykstra, missionary pastor. Opened 1961. Families 12. Sunday School 32. Vacation Bible School 165. AM Worship Service 43. The Dayton Church has its church building and it is located at the junction of several suburban housing areas. The church is in a period of transition and is giving much prayer and work to the matter of internal development.

9. **East Islip, New York:** Rev. Alan A. Arkema, missionary pastor. Opened 1957. Families 28. Sunday School 68. Vacation Bible School 126. Catechism 40. Adults preparing for membership 4. AM Worship Service 88. The goals for 1967 are internal growth, community outreach and progress toward calling church status.

10. **East Tucson (Elim), Arizona:** Rev. John Huiuzenga, missionary pastor. Opened 1965. Families 13. Sunday School 35. Catechism 15. Adults preparing for membership 1. AM Worship Service 44. Services are also extended to winter visitors and to servicemen in the area. The church is located 13 miles from the Bethel Chr. Ref. Church and is on the growing edge (Southwest) of the city. The church is meeting in temporary facilities.

11. **El Paso, Texas:** Rev. Roy Boeskool, missionary pastor. Opened 1960. Families 9. Sunday School 54. Vacation Bible School 155. Community Bible Class 13. AM Worship Service 46. This field has more than doubled in number of families in spite of a fantastic turn-over in membership. The ministry to the service men stationed in the area accounts for a large part of the turn-over. At the same time this mobility of population is becoming a characteristic of our times, and it is reflected in almost every field. The Lord has performed miracles in El Paso. The missionary and his family are carrying an especially heavy load because of the unique demands of the field.

12. **Fairbanks, Alaska:** Rev. Wayne De Young, missionary pastor. Opened 1956. Families 10. Sunday School 50. Vacation Bible School 80. Catechism 18. Adults preparing for membership 1. Community Bible Class 12. AM Worship Service 45. The Fairbanks Church carries a heavy responsibility to both the community and the servicemen. Rev. De Young is just beginning his ministry in this area and has already made inroads into the community. A program of "family

night" affairs has been instituted. Counseling for the Billy Graham film "The Restless Ones" was also undertaken.

13. **Flanders Valley, New Jersey:** Rev. David G. Zandstra, missionary pastor. Opened 1965. Families 12. Sunday School 30. Vacation Bible School 62. Catechism 15. AM Worship Service 58. A church site has been purchased and the group looks forward to the construction of a church and parsonage in 1967.

14. **Fountain Valley, California:** Rev. Roger G. Timmerman, missionary pastor. Opened 1965. Families 16. Sunday School 35. Catechism 7. Adults preparing for membership 1. Four-fifths of the congregation is active in the visitation program. AM Worship Service 65. In cooperation with the Classis of Southern California a church site has been purchased. The high cost of the property is a barometer of the tremendous potential of the area. The group is meeting in a Seventh-Day Adventist church temporarily. A church building is the next objective so that an effective address to a specific community can begin.

15. **Fresno, California:** Rev. Duane A. Visser, missionary pastor. Opened 1963. Families 30. Sunday School 87. Vacation Bible School 130. Catechism 16. Adults preparing for membership 6. Community Bible Class 18. AM Worship Service 111. The Fresno congregation has had a large number of families moving in and out, as is the case with most of the fields on the Urban frontier. In spite of this there has been a steady progress toward the status of calling church. This field was begun by Rev. F. De Jong. Rev. Visser is in Fresno on his first assignment after Seminary and graduate studies.

16. **Fort Collins, Colorado:** Rev. Gerrit B. Boerfyn, missionary pastor. Opened 1963. Families 29. Sunday School 72. Vacation Bible School 106. Catechism 17. Adults preparing for membership 4. AM Worship Service 84. The Immanuel Church was formerly part of the Evangelical and Reformed denomination. Some extensive improvements have been made to the church building. The Immanuel Church has an opportunity to minister to the student body of Colorado State University. The congregation is moving steadily toward the goal of calling church.

17. **Grand Forks, Minnesota:** Rev. Peter Lagerwey, missionary pastor. Opened 1963. Families 16. Sunday School 62. Vacation Bible School 56. Catechism 15. Adults preparing for membership 3. Community Bible Class 30. AM Worship Service 59. The Grand Forks congregation has a stake in the ministry to the campus of the University of North Dakota, across the river in Grand Forks, North Dakota.

18. **Hayward, California:** Rev. Jacob Hekman, missionary pastor. Opened 1959. Families 24. Sunday School 112. Vacation Bible School 82. Catechism 22. Adults preparing for membership 3. AM Worship Service 103. The Hayward Church has its second home missionary. The first missionary was Rev. Jay C. Vander Ark. The congregation is building an educational wing to the church plant. This is being done with volunteer labor on the part of the congregation. The church is progressing nicely along the road to calling church status.

19. **Indian Harbour Beach, Florida:** Rev. Gerald Hubers, missionary pastor. Opened 1959. Families 20. Sunday School 85. Vacation Bible School 125. Catechism 15. AM Worship Service 65. Kindergarten 24. The missionary has an effective address to the community by radio each week. The community is located near Cape Kennedy and has a unique ministry to the bustling space center. Rev. Hubers is the second home missionary to serve this field. Rev. Van Harn preceded him in this field.

20. **Iowa City, Iowa:** Rev. James Kok, missionary pastor. Opened 1960. Families 35. Sunday School 150. Vacation Bible School 138. Visitation program which is designed to follow up on V.B.S. prospects is working. Numerous small groups meet for Bible study with the intention of inviting non-Christians. The ministry in Iowa City is directed toward the community, the campus of the University of Iowa, and the University Hospital. An extensive mailing ministry is also maintained. (Because the character of the University town, ten of the families are non-resident at the present time.)

21. **Jackson, Michigan:** Rev. Jerome Batts, missionary pastor. Opened 1957. Families 31. Sunday School 71. Vacation Bible School 100. Catechism 24. AM

Worship Service 101. The congregation has its second home missionary and is making good progress toward becoming a calling church.

22. **Mason City, Iowa:** Rev. Wendell Gebben, missionary pastor. Opened 1960. Families 11. Sunday School 41. Vacation Bible School 60. Catechism 6. Adults preparing for membership 2. AM Worship Service 59. Rev. Gebben has an opportunity to address the community by way of literature and by means of radio. The first professions of faith have been a source of encouragement to the congregation.

23. **Minneapolis (Calvary), Minnesota:** Rev. Dirk H. Aardsma, missionary pastor. Opened 1963. Families 37. Sunday School 110. Vacation Bible School 150. Catechism 34. Adults preparing for membership 3. AM Worship Service 143. Adult baptisms and professions of faith have given encouragement to the congregation. The congregation is organized and has been using their new church building for more than a year. Progress toward the goal of calling church is noted.

24. **Minneapolis (New Brighton), Minnesota:** Rev. Arthur J. Stienstra, missionary pastor. Opened 1965. Families 40. Sunday School 85. Catechism 24. Adults preparing for membership 3. Community Bible Classes 30. AM Worship Service 134. The construction of a parsonage and a church building are underway. The church was organized on March 30, 1966.

25. **Norfolk, Virginia:** Rev. John C. Rickers, missionary pastor. Opened 1962. Families 12. Sunday School 90. Vacation Bible School 105. Catechism 10. Community Bible Class 35. AM Worship Service 65. The Bay View Christian Reformed Church has an active program. As in all of the fields, the challenge for 1967 lies in the numerous unchurched people who are attending the worship services. The church is located a short distance away from the Norfolk Servicemen's Center and provides not only a place for the servicemen to worship but more important, a place where they can be used in the work of the church.

26. **Ogden, Utah:** Rev. Ronald Slater, missionary pastor. Opened 1958. Families 22. Sunday School 120. Vacation Bible School 160. Catechism 9. Adults preparing for membership 3. Bible Class 15. AM Worship Service 98. In this strongly Mormon community there have been dramatic results. The "second hand" church building is fast becoming too small. Retired people as well as young people have served the Ogden Church as volunteers in the evangelism program.

27. **Orlando, Florida:** Rev. Richard Wezeman, missionary pastor. Opened 1959. Families 15. Sunday School 50. Catechism 26. Adults preparing for membership 4. AM Worship Service 51. Christian School: kindergarten, first and second grades—22 pupils. A mailing ministry is maintained. Rev. Wezeman is the second home missionary in the Orlando field. Rev. R. Bronkema, his predecessor left to serve the Air Force as chaplain. The field was vacant for several months during the period of transition. The church was originally located on the far west side of Orlando, beyond the growing edge. The city is now growing out to the church property.

28. **Portland (Oak Hills), Oregon:** Rev. Howard Spaan, missionary pastor. Opened 1965. Families 14. Sunday School 54. Vacation Bible School 77. Catechism 22 (52 weeks a year). Adults preparing for membership, several each month. AM Worship Service 63. The congregation is meeting in their new church building. The church was organized in 1966. An active program for community outreach is being carried on. Church growth is largely from the community around the church.

29. **Quincy, Washington:** Rev. John Roorda, missionary pastor. Opened 1963. Families 18. Sunday School 62, including a special Sunday School of Mexican laborers in the area. Vacation Bible School 35. Bible Class 19. Class for Profession of Faith 3. AM Worship Service 65. A full church program is maintained. The congregation was organized in 1964. A beautiful but modest second hand church building was purchased by the group in 1966.

30. **Davenport, Iowa:** Rev. Samuel Vander Jagt, missionary pastor. Opened 1965. Families 10. Sunday School 28. Catechism 4. Adults preparing for membership 3. Community Bible Class 7. AM Worship Service 45. The Quint Cities congregation is meeting in temporary quarters. A church site has been pur-

chased and the congregation looks forward to the construction of their church building in 1967.

31. **Riverside, California:** Vacant. Opened 1960. Families 34. Sunday School 82. Vacation Bible School 136. Catechism 23. AM Worship Service 115. The Riverside congregation is moving steadily toward the goal of calling church status.

32. **Salem, Oregon:** Rev. Bernard Niemeyer, missionary pastor. Opened 1961. Families 19. Sunday School 80. Vacation Bible School 90. Catechism 20. AM Worship Service 77. Special projects designed to address the young people with the message of the Word of God are held. The church is organized and they are meeting in their own facilities. They look forward to the possibility of adding a Sunday School classroom unit to their church plant in 1967.

33. **Salt Lake City (Immanuel), Utah:** Rev. Donald Van Gent, missionary pastor. Opened 1960. Families 17. Sunday School 38. Catechism 56 including an adult Bible Study Group. AM Worship Service 69. The Immanuel congregation has purchased a church site and looks forward to the erection of their church building in 1967. A mailing ministry and a visitation program is operating out of temporary quarters. A Christian School is operative with 90 pupils, (in conjunction with the First Church).

34. **Scottsdale, Arizona:** Rev. John F. Hollebeek, missionary pastor. Opened 1964. Families 28. Sunday School 74. Vacation Bible School 114. Catechism 30. Adults preparing for membership 2. Community Bible Class 26. AM Worship Service 112. The Palm Lane congregation is worshipping in their own beautiful sanctuary. The church is organized and well on the way toward becoming a calling church. From the day the church was opened they have enjoyed an excellent rapport with the community.

35. **South St. Paul, Minnesota:** Rev. Donald J. Van Beek, missionary pastor. Opened 1959. Families 20. Sunday School 70. Vacation Bible School 90. Catechism 25. AM Worship Service 79. Rev. Van Beek came to this post during 1966 to take the place of Rev. A. Van Andel who entered the Veterans Administration Hospital Chaplaincy. The new missionary has initiated a program which is designed to reach out into the community. The church is organized and in its own church building.

36. **South Windsor, Connecticut:** Rev. James A. Bonnema, missionary pastor. Opened 1962. Families 21. Sunday School 75. Vacation Bible School 95. Catechism 6. Adults preparing for membership 4. Community Bible Class 40. AM Worship Service 79. The congregation is active in the evangelistic effort of the church. Films and a film crusade have had encouraging results. The congregation was organized in January of 1966. They are worshipping in their new church building.

37. **St. Louis, Missouri:** Rev. Henry M. De Rooy, missionary pastor. Opened 1965. Families 10. Sunday School 68. Vacation Bible School 111. Catechism 8. Adults preparing for membership - more than two per week. AM Worship Service 46. Six families are receiving instruction and looking forward to joining the church. A church site has been purchased and a canvass of the new area has begun. The missionary has been privileged to address the community on radio and television. The congregation looks forward to the construction of their church building and parsonage in 1967.

38. **Syracuse, New York:** Rev. Fred Bultman, missionary pastor. Opened 1966. Families 5. Sunday School 26. Catechism 6. AM Worship Service 31. This field is only a few months old and already there is a reaching out into the community in the confidence that the Lord builds His church. The congregation is planning for future location. They worship in adequate but temporary quarters.

39. **Tacoma, Washington:** Rev. Rits Tadema, missionary pastor. Opened 1959. Families 24. Sunday School 120. Vacation Bible School 220. Catechism 20. Adults preparing for membership 5. Community Bible Class 16. AM Worship Service 164. Volunteer evangelistic assistance has been available to the Tacoma Church. The Tacoma Church has a large ministry to servicemen in the area.

40. **Terre Haute, Indiana:** Rev. John A. Houseward, missionary pastor. Opened 1960. Families 10. Sunday School 50. Vacation Bible School 87. Catechism 24.

Adults preparing for membership 1. Three weekday Bible Classes - total 33 in attendance. AM Worship Service 34. Approximately one third of the congregation is active in an evangelism visitation program. The group is unorganized and is meeting in temporary quarters.

41. **Toledo, Ohio:** Rev. Earl S. Holkeboer, missionary pastor. Opened 1961. Families 30. Sunday School 122. Vacation Bible School 131. Catechism 36. Adults preparing for membership 5. Community Bible Class 20. AM Worship Service 98. The congregation was organized in June of 1963. The church was built in 1962 and the parsonage was acquired in 1961.

42. **Visalia, California:** Rev. Bartel N. Huizenga, missionary pastor. Opened 1965. Families 29. Sunday School 100. Catechism 24. Adults preparing for membership 2. Community Bible Classes; adults 20, young people 15. AM Worship Service 124. The pastor has a radio broadcast, "Invitation to Worship." Nearly all of the congregation is involved in the evangelism program of the church. The church was organized in September of 1965. Plans for the construction of a church building should mature early in 1967.

43. **Wanamassa, New Jersey:** Rev. Gerrit Rientjes, missionary pastor. Opened (reopened) in late 1966. Families 12. Sunday School 18. Vacation Bible School 26. Catechism 9. Community Bible Class 12. AM Worship Service 38. An evangelistic program is underway. The Wanamassa field reverted to the Board of Home Missions because of an emergency. The task before us is to rebuild the ministry of this church and push forward in the confidence that the Lord will build His church.

44. **Webster, New York:** Rev. Edwin Walhout, missionary pastor. Opened 1965. Families 15. Sunday School 50. Vacation Bible School 50. Catechism 19. Adults preparing for membership 2. AM Worship Service 57. The Webster Church has a newspaper evangelism program and a monthly film program. The Webster Church is unorganized. A church site has been purchased and they look forward to the construction of their church building in 1967. They meet in temporary quarters at present.

45. **Washington, Pennsylvania:** Rev. Ren. O. Broekhuizen, missionary pastor. Opened 1964. Families 18. Sunday School 39. Catechism 6. Adults preparing for membership 2. Community Bible Class 10. AM Worship Service 67. Washington, Pa., is a church built by the Lord entirely from a non-Dutch community. It originated with the Back to God Hour response and has since grown. The church is unorganized. They have acquired a church site and hope to build their sanctuary in 1967.

C. *General observations — Regular Urban Missions, U.S.A.*

1. All the home mission fields have two Sunday worship services plus an outreach into rest homes, jails, and other facilities in the community. Temporarily one field has only a morning worship attendance due to extenuating circumstances. The morning worship attendance figure is listed above because it reflects the visitors and potential members in attendance. Some fields have 10 visiting families to every twenty member families.

2. The home mission churches have a high percentage of members who are from unchurched or non-Christian Reformed background. Washington, Pennsylvania is 100% non-Christian Reformed in background. The lower end of the list finds home mission churches with at least one fourth of their membership drawn from the community.

3. All of the mission churches have a program which is oriented to the community and a scriptural address to those who do not know Christ as their Savior. Every legitimate means is employed to arrest secular man with the compelling urgency of the gospel.

4. The home missionaries have enjoyed the excellent cooperation of the Back to God Hour in the new areas into which they enter. The Back to

God Hour has provided an excellent image of the Christian Reformed Church. In some fields the fruits of the Back to God Hour broadcast are extensive.

5. Every home mission field has an evangelism visitation program and a mailing ministry. The Back to God Hour "Family Altar" and "The Way" are used extensively in reaching out to the community. Tract distribution and newspaper evangelism are also used. Each missionary is encouraged to use approved means in meeting the particular needs of his area.

6. Most of the home mission fields have a summer evangelism program which includes a team of young people under the Summer Workshop In Missions (SWIM).

D. Fields graduated to calling status:

Richton Park, Illinois, opened in 1958, calling church 1966. 31 families.

E. Waiting list of fields to be opened:

1. *Suggested Fields:* Those to which our attention has been drawn by residents of the area, by consistories, classes, individuals, Back to God Hour, etc.

This listing establishes no priority, and is not to be construed as a guarantee of the opening of any field herein listed.

Albany, New York	Fairfax, County, Virginia	Princeton, New Jersey
Anderson, South Carolina	Farmington, New Mexico	Providence, Rhode Island
Atlanta, Georgia	Fort Dodge, Kansas	Redding, California
Boise, Idaho	Fort Meyers, Florida	Riviera Beach, Florida
Boston, Massachusetts	Fort Smith, Arkansas	San Antonio, Texas
Bridgeport, Connecticut	Houghton, Michigan	Santa Barbara, California
Buffalo, New York	Houston, Texas	Santa Cruz, California
Corona, California	Jacksonville, Florida	Tampa, Florida
Corvallis, Oregon	Lincoln, Nebraska	Trenton, New Jersey
Dallas, Texas	Little Rock, Arkansas	Vancouver, B.C. Canada
Duluth, Minnesota	Longview, California	Wichita, Kansas
Durham, North Carolina	North Glen, Denver, Colo.	Winston Salem,
Easton, Pennsylvania	North Sacramento, California	North Carolina
Eugene, Oregon	Port Jervis, New York	

2. *Surveyed Fields:* These are those concerning which sufficient data has been obtained so as to indicate possibility of eventual entrance. This listing establishes no priority, and is not to be construed as a guarantee of the opening of any field herein listed.

Baltimore, Maryland	Livermore, California
North Seattle, Washington	Utica, New York
Flagstaff, Arizona	

3. *Fields Eligible for Opening:* Fields will be chosen from this list for opening in the current year, if and when funds are available. It is understood, however, that some flexibility of priority must be retained to allow for emergencies and exceptional opportunities and needs.

Bakersfield, California
Bellevue, Washington (East Seattle)
Yakima, Washington

The following fields have already been opened:

- Syracuse, New York (opened January 1, 1967)
- Wanamassa, New Jersey (reopened 1967)
- Windsor, Ontario (opened January 1, 1967)

F. Special Considerations:

1. *Washington, D.C.:*

Your Board of Home Missions has taken the following action regarding Washington, D.C.

a. It has decided to acquiesce in the return of the Washington, D.C. Church to home mission status after the Maryland Church has been formally organized.

b. It has decided to assign a home missionary to the home mission church in the District of Columbia and assume financial support for this home missionary. This to take effect in 1968.

c. It has decided to grant a loan of \$70,000 to the Washington D.C. Church to be conveyed over a three year period.

The grounds for this action are to be found in the following items:

a. In recent years the community in which the D.C. Church is located, has undergone drastic change. The present church building is too small, necessitating double services which is a severe hindrance to community evangelism.

b. The Washington D.C. Church presents a convincing case for evangelistic program and potential in the D.C. area. The people in the D.C. Church have built a significant ministry to the community over a period of many years. The church has a good image and its members are well received when they make their continuing contacts in the neighborhood.

c. The maintenance of our witness in the nation's capitol is in accord with the Inner City Policy (cf. Acts 1966, p. 83-84) and warrants substantial denominational assistance.

2. *Los Angeles, California:*

Your Board of Home Missions has taken the following reaction regarding Los Angeles, California.

a. The Board of Home Missions reaffirms the urgency of maintaining the witness of the Christian Reformed Church in Los Angeles. The present Los Angeles Church program involves many Negroes from the community, and the consistory already includes Negro members. Abandonment of this witness is unthinkable.

b. The Board recognizes the responsibility of the denomination to provide the Los Angeles Church with some assistance to make possible the maintenance of the program in Los Angeles, despite the residence of most of the congregation in the Torrence area. Here again the Inner City Policy declares our denominational interest in the retention of such a ministry.

c. Because of all this the Board of Home Missions decided to place a home missionary in the Inner City field at Los Angeles and assume the financial support of the home missionary. This would take effect in 1968.

d. The Board also approved a loan in the amount of \$120,000 to the

Los Angeles Church, to be conveyed to the Los Angeles Church over a four year period.

IV. INDIAN FIELD

A. *Goals and Objectives*

As an agent of the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church your Board of Home Missions is attempting to accomplish the following goals.

1. We aim to use every legitimate means to bring the gospel to the Indians on the reservations and those dispersed in the large metropolitan areas in the West. To do this effectively we have begun a training program for missionaries, introducing them to the latest methods and equipment for teaching. The Navajo Radio broadcast has received more attention. New methods for establishing contact with the Indians have been explored.

2. We seek to integrate the Indian mission more closely into the normal pattern of ecclesiastical life. This involves a closer relationship to the Classis and training of Indian consistories in the responsibility of membership in the wide fraternity within the denomination.

3. The Board is pressing forward in an attempt to make the Indian field more indigenous. The addition of additional ordained men who are Indians is our goal. The organization of more stations into congregations with a consistory is a necessity as we build for tomorrow.

4. The Hospital Ministry, in cooperation with the Luke Society, is evidence of an increased ministry to the Indian but also a significant and fruitful ministry to the non-Indian community. Thus the specialized work of Indian missions begins to take on the character of normal outreach to the American community.

5. The boys and girls on the Indian Reservation and in Government Schools everywhere are a matter of grave concern. There are more than 6000 Indian children in these schools who are registered as "Christian Reformed." In the limited contact that we have with these children throughout the week and on Sunday, we must make the most out of this teaching situation. Ways and means are being pursued to make our ministry more effective through the use of visual aids and better teaching methods for large classes. The cooperation of the Calvin College faculty in their area of concern is deeply appreciated. The future is bright with opportunity. The past is filled with the overwhelming evidence of God's blessing. We are delighted and confident in the present because God is using us in His work.

B. *Personnel*

1. It is with profound sorrow that we note the passing of Mr. Rex Natewa, veteran of 28 years as missionary to the Zuni Indians. We commend the family to the loving care of our Father in Heaven.

2. *Left during the year*

Mr. Marvin Baas left to continue education.

Grace Bitsie left to continue education.

Mr. Frank Curley left to continue education.

Mr. Boyd Garnenez left to continue education.

Mr. Roland Kamps resigned as principal of the Zuni High School.

Alberta Kuipers resigned as teacher in Zuni Elementary School.
 Ruth Moblard left because of marriage.
 Ethel Mokma left because of intended marriage.
 Mr. Clarence Tsosic resigned.
 Elvá Vos left to continue nursing.
 Emma Yazzie left to continue education.
 Mr. Jackson Yazzie left to continue education.

3. Added during year

Mr. Rex Chimoni	Zuni
Janet Anama	Rehoboth dorm.
Rev. David Doyle	Crown Point
Mr. Keith Kuipers	Rehoboth School
Mrs. Keith Kuipers	Rehoboth School part time
Mr. Geronimo Martin	Sanostee
Hermína Nyhof	Shiprock
Mrs. R. Posthuma	Zuni School
Rev. Richard Venema	San Francisco
Mr. Thomas Weeda	Zuni School
Mr. Boyd Whitehorse	Pinedale-Mariano Lake

4. Transfers

	—from	—to
Gary Klumpenhower	Brigham City	Salt Lake City
Richard Kruis	Toadlena	Shiprock
Sidney Nez	Tohlakai	Toadlena
Ernest Benally	Sanostee	Tohlakai
Paul Belin	Crown Point	Toadlena

C. Fields

1. **Albuquerque, New Mexico:** Rev. Harry Van Dam, missionary pastor. Families 9. Sunday School 42. Vacation Bible School 120. Catechism 10. Weekday Bible Class 9. Worship Services AM - 39 plus 167 (students from the Indian School). PM service 31 plus 95 (students). Worship service at the T.B. Sanitarium 30 Sundays, Thursdays 20. The work at Albuquerque is a multiple ministry to the community, and to the hospitals serving Indians and others. Rev. Van Dam is also serving as Chairman of the pastor's staff at the Indian School.

2. **Brigham City, Utah:** Rev. Alfred Mulder, missionary pastor. Mr. Ivan Mulder, Miss Erma Vos, staff members. Opened 1954. Families 9. Sunday School 57. Vacation Bible School 120. Weekday Bible Class 220 (Indian Students). Adults preparing for membership 5. AM Worship Service 78. Evening Service 76. As in other "off reservation" Indian fields this one has a dual role to play. The Indian students represent the bulk of the work, the community people are the challenge for the building a worshipping community. A mailing ministry, a weekly radio broadcast, Good News clubs and the School Hospital are all part of the outreach in Brigham City.

3. **Chicago, Illinois, American Indian Chapel:** Mr. Howard Bielema, missionary. Opened 1963. Sunday School 76. Vacation Bible School 48. Catechism 21. Weekday Bible Classes 32. AM Worship Service 49, Evening 39. The activities of this field are carried on in the Isham Y.M.C.A. The program involves a wide-ministry to the needs of the Indians who find themselves at sea in a huge metropolitan area.

4. **Crown Point, New Mexico:** Rev. David Doyle, missionary. Mr. Jack Toledo, assistant. Opened 1913. Families 13. Sunday School 17. Adults preparing for membership 1. Weekday Bible Class 10. Worship Services 41. Vacation Bible School 115. Rev. Doyle has been in Crown Point since the summer of 1966. In addition to the work at Crown Point there are outposts and a ministry to Indian Students at the government school. Rev. Doyle recently completed a Berlitz course in the Navajo language and has addressed his congregation in the Navajo language on Christmas Day 1966. This is a most remarkable new development and we hope it will prove to be the pattern for the future.

5. **Farmington, New Mexico:** Rev. Sampson T. Yazzie, missionary pastor. Mr. Howard Begay, assistant. Opened 1921. Families 26. Sunday School 60. Vacation

Bible School 108. Weekday Bible Class 17. Adults preparing for membership 3. AM Worship Service 90, PM 70. The congregation was organized in April 1962. They are paying for their church building and have an active evangelistic outreach.

6. **Fort Wingate, New Mexico:** Rev. John Hofman, Jr., missionary pastor. Mr. Boyd Whitehorse, assistant. Opened 1965. Families 26. Sunday School 230. Catechism (Indian Students) 462. AM Worship Service 58, Evening 27. Special services are held for Indian students and community people. A church building is in existence and is put to maximum use. A parsonage was completed in 1965.

7. **Gallup, New Mexico:** Rev. Thomas Beech, Stated Supply. Mr. Melvin Chavez, assistant. Opened 1932. Families 24 (41). Sunday School 110. Vacation Bible School 90. Catechism 18. Adults preparing for membership 8. Weekday Bible Class 10. AM Worship Service 88. A ministry to the PHS Hospital, the government school and the Job Corps is maintained in addition to the strengthening of the church fellowship.

8. **Indian Village, New Mexico:** Mr. John Tso, missionary. Families 28. Sunday School 84. Vacation Bible School 48. AM Worship Service 84, Evening 63. Camp meetings are an important part of the ministry to the Indian community. The missionary looks forward to the possibility of church organization. The group has its own church building and is assuming a greater responsibility in the church's ministry.

9. **Naschitti, New Mexico:** Mr. Marinus Harberts, missionary. Mr. Ben Henry, assistant. Families 18. The church at Naschitti has just dedicated its new church building. Good growth and an active program characterize the field.

10. **Phoenix, Arizona:** Rev. Jacob Van Bruggen, missionary teacher. Rev. Van Bruggen is the Christian Reformed representative on the campus of the Cook Christian Training School.

11. **Red Rock, Arizona:** Rev. Paul H. Redhouse, missionary pastor. Mr. Cato Begay, assistant. Families 26. Opened 1953. Sunday School 75. Indian School 100. Adults preparing for membership 5. Vacation Bible School 63. AM Worship Service 55, Evening 50. Rev. Redhouse has a large part in the Navajo radio broadcast. Camp meetings, classes at work, sewing classes and choir make up part of the ministry.

12. **Rehoboth, New Mexico:** Rev. Edward Cooke, missionary pastor. Opened 1896. Families 29. Sunday school 120. Catechism 150. Weekday Bible Classes 79. AM Worship Service 200, Evening 175. The Rehoboth Village is involved in every part of the mission. Nine persons are teachers in the Rehoboth elementary and high school. The Business Manager and 17 people are either service personnel or support persons for the educational system. The Rehoboth Hospital is now operated by the Luke Society, Inc.

13. **Riverside, California:** Mrs. Carlotta Thomas, missionary. Mrs. Thomas is working at the government school (Sherman Institute). Meetings are held in the Protestant Chapel across the street from the Sherman Institute Campus.

14. **Salt Lake City, Utah:** Mr. Gary Klumpenhower, missionary. Opened 1960. Families 8 integrated into the local Christian Reformed churches. Sunday School 28. Vacation Bible School 25. Adults preparing for membership 3. Midweek meetings at Lark, Utah 10. Friendship meetings 43. Bible Study groups - 7, 17, 13. AM Worship 34. Bible Study (Sunday) 17. Good progress has been made in integrating the Indian families into the existing congregations in Salt Lake City.

15. **San Antone, New Mexico:** Mr. Alfred Becenti, missionary. AM Worship Service 15, Evening 15.

16. **San Francisco, California:** (Friendship House) Rev. Richard J. Venema, missionary pastor. Opened 1963. Rev. Venema came in 1966. The group is made up of 5 communicant members and 4 baptized members. The Friendship House serves dozens of Indians transplanted from the reservation into a big city. Sunday School 12. Vacation Bible School 30. Catechism 10. Bible Class 15. Adults preparing for membership 10. Counseling is provided for the Indian as often as the missionary has time. The need in San Francisco is for an enlarged staff. A succession of one year volunteer retired couples has provided "house parents" for

the Friendship House. The house has dormitory space, recreation area, dining area and a small worship space.

17. **Sanostee, New Mexico:** Mr. Geronimo Martin, missionary. Opened 1913. Families 6. Sunday School 69. Worship Service AM 21, PM 12. Catechism 5. Prayer Meeting 8. Government School 179. Camp meetings, and an evangelistic program are used effectively in the ministry of this part of the Navajo Church.

18. **Shiprock, New Mexico:** Rev. F. Vander Stoep, missionary pastor. Hermina Nyhof, Edward Henry, Sidney Nez, staff. Opened 1936. Families 32. Sunday School 85. Catechism 81. Vacation Bible School 135. Adults preparing for membership 4. Weekday Bible Classes - Indian School - 341. Two Sunday Gospel meetings with Boarding School pupils 185. AM Worship Service (one English, one Navajo) 90. A full schedule of meetings for the congregation is maintained in addition to the work among the Indian students. The missionary indicates that organization as a church will be a goal for 1967.

19. **Teec Nos Pos, Arizona:** Mr. Corwin Brummel, missionary. Mr. John Talley, assistant. Opened 1936. Families 22. Sunday School - including Indian Boarding School - 270. Vacation Bible School 52. Weekday Bible Classes - Teec Nos Pos 22, Beclabito 13. AM Worship Service 47, Evening 21.

20. **Toadlena, New Mexico:** Mr. Richard Kruis, missionary. Mr. Paul Belin and Miss Lucy Harvey, assistants. Families 21. Sunday School (Indian students included) 275. Catechism 15. Vacation Bible School 65. Adults preparing for membership 3. AM Worship Service 54, Evening 32. Camp meetings and personal visitation and counseling are expressions of a broad evangelistic concern. The group hopes to construct a new sanctuary to replace the little frame building now in use.

21. **Tohatchi, New Mexico:** Rev. Gordon Stuit, missionary pastor. Miss Thelma Vander Ven, assistant. Opened 1898. Families 25. Sunday School 158. Catechism 24. Vacation Bible School 66. Weekday Bible Class 9. Adults preparing for membership 4. AM Worship Service 52, Evening 24. The ministry at Tohatchi covers Coyote Canyon where Sunday services have 19 in attendance and a Bible School of 95. Mexican Springs has an attendance of 35 with 86 in Bible School.

22. **Tohlakai, New Mexico:** Mr. Ernest Benally, missionary. Mr. John George, assistant. Families 18. Sunday School 20. Weekday Bible Class 13. AM Worship Service 26, Evening 12. Vacation Bible School 50.

23. **White Horse Lake, New Mexico:** Mr. Charles Grey, missionary. Opened 1964. Families 5. Sunday School 32. Weekday Bible Class 17. Adults preparing for membership 4. AM Worship Services 25.

24. **Window Rock, Arizona:** Rev. Scott K. Redhouse, missionary pastor. Opened 1966. Families 12. Sunday School 33. Catechism 13. Weekday Bible Class 12. Adults preparing for membership 10. AM Worship Service 50, Evening 17. Window Rock is the capital of the Navajo tribe. It is a new project and the congregation is making a good beginning under the leadership of Rev. Scott Redhouse, the first ordained Navajo minister in the Christian Reformed Church. The congregation hopes to be able to finish the new church building early in 1967.

25. **Zuni, New Mexico:** Rev. Roger Posthuma, missionary pastor. Mr. Rex Chimoni assistant. Opened 1897. Families 10. Sunday School 98. Vacation Bible School 120. Catechism 17. Weekday Bible Class 22. AM Worship Service 55, Evening 52. In addition to a ministry to the community and to the congregation, the Zuni mission operates a Christian elementary school. Principal: Mr. Thomas Weeda. Teachers: Eunice Post, Wilma Van Dam, Wanda Van Klompenberg, Mrs. Roger Posthuma. Enrollment at the school is 135. Mr. Neil Natewa is industrial employee.

D. Education Department

The educational programs at Rehoboth and Zuni continue in good fashion under the capable direction of Mr. Keith Kuipers, ed. Supt., and Mr. Thomas Weeda, Zuni Principal. Mr. Kuipers has assumed his duties in a most effective way. The spirit that prevails among staff members is

a very excellent one. The "statement of purpose" for the Rehoboth School has been the subject of discussion on the part of the Indian Committee, office staff, as well as the educational staff on the field. This matter continues for further clarification and development. It is hoped that the classrooms authorized by the General Board 1966 will be completed in time for the 1966-'67 school year. Related to this is the master planning that has been done so far by the Daverman Associates.

E. Rehoboth Hospital

The administration of the hospital is now the responsibility of the Luke Society, Inc., which operates the Rehoboth Christian Hospital through the Rehoboth Christian Hospital Association (RCHA). The vastly increased activity at the hospital has brought with it many additional opportunities for a spiritual ministry. Rev. E. Cooke, also functioning as Hospital Chaplain, testifies to the visible fruit on past activity, as well as the increased opportunities that are opened to us. In a recent newsletter, Dr. M. P. Vanden Bosch, Medical Director, wrote the following:

"This is the time of the year for annual reports and appraisal of what was accomplished during the past year. Figures are still incomplete but suggest some startling observations. Not only are we taking care of more Indians than ever before, but in addition we are caring also for twice as many non-Indians as Indians. The contrast is well illustrated in the x-ray work. In 1964, we did 184 examinations, in 1965 - 1163, and in 1966 - 1428. In obstetrics babies delivered were as follows: 1964 - 36, 1965 - 124, 1966 - 173. We are grateful that the Lord has seen fit to use us so abundantly in this Kingdom work."

During the year numerous meetings, letters and phone calls were held with representatives of the Luke Society, RCHA and our own personnel re the hospital operation and its relationship to our total mission program. Such matters of policy involving all of us continue to be worked out. Plans are being completed by the RCHA for the construction of a new facility near the present Rehoboth campus. A community financial drive, at this writing, has brought in pledges and gifts of \$124,000 of the \$250,000 goal. We are sincerely grateful, with the medical personnel, for the numerous blessings of the past year.

F. Industrial Department

The contributions of those in the Industrial Staff are extremely vital to the success of the mission program. The past year has involved them in endless tasks of maintenance and repair—necessitated to a larger degree by the many old buildings on the field, as well as certain new construction. Dedication of the new church at Naschitti on Jan. 11, 1967, was a memorable event. Work began on the Window Rock Church—with dedication scheduled for April '67. A significant development during the year has been an increased response by various persons desiring to contribute a few weeks of time as "volunteers" in the Industrial Department. During 1966, twelve couples and three individuals gave of their time for varying periods. Excluding the time given by the wives in various capacities, the men contributed an estimated 2400 hours of labor as carpenters, electricians, plumbers and in general assistance. So far in 1967 we have had a most wonderful response from persons desiring to serve in this way.

G. *Summary of Statistics*

	1964		1965		1966	Total
Adult baptisms	26 (61)	42%	41 (75)	55%	30 (71)	42%
Infant baptisms	52 (232)	22%	108 (297)	36%	114 (338)	33%
Confessions of faith ..	14 (192)	7%	23 (104)	22%	39 (147)	27%
Reaffirmations of faith	0 (17)	0	6 (33)	18%	12 (65)	18%

V. SPECIAL FIELDS

A. *Personnel, Special Fields*1. *Departures from the staff:*

a. Veteran missionary, Rev. J. Jerry Pott, left service of the Board of Home Missions to serve the Board of Foreign Missions in Mexico.

b. Rev. John Rozendal retired from the ministry after more than 30 years of service in Jewish evangelism.

c. Rev. Robert Ruis left the service of the Board of Home Missions to take on an assignment with the Board of Foreign Missions in Mexico.

d. Miss Judy Grotenhuis left the employ of the Board in Miami, Florida—Good Samaritan Christian Reformed Church. She will pursue other work in the East.

e. Rev. Brandt Bruxvoort retired from the active ministry and thus left the staff of the Good Samaritan Christian Reformed Church in Miami.

The Board is grateful to God for the many years of distinguished service which these servant were able to perform in the mission of the church:

2. *Accretions to the staff:*

a. Rev. Carlos Cortina was called to take up the work among the Cuban Refugees in Grand Rapids, Michigan, replacing Rev. John Boonstra who left to serve the Back to God Hour Committee.

b. Mr. Clifford Christians was appointed to serve as Stated Supply to take the place of Rev. G. Lau who left to pursue study at Calvin Seminary.

c. Rev. August de Berdt was called to serve in the Good Samaritan Church in Miami.

B. *Inner City:*

1. **Manhattan, New York City:** Christian Reformed Church Mission Department. Rev. Gordon Negen, pastor. James Allen, Elease Feimster, Bernard Greenfield, and George Vander Weit, assistants. Opened 1952. Families 32, Sunday School 185. Weekday Bible Classes 10. Adults preparing for membership 6. AM Worship Service 130. Vacation Bible School 100. A local radio broadcast entitled "The Evening Altar" reaches out into the community and elicits a remarkable response. A special program for youth and an outstanding program for drug addicts make the Harlem mission a project for which we can thank God. Eight ex-addicts are presently preparing for membership.

2. **Detroit, Michigan:** Rev. Harold Botts, missionary pastor. Mr. Terry Hager, Seminarian Intern. Opened 1964. Families 9. Sunday School 200. Vacation Bible School 340. AM Worship Service 67. The blessings of the Lord have been abundant in this new project in Detroit. The building was purchased, remodeled during 1965-66. Dedication took place on March 10, 1966. A special appreciation

goes out to the Detroit churches for assistance given to Rev. Botts in promoting the program.

3. **Hoboken, New Jersey:** Rev. Edson T. Lewis, missionary pastor. Opened 1964. Families 15. Sunday School 20. Weekday Bible Classes 50 and 8. Adults preparing for membership 3. Vacation Bible School 56. AM Worship Service 45. The Hoboken project is one of readjustment and rebuilding. The community is fast becoming a Spanish-speaking community. The problems attending this fact will challenge us for the next year or more. A significant beginning has been made. We pray the Lord of Harvest for His guidance and blessing.

C. *Chinese Mission:*

1. **Los Angeles, California** (Crenshaw): Mr. Clifford Christians, Stated Supply. Families 18. Opened 1963. Sunday School 165. Vacation Bible School 82. Catechism 5. Adults preparing for membership 64. The evangelistic program includes a youth project, summer camp, and community Sunday canvass. The church was organized in 1966. The church building was completed in 1965.

2. **Hyde Park, Chicago, Illinois:** Rev. Paul Han, missionary pastor. Families 14. Opened 1962. Sunday School 26. Catechism 12. Vacation Bible School 32. AM Worship Service 60. This church ministers to a gathering of oriental people from the Chicago area and has a significant contact with the University of Chicago.

3. **San Francisco, California:** Rev. Peter Yang, missionary pastor. Opened 1965. Families 1. AM Worship Service 35. The group has had to move to larger quarters as the crowds more recently have been as high as 100. Sunday School 55. Catechism 2. Weekday Bible Class 20. Vacation Bible School 20. The ministry here is to resident Chinese and especially to the more than 6,000 immigrants who came to San Francisco each year. A significant ministry has been initiated among the Chinese students in the Bay area.

4. **Queens, New York:** Rev. Paul Szto, missionary pastor. Opened 1956. Families 16. Sunday School 42. Midweek Bible Class 15. Adults preparing for membership 3. AM Worship Service 75. The Queens Church is organized and they are meetings in the parsonage. The future holds promise for new evangelistic effort and a plan for the construction of a church building.

D. *Cuban Refugee:*

1. **Miami, Florida:** Rev. Clarence Nyenhuis, mission director. Rev. August de Berdt, Miss Carol Boersma, Dr. Vicente Hernandez, staff. Opened 1960. Families 25. Sunday School 100. Catechism 17. Weekday Bible Class 20. Adults preparing for membership 5. Vacation Bible School 157. AM Worship Service 137. The outreach to the community of Cuban Refugees is a major part of the program of the Good Samaritan Christian Reformed Church. The membership also includes people from seven Latin American countries. In cooperation with the CRWRC there is a counseling office at the Good Samaritan Center.

2. **Los Angeles, California:** Ministry to Cuban Refugees—this field is temporarily vacant.

3. **Grand Rapids, Michigan:** Rev. Carlos Cortina, missionary pastor. Rev. Cortina is a former classmate of Fidel Castro in Cuba. He escaped Cuba and was led of the Lord to join the Christian Reformed Church in Miami (Good Samaritan). He enrolled at Calvin Seminary in 1962 and was ordained to the ministry in 1966. He serves the Cuban Refugee group in Grand Rapids. This group is now serving as a gathering of other Spanish-speaking people in the Grand Rapids area. They are meeting in the church building which formerly housed the Franklin Street Christian Reformed Church.

E. *Jewish Missions:*

1. Parish evangelism in areas where Christian Reformed churches are located.

2. **Nathanael Institute, Chicago, Illinois:** Miss Edith Vander Meulen, missionary. The work consists of Ladies groups, children classes and personal visitation evangelism.

VI. REGULAR URBAN MISSION — CANADA

A. *Changes in Personnel:*

1. Mr. H. Klok left the service of the Board of Home Missions. Mr. Klok served the mission in the Peace River District of Northern Alberta.

2. Rev. D. Kwantes was transferred from High River to the new field at Windsor, Ontario.

3. Mr. John Tensen was transferred from Penticton, B.C., to Cochrane, Ontario.

4. Rev. Ralph Groeneboer accepted the call to serve the field at Penticton, B.C.

B. *Fields:*

1. **Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island:** Rev. M. Dornbush, missionary pastor. Families 29. Sunday School 43. Catechism 23. Rev. Dornbush also ministers to the group in New Glasgow.

2. **Cochrane, Ontario:** Mr. John Tensen, missionary. Opened 1950. Families 14. Sunday School 8. Catechism 4. Vacation Bible School 120. AM Worship Service 32. Mr. Tensen was transferred to Cochrane from Penticton, British Columbia. His coming brought to an end a rather long vacancy in Cochrane.

3. **Fredericton, New Brunswick:** Rev. Hendrik De Bruyn, missionary pastor. Opened 1961. Families 18. Sunday School 43. Weekday Bible Classes 12, and 6. Catechism 8. Adults preparing for membership 3. AM Worship Service 64. Vacation Bible School 80.

4. **High River, Alberta:** Vacant. Opened 1952. Families 18. Sunday School 35. Catechism 17. AM Worship Service 68.

5. **Penticton, British Columbia:** Rev. Ralph Groeneboer, missionary pastor. Opened 1966. Families 17. Sunday School 30. A new church building is near completion. The church has begun to address itself to the community and to grow internally.

6. **Prince George, British Columbia:** Rev. Gerrit H. Polman, missionary pastor. Opened 1957. Families 27. Sunday School 50. Catechism 5. Weekday Bible Class 10. Vacation Bible School 85. One adult is preparing for membership. AM Worship Service 71. The church maintains a visitation program and services at the provincial jail.

7. **Stony Plain, Alberta:** Rev. Edgar O. Holkeboer, missionary pastor. Opened 1963. Families 53. Sunday School 60. Catechism 3. AM Worship Service 118. Vacation Bible School 66. The Hope Christian Reformed Church came into our denomination from the Evangelical and Reformed Church. The progress made in adjusting to the new environment is remarkable. The church has a parsonage and sanctuary which are old but in good repair.

8. **Windsor, Ontario:** Rev. D. Kwantes, missionary pastor. Opened late in 1966. Families 14. Rev. Kwantes was transferred to Windsor from High River, Alberta. An enthusiastic missionary and congregation look forward to progress as they begin a witness in this large city.

9. **Fourth Creek, Alberta:** Vacant. The future of this field will be decided in the months ahead. The church at Grande Prairie-LaGlance has become a calling church.

VII. 1966 SUMMARY OF STATISTICS

	United States		Canada	Totals
	regular	Indian		
Adult Baptisms	40	30	1	71
Infant Baptisms	201	114	23	338
Confessions of Faith	96	39	12	147
Reaffirmations of Faith	53	12	0	65

	Year	Adult Baptism	Infant Baptism	Confession of faith	Reaffir- mation of faith
U.S. - regular	1962	52	174	81	84
	1963	53	195	108	41
	1964	35	139	163	16
	1965	33	152	68	27
	1966	40	201	96	53
U.S. - Indian	1964	26	52	14	0
	1965	41	83	23	6
	1966	30	114	39	12
	1962	0	29	3	5
Canada	1963	2	44	11	0
	1964	0	41	15	1
	1965	1	37	13	0
	1966	1	23	12	0

VIII. SUPPORTING CHURCHES

Classis Alberta North	GR - Millbrook
Stony Plain, Hope	GR - Neland Ave.
Classis British Columbia	GR - Plymouth Heights
New Westminster	GR - Seymour
Prince George	GR - Shawnee Park
Vancouver I	GR - Sherman Street
Vernon	A Grand Rapids Construction Com- pany
Classis Cadillac	Classis Grand Rapids South
Falmouth, Prosper	GR - Alger Park
Lucas	GR - Burton Heights
Mc Bain	GR - Grandville Ave.
Classis California South	GR - Kelloggsville
Anaheim	GR - LaGrave Ave.
Artesia I	Classis Grand Rapids West
Chula Vista	Coopersville
Escondido	GR - Alpine
Riverside	GR - Westview
Classis Central California	Classis Grandville
Alameda	Bauer
Visalia	Byron Center I
Classis Chicago North	Byron Center II
Fulton I S.S.	Grandville, South
Oak Park	GR - Beverly
Wheaton	GR - Lee Street
Classis Chicago South	GR - 36th Street
Champaign, Hessel Pk.	Jenison, Baldwin St.
Chicago, Hyde Park	Jenison, Ridgewood
Chicago, Roseland III	Jenison, Trinity
Chicago, Roseland IV	Jenison, 12th Ave.
Evergreen Park I	Classis Hackensack
Classis Eastern Ontario	East Islip, N.Y.
Fredericton, N.B.	Jamaica, N.Y.
Lindsay	Norfolk, Va.
Classis Grand Rapids East	Wayne, N.J.
GR - East Paris	Classis Holland
GR - Faith	Graafschap
GR - Fuller Ave.	Holland, Bethany
	Holland, Calvin

Holland, Central Ave.
 Holland, 14th St.
 Holland, Maple Ave.
 Holland, Maranatha
 Holland, Montello Park
 Holland, Ninth Street
 Holland, Prospect Park
 Holland, 16th Street
 Niekerk
 Noordeloos
 Pine Creek

Classis Hudson

Goshen, N.Y.
 Midland Park, N.J.
 Paterson I
 Paterson IV
 Rochester, N.Y.
 Webster, N.Y.

Classis Illiana

De Motte, Ind.
 Lansing, Bethel
 Munster, Ind.
 South Holland, Bethany

Classis Kalamazoo

Kalamazoo II
 Kalamazoo III
 Kalamazoo, Grace
 Kalamazoo, Southern Heights

Classis Lake Erie

Ann Arbor, Mich.
 Cleveland, East
 (\$500 Broekhuizen)
 Dayton, Ohio
 Jackson, Mich.
 Toledo, Ohio

Classis Minnesota North

Minneapolis, Calvary
 Minneapolis, Faith
 Pease

Classis Minnesota South

Edgerton I
 Edgerton, Bethel
 Luverne

Classis Muskegon

Fremont II
 Grand Haven II
 Muskegon, Allen Ave.
 Muskegon, Bethany

Classis Northcentral Iowa

Kanawha
 Kanawha, Wright
 Parkersburg

Classis Orange City

Le Mars, Calvin
 Orange City I
 Orange City II

Classis Pacific Northwest

Anchorage, Alaska
 Lynden, Wash., I
 Lynden, Wash., II
 Lynden, Wash., III
 Salem, Ore.

Classis Pella

Leighton
 Newton
 Pella I
 Pella II
 Pella, Calvary
 Peoria
 Prairie City
 Sully

Classis Rocky Mountain

Denver II, Colo.
 Dispatch, Kan.
 Ogden, Utah
 Luctor, Kan.
 Rehoboth, N.M.
 Salt Lake City, Utah, Immanuel
 Scottsdale, Ariz., Palm Lane

Classis Sioux Center

Hull I, Iowa
 Hull, N.D.
 Platte, S.D.

Classis Wisconsin

Waupun I

Classis Zeeland

Allendale I
 Allendale II
 Beaverdam
 Borculo
 Drenthe
 Hudsonville I
 Hudsonville, Immanuel
 Hudsonville, Hillcrest
 Hudsonville, Messiah
 Jamestown
 North Blendon
 Oakland
 Rusk
 Zeeland I
 Zeeland III
 Zeeland, Bethel
 Zeeland, Haven
 Zutphen

IX. EVANGELISM DEPARTMENT

A. *The Christian Service Corps:*

1. Summer Workshop In Missions (S.W.I.M.)

In 1966 there were 450 young people involved in an intensive summer evangelism program on 67 Home Mission fields. Once more the story of 1966 proves the effectiveness of the S.W.I.M. program and the abundant blessing of the Lord upon the joint effort of the Board of Home Missions and the Young Calvinist Federation. In 1967 we will need more than 500 young people to help with the evangelism program on 82 Home Mission fields.

2. Teacher Volunteers: In 1966, 23 teachers were involved in the summer evangelism program, working as assistant field leaders in the S.W.I.M. program or as helpers in a mission church.

In 1967 there will be a need for 40 teachers.

3. Regular volunteers:

Miss Marilyn Baker, Anchorage, Alaska; Mrs. Effie Dykema, Harlem, New York; Mr. and Mrs. Amos Goris, Ogden, Utah; Miss Darlene Kortenhoven, Brigham City, Utah; Mr. and Mrs. Cornelius Louis, Phoenix, Arizona; Mrs. Edward Lubbinge, Zuni, New Mexico; Miss Jacquelyn Mulder, Harlem, New York; Miss Riena Timmer, Tacoma, Washington; Miss Ardele Vanden Brink, Madison Ave., Paterson, New Jersey; Mr. and Mrs. Peter Yonker, San Francisco, California.

4. Interns (Seminarists on one year field assignment) :

Mr. Gene Beerens, Ann Arbor, Michigan; Mr. Terry Hager, Detroit, Michigan; Mr. George Vander Weit, Manhattan (Harlem) New York.

B. *Evangelism Conferences:*

Evangelism Conferences were held in Detroit, Mich.; Hospers, Iowa; Grand Rapids, Michigan; Pease, Minnesota; Saginaw, Michigan; Leighton, Iowa; Everett, Washington; Portland, Oregon; and Edmonton, Alberta. These conferences were held to assist in the training of church members in the task of witnessing in their own communities. The response to these conferences has been good. There is much interest in being better witnesses.

C. *Evangelism Institutes:*

These meetings are designed to help ministers by means of a concentrated study of evangelism. One such institute was held in Grand Rapids in cooperation with Calvin College and Seminary. Two more institutes are planned for 1967. More institutes will be held in other parts of Canada and the United States in the future.

D. *Consistorial Conferences:*

A series of meetings with consistory members has been held. The role of the consistory member in evangelism was discussed in the light of the Church Order.

E. *The Way*:

Each month "The Way" is edited and sent out for use by the churches. There has been an excellent acceptance of this tool for evangelism. More than 30,000 copies are used each month.

F. *Film Library*:

A series of 45 films were added to the film library this year. These are the "Moody Science Films." Another step forward was made when the Home Missions film library was merged with the film library of the National Union of Christian Schools. The new library is known as the *Church and School Film Library*. This merger will provide better service and a much greater selection of excellent films.

G. *Campus Ministry*:

The Board of Home Missions presents herewith the revised policy statement on Campus Ministry and respectfully requests the endorsement of the Synod of 1967.

With respect to Campus Ministries, the Christian Reformed Church declares

1) There is a great opportunity and an urgent need for the Christian Reformed Church to be engaged in Campus Ministry.

(a) Many Christian Reformed students are attending colleges and universities today and do not have the benefit of an on-campus Reformed ministry which serves them and stimulates them to serve others.

(b) Many of the students on campus today will be the leaders and decision-makers in our society tomorrow. It is important for the church to make known the claims of Jesus Christ to these students and aid students to integrate a commitment to Christ into the whole structure of their lives. This will enable them to discharge their leadership under the Lordship of Christ.

(c) Through a campus ministry our church can conduct a vital ministry not only to Christian Reformed students, but also to the entire university community, including faculty and administration.

(d) A campus ministry provides the opportunity to reach international students, thus enabling us to engage in an international ministry and to confront leaders of other countries with the gospel.

2) That the church's ministry on campus be of the following nature:

(a) The ministry on campus will be basically the same as the church's ministry elsewhere—the ministry of the Word and Sacraments. However, the church must make its ministry relevant to the campus community, keeping in mind the peculiarities of the campus constituency.

(b) The student should be of primary importance in the church's ministry on campus. In ministering to the students the peculiar areas of stress and development that students encounter in their academic, social and vocational contexts must be taken into account.

(c) The campus ministry should seek to lead the student to conversion or rededication, and to the strengthening of faith.

(d) The student will be encouraged to participate actively in the ministry of the church assuming a critical and creative role in formulating

and implementing a program through which the church's ministry on campus is discharged, and witnessing to the campus as a whole.

(e) The ministry on campus should go to the student in order to be where the student is. The church's ministry should be as accessible as the classroom.

3) That the church's ministry on campus should be implemented in the following ways:

(a) In those university towns where there is a Christian Reformed Church, the church should be encouraged to engage in a ministry which is specifically directed to the campus community.

(b) The Board of Home Missions will give assistance regarding the church's ministry on campus by:

(1) Encouraging the churches to see the challenge and the need of campus ministries in their own communities.

(2) Helping to evaluate campus situations and giving advice with respect to a ministries on the campus in the communities in which the churches are located.

(3) Providing materials which will be helpful in campus ministry, and ideas for programming this ministry.

(4) Where necessary, providing financial assistance through: grants-in-aid (salaries), internships, funds for rental facilities and programming, and loans for capital expenditure.

(c) On those campuses where there are a number of Christian Reformed students in residence and there is no local Christian Reformed Church, and where there seems to be a warrant for beginning a Reformed campus witness, the Board of Home Missions may place a campus pastor or religious worker.

(d) Where possible, cooperation with other student ministries will be encouraged.

This declaration, if adopted by Synod, is to be regarded as the policy of the Christian Reformed Church with respect to Campus Ministry. This is to be considered the answer to the overture from Classis Toronto (Overture 16, Acts of Synod 1966).

Re Overture 24 from Classis Central California it was decided to recommend that Synod do not accede to the overture of Classis Central California to postpone adoption of the Campus Ministry Report until a further study be made of entering the Campus Ministry through Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship.

Grounds: Our report concerns itself with the ecclesiastical aspect of Campus Ministry, while the ministry of IVCF is basically non-ecclesiastical. We do support the ministry of IVCF where possible; however, the composition of some campus communities requires a more ecclesiastically oriented student ministry.

H. *Grant-In-Aid:*

The Board of Home Missions recommends the following Grants-in-Aid to the Synod of 1967 for approval. In each case the field has been investigated in person, the approval of the respective classis has been re-

ceived and the requirements set forth in the Acts of Synod 1964, (Art. 143, II, p. 107) have been fulfilled.

a. Renewal of previous requests:

1. Ames, Iowa	\$3,000
2. Highland, Mich. (conditioned on their raising the evangelist's salary by \$500)	2,000
3. Madison Ave., Paterson, N.J.	6,000
4. Mount Vernon, Wash.	1,200
5. Oak Harbor, Wash.	3,500
6. Racine, Wis.	1,500
7. Rapid City, S.D.	2,000
8. Manhattan, (Gateway) Mont. (Manhattan I Chr. Ref. Church is encouraged to assume full responsibility for this work by 1969)	2,500
9. Columbus, Ohio	4,000
10. Big Rapids, Mich.	6,000
11. Eastern Ontario, St. Lawrence Seaway Chaplaincy	5,000
12. Classis Cadillac, Mt. Pleasant, Mich.	6,000
13. Englewood, N.J.	4,000
14. Lansing, Mich.	7,000
15. Edmonton III, Alta.	4,000

b. New Requests:

1. Portland, Ore.	3,900
2. Sunnyside, Wash.	6,000
3. Classis Wisconsin (Madison)	2,500

X. DISPERSED AND NON-RESIDENT MEMBERS:

A. The number of Christian Reformed families on the move is increasing. In addition, the Home Missions office has been receiving notice from Christian Reformed families who have moved overseas to foreign lands. The mobility of the population in Canada and the United States is fast becoming an important factor in the work of the church. This year one out of every nine families in the United States will move to another location. Transiency is fast becoming an accepted part of American life. This transiency is also affecting the Christian Reformed families.

B. Statistics for dispersed and non-resident members for the last seven years:

United States	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966
Families reported	38	37	31	49	47	74	77
Individuals reported	41	40	43	37	17	23	34
Consisting of							
Confessing members	63	69	60	115	82	126	161
Baptized members	48	70	47	88	89	109	138
Undesignated	47	19	19	70	32	35	8
Total souls reported	158	158	126	213	203	270	307

Canada	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966
Families reported	0	2	16	6	3	3	6
Individuals reported	0	9	9	9	2	7	15
Consisting of							
Confessing members	0	6	3	15	5	11	16
Baptized members	0	12	2	24	4	11	23
Undesignated	0	4	36	2	9	2	3
Total souls reported	0	22	41	41	18	24	42
Total Canada & U.S.	158	180	167	254	221	294	349

XI. YOUTH IN THE MILITARY SERVICE:

For the third time within a generation the young men of the United States and other free countries have been called upon to leave their civilian occupations and take up arms to stop the tide of aggression in foreign lands. Hundreds of Christian Reformed young men are presently engaged in the struggle in Vietnam, others in Korea, Germany, Okinawa, Philippines, Thailand, Japan and on the high seas. Others are being trained or are manning the defenses at home. The church has felt the pain of sacrifice. Already 17 Christian Reformed young men have given their lives in the defense of freedom.

We may not be mere spectators to this struggle. The church is duty bound to extend its ministry to the men in uniform to the best of its ability. To that end your Board of Home Missions is establishing a servicemen's home in Korea. It is establishing a ministry to servicemen in Hawaii. It is seeking to enlarge its ministry to the men in the Armed Services in consultation with the Young Calvinist Federation and the Chaplains Committee. In such places as Tacoma, El Paso, Anchorage, Fairbanks, Wanamassa, Norfolk, Washington, Halifax, St. Louis, New London, New York City, the ministry to Armed Forces personnel is increasing.

So that your Board of Home Missions may fulfill its mandate to the servicemen in these times of crisis, we urgently request the Synod of 1967 to place the Armed Forces Fund (Board of Home Missions) on the list of causes recommended for one or more offerings.

XII. MATTERS FOR SYNODICAL ACTION:

A. The Board of Home Missions respectfully requests that its President, Executive Secretary, and Treasurer be granted the privilege of the floor when matters pertaining to Home Missions are discussed.

B. The Board of Home Missions urgently requests that Synod approve the Armed Forces Fund for one or more offerings from the churches.

C. The Board of Home Missions requests Synod to approve the schedule of Grants-in-Aid for evangelism as presented in Section IX, H, of its report to Synod.

D. The Board of Home Missions requests the Synod to approve the re-appointments listed below:

1. The Rev. Marvin C. Baarman as Executive Secretary for a term of three years.

2. The Rev. Nelson Vanderzee as Field Secretary for a term of three years.

3. The Rev. Wesley Smedes as Minister of Evangelism for a term of three years.

4. Mr. Gerard J. Borst as Treasurer for a term of three years.

E. The Board of Home Missions respectfully requests the Synod to approve the Campus Ministry Policy Statement as presented in Section IX, G, of its Report to Synod.

F. The Board of Home Missions presents the following nominations to the Synod.

- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| 1. Western Canada — alternate delegate — | Mr. G. Monsma* |
| | Mr. G. Ingwersen |
| 2. Eastern U.S.A. — alternate delegate — | Mr. Walter Hommes |
| | Mr. Adrian Visbeen |
| 3. Western U.S.A. — regular delegate — | Mr. M. Tanis |
| | Mr. J. Vande Beeke* |
| alternate delegate — | Mr. S. De Vries |
| | Dr. W. Den Dulk |
| 4. Central U.S.A. — regular delegate — | Mr. C. Ackerman |
| | Mr. D. Pruis |
| alternate delegate — | Dr. R. Plekker* |
| | Dr. S. Dusterwinkle |
| 5. Central U.S.A. — regular delegate — | Mr. Jack Van Eerden* |
| | Mr. A. Draft |
| alternate delegate — | Dr. R. Baker |
| | Dr. F. Westendorp |
| 6. Central U.S.A. — alternate delegate — | Mr. M. Van Dellen |
| for Mr. J. Simerink | Mr. L. Hendrickson |

*Incumbent

G. The Board of Home Missions requests the approval of Synod for a member-at-large from Central Canada — (Classis Chatham).

Grounds:

1. The Central Canadian area is the only geographic area without member-at-large representation on the Executive Committee.

2. The future of Home Missions work in Canada will require representation of laymen from the heavily populated area of Central Canada.

H. Should the Synod accede to the request, the following nomination is presented:

Member-at-large,

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Central Canada — regular delegate — | Mr. P. Nienhuis |
| | Mr. J. Janssens |
| alternate delegate — | Mr. H. Nymeyer |
| | Mr. H. Dekker |

I. The Board of Home Missions informs Synod that

a. A study committee was appointed by the board at its annual meeting in 1966 to study in depth the program of Jewish Evangelism in the light

of the synodical mandate re Jewish Missions (Acts of Synod, 1958) with a view to determining its validity in the light of our work since 1958. A preliminary report has been received. This study committee will report to the Board of Home Missions in February of 1968.

b. Regarding Nathanael Institute in Chicago, the Board authorized the Executive Committee to liquidate our assets on Devon Avenue in Rogers Park, Chicago.

Grounds:

1. It has been historically demonstrated that the work at this location has been ineffective.

2. Good stewardship demands that we seek release from maintenance and ownership of the building.

J. The Board of Home Missions addresses Synod regarding the Rules for Synodical Procedure.

The Board of Home Missions respectfully calls the attention of Synod to what would appear to be a consistent oversight on the part of successive Synods regarding consideration of reports submitted to Synod by those boards appointed to supervise denominational endeavors.

The relevant rule for synodical procedure (VI, B, 1 and 2 or Rules for Synodical Procedure) reads:

"1) These committees have the right of elucidating and defending their reports on the floor of Synod. The spokesmen of these committees shall have the same privilege during the discussion as the chairman and reporters of the advisory committees.

"2) With respect to the reports submitted to Synod that are given into the hands of advisory committees, the recommendations of these synodical committees shall have precedence, if the recommendations of the advisory committee are radically different."

According to this section of the Rules, the recommendation of "Committees . . . appointed . . . to supervise the missionary, educational, journalistic, or benevolent activities of the denomination . . . shall have precedence, if the recommendations of the advisory committee are radically different."

Despite this rule, the following practice prevails. The budgetary requests of the above mentioned committees (or boards) are placed in the hands of Synod's Advisory Committee on Budget Matters. If, in the judgment of the Advisory Committee, the quota request of any of the above mentioned committees is excessive, the advisory committee presents its contrary recommendation to Synod, and *this contrary recommendation takes precedence over* the quota request of the committee responsible for supervision in behalf of Synod, even though radically different from said request. (Surely when recommendations differ to the extent of many thousands of dollars they may be described as 'radically different.')

We would respectfully call Synod's attention to the very valid principle upon which Rules VI, B, 1 and 2 are quite obviously based: that the Synod owes prior attention to the report and judgment of those who are responsible for and engaged in the very work they have been mandated to perform on behalf of Synod, and concerning which they report.

It may conceivably be contended, since the Standing Advisory Budget Committee of Synod may be included in those committees described in Rules VI, B, 1 and 2, that said committee's recommendations should take precedence. In that event, Synod should make a judgment as to the priority of the recommendations of the Standing Advisory Budget Committee as over against those committees charged "to supervise the missionary, educational, journalistic, or benevolent activities of the denomination." It is our conviction, however, that the above-stated principle would be violated if those whose mandate is primarily fiscal should be given priority in judgment as to the extent and proportions of denominational engagement in endeavors of missions, benevolence, education, etc. Surely, however relevant fiscal concerns may be, these are not *primary* when the Church of Jesus Christ is called upon to view the challenges and responsibilities laid before it. Let the challenges and responsibilities be seen first; *then* let them be viewed in the light of denominational stewardship and monetary potential.

The very valid concern that our fathers were careful to embody in the above mentioned rules is the principle contravened by extant synodical practise.

We therefore respectfully request that Synod conform, in respect to quota requests, to Rules VI, B, 1 and 2 of its Rules for Synodical Procedure and to the principle of which these rules are an expression.

K. The Board of Home Missions requests the Synod of 1967 to approve a 1968 Home Missions quota in the amount of \$36 per family (an increase of \$2.50).

L. The Board of Home Missions requests Synod to place the Board of Home Missions on the list of Denominational Causes for one or more offerings.

M. The Board of Home Missions requests Synod to place the Armed Forces Fund (formerly called Soldiers Fund) on the list of Denominational Causes for one or more offerings.

XIII. FINANCIAL MATTERS

A. The Statement of Fund Balance and Statement of Changes in Fund Equity, as prepared by our auditors, follows:

To the Board Members,
Christian Reformed Board of Home Missions,
Grand Rapids, Michigan

We have examined the statement of fund balance of the Christian Reformed Board of Home Missions, Grand Rapids, Michigan, as of December 31, 1966, and the related statement of changes in fund equity for the year then ended. Our examination was made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, and accordingly included such tests of the accounting records and such other auditing procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.

In our opinion, the accompanying statement of fund balance and statement of changes in fund equity present fairly the financial position of the Christian Reformed Board of Home Missions at December 31, 1966, and the results of its operations for the year then ended, in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

Men Braber, Helmholdt & Lyzenga
Certified Public Accountants

Statement of Fund Balance
December 31, 1966

Assets		
Operating Funds — Cash (Note A)		\$ 352,068.51
Restricted Funds — Cash (Note B)		299,888.22
Real Estate and Notes Receivable		
United States	\$3,520,501.36	
Canada	377,659.49	
Special fields	1,072,240.27	4,970,401.12
<hr/>		
Real Estate and Equipment - Indian Field		
Land and buildings	\$1,279,607.13	
Furniture and equipment	124,358.80	
Trucks and automobiles	61,631.33	
<hr/>		
Less allowance for depreciation	\$1,465,597.26	
	676,848.92	788,748.34
<hr/>		
Other Assets		
Mortgages and contracts receivable	\$ 194,605.27	
Stocks and bonds	14,505.00	
Inventories	2,119.92	
Prepaid expenses and deposits	1,730.00	
Furniture and fixtures - Grand Rapids	6,833.56	219,793.75
<hr/>		
Total Assets		\$6,630,899.94

Liabilities and Fund Equity

Liabilities		
Notes and mortgages payable	\$ 31,489.14	
Withheld taxes and other payables	1,351.94	\$ 32,841.08
<hr/>		
Restricted Funds (Note B)		
Missionary training fund	\$ 59,200.41	
Indian field expansion fund	175,658.02	
Korean service home	46,545.09	
Other restricted funds	18,484.70	299,888.22
<hr/>		
Fund Equity		
Balance at end of year		6,298,170.64
<hr/>		
Total Liabilities and Fund Equity		\$6,630,899.94

NOTE A — At December 31, 1966, \$245,788 of operating funds was committed and budgeted for additional capital expenditures but not spent at the end of the year.

NOTE B—The restricted funds represent amounts received by specific projects, the use of which is restricted either by Synod or by the donor.

Statement of Changes in Fund Equity
Year ended December 31, 1966

Balance - January 1, 1966		\$5,734,286.09
Additions		
Quota receipts	\$1,620,686.27	
Salary support	228,718.91	
Above quota gifts	158,944.14	
Indian field revenue	27,336.20	
Other income	25,073.67	
Total Additions		2,060,759.19
<hr/>		
Total Available		\$7,795,045.28

Deductions

General home missions	\$ 155,249.06	
Administration	111,409.36	
Evangelism	25,285.64	
Regular outreach	426,653.54	
Special fields	175,448.99	
Indian field	547,661.22	
Depreciation	55,166.83	
Total Deductions		1,496,874.64
Balance - December 31, 1966		\$6,298,170.64

B. The Budget for 1968 is summarized below. A more detailed list of Budget requests for 1968 will be submitted to Synod's Advisory Budget Committees.

1968 PROPOSED BUDGET

	Budget 1966	Budget 1967	Budget 1968
Estimated Receipts			
Quota Payments	\$1,570,000	\$1,660,000	\$1,825,200
Salary Support	220,000	240,000	270,000
Above Quota Gifts	200,000	250,000	250,000
Indian Field Revenue	35,000	30,000	30,000
Real Estate Repayments	50,000	55,000	55,000
Other Income	25,000	25,000	25,000
Total Estimated Receipts	\$2,100,000	\$2,260,000	\$2,455,200
Budgeted Disbursements			
Operating:			
Administration	\$ 115,550	\$ 127,950	\$ 142,100
General Home Missions	44,000	65,800	67,800
Evangelism	111,850	187,200	199,650
Regular Outreach - U.S.A.	382,000	435,000	488,525
Regular Outreach - Canada	61,900	66,900	71,425
Special Fields	271,700	310,550	338,675
Indian Field	490,000	519,600	553,025
Total Operating	1,477,000	1,713,000	1,861,200
Real Estate:			
Regular Fields	430,270	330,000	365,000
Special Fields	140,000	120,000	100,000
Indian Field	50,730	93,000	125,000
Equipment	2,000	4,000	4,000
Total Real Estate	623,000	547,000	594,000
Total Budgeted Disbursements	\$2,100,000	\$2,260,000	\$2,455,200

REPORT 26

THE LUKE SOCIETY

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

As your representatives to the Luke Society, we herewith submit this annual report for your consideration.

Introduction

The Luke Society has been blessed the last year as it has worked for the Christian Reformed Church. We have enlisted more of the physicians and dentists of our church in the work of surveying and directing the medical and dental resources of the Christian Reformed Church in cooperation with its mission boards. Of the nearly 400 physicians and dentists in our church, 108 have joined the Luke Society. A representative of the Luke Society was at the Foreign Mission Conference held at Winona Lake.

Portland, Oregon

In response to a request from Home Missionary Rev. H. Spaan in Oak Hills, Oregon for a Christian physician and dentist, the Luke Society has:

- (1) circulated a description of the missionary medicine and dentistry opportunity in Oak Hills to every physician and dentist in our church, and
- (2) researched in depth the economic and professional aspects of dentistry in Oregon compared to other areas in the United States and sent this to all physicians and dentists in our church, and
- (3) sent a representative to inspect the opportunity personally, so that the Luke Society can better advise potential missionary dentists and physicians.

Rehoboth

In accordance with the authority granted to the Christian Reformed Board of Home Missions in the Acts of Synod 1964, the Luke Society has sub-leased the hospital, physician's home, and trailer area to the Rehoboth Christian Hospital Association. (Ref. Acts of Synod, 1966, Suppl. 29, P. 263, Part II, 2). Also the 40 acre site for the proposed new Rehoboth Christian Hospital has been selected and transfer of title will occur when necessary land surveys have been completed. (Ref. Acts of Synod 1966, Suppl. 29, P. 263, Part II, 2, 4.)

Hospital operations have increased as reflected in the attached statistical report labeled Exhibit 1. Services performed for the Home Mission Board are detailed in the attached statement.

A pension plan has been instituted for hospital employees. Salaries of hospital personnel have been raised, but are still far below the salaries paid in surrounding hospitals.

A building fund campaign has been conducted in the community of Gallup, New Mexico, and as of December 31, 1966, \$125,825.00 had been pledged and \$17,699.00 had been collected. The total cash available for building is \$80,278.00.

Physician services from our full time doctors do not meet the need. Efforts to obtain a third full time physician continue. Part time aid has been most helpful, but less than what is needed. A board certified surgeon, practicing in Gallup, joined the associate staff in the Spring of 1967.

A licensed medical technologist now works in the laboratory which has been considerably improved through the purchase of new equipment. Additional necessary equipment is being obtained by a cooperative venture with the Christian Reformed Laymen's League.

The Luke Society has supervised the medical function of the hospital through conferences with department heads and medical audits, and is encouraged by the rising quality of medical care.

The present building frustrates acceptable medical care and has been condemned by the New Mexico Health Authorities. The Luke Society is carefully considering a building program staged according to financial resources, the first stage of which is an outpatient facility.

Medical care at Rehoboth Christian Hospital has been approved by Medicare on condition that present condemned facilities are replaced.

The Nigerian Dental Clinic

In response to Synod's instruction (Acts of Synod, 1966, P. 74, Art. 100, II, B, 3) the Luke Society assisted the Foreign Mission Board's dental committee (Rev. J. Blankespoor, Rev. J. Gunnink, G. A. Mulder, M.D., and Rev. H. J. Evenhouse) as it studied the proper place of dentistry in our foreign mission program. The Foreign Mission Board is reporting this study to the Synod of 1967. The recommendations made in this report will require an expenditure of Luke Society funds. We heartily agree with the recommendation that the Luke Society assist in the procurement of personnel and finances for supplies and equipment. In addition, a document entitled "Suggestions With Regard To Specifics of Pre-departure Dental Examinations" was presented to the Foreign Mission Board for their consideration.

In 1965, the Luke Society obtained and tested water samples from Jos, Nigeria, which were found to have no fluoride. Medical and Dental authorities are agreed that fluoride greatly reduces the incidence of dental caries, a problem which particularly exists in American children due to diet. The medical committee of our mission in Nigeria recognizes this and asked the Luke Society to design a program to correct this. The Luke Society has done this. The need for fluoride exists in all of the children attending Hillcrest School in Jos. Therefore, in answer to the request of the Nigerian medical committee and the Luke Society, a leading pharmaceutical company has donated to date 25,000 fluoride tablets, and the C.R.W.R.C. has recently donated 50,000 fluoride

tablets. We are also corresponding with the Christian Medical Society and its arm, the Medical Assistance Program, to obtain further supplies.

During the past year the Luke Society has cooperated with the Foreign Mission Board by procuring the services of Drs. D. Goris and B. Hoffman for interim short term dental service in our Nigerian mission program (c.f. Acts of Synod 1966, P. 74, Art. 100, II, B, 4). This staffing of the Nigerian Dental Clinic in 1967 will not require funds from the Foreign Mission Board (c.f. Acts of Synod 1966, P. 74, Art. 100, II, B, 5). The \$1,000.00 loan from the Foreign Mission Board in 1966 to staff the Nigerian Dental Clinic has been partially repaid.

Therefore, the Luke Society Respectfully Requests:

1) That Synod concur with the recommendation of the Foreign Mission Board (re: Foreign Mission Board recommendation to Synod 1967 on: "The Place of Dental Care in Our Foreign Mission Activity." (V.C. 1, 2, & 3)

2) that Synod place The Luke Society on the list of approved causes, with the clear understanding that offerings will not be requested by The Luke Society from the churches or classis, but may be requested from societies within a congregation, and

3) that Synod grant the privilege of the floor to the undersigned on Luke Society matters.

Grounds for (2) above:

The expanding financial obligations of The Luke Society programs require that we obtain financial support outside the membership of The Luke Society, on a denominational basis.

Reasons:

1) The Christian witness at Rehoboth Christian Hospital, and the Nigerian Dental Clinic merits the recognition and support of the members of the Christian Reformed Church.

2) The expansion of dental services in Nigeria (re: Foreign Mission Board recommendation to Synod 1967 on: "The Place of Dental Care in Our Foreign Mission Activity" will require additional expenditures for "supplies and equipment."

3) Additional expenditures will be necessary earlier than anticipated in order to comply with medicare regulations and New Mexico Public Health regulations . . . to continue in the "tradition of Rehoboth" (Synod 1964).

Respectfully submitted,

Henry Evenhouse, M.D., Alternate Reporter
 Melvin Gesink, M.D., President
 Gilbert Den Dulk, M.D. Vice-pres.
 Gary Ritsema, D.D.S., Treasurer
 Robert Plekker, D.D.S., Chairman
 Nigerian Dental Clinic
 Raymond De Haan, M.D.
 Roger Hamstra, M.D., Secretary

REHOBOTH CHRISTIAN HOSPITAL

Comparative Statistical Report

Exhibit 1

	1964*	1965	1966
Admissions—Regular	540	923	1,061
—Newborn	72	124	173
Discharges—Regular		934	1,069
—Newborn		120	172
Hospital Days—Regular	3,300	5,346	5,950
—Newborn	420	545	846
Percent of—Regular	30	48.8	54.3
Occupancy—Newborn	11	15	23.2
Average Stay—Regular	6	5.2	5.5
—Newborn	5.8	4.5	4.7
Deaths	8	18	28
Out-patient Visits			
Indian	6,148	6,822	6,287
Non-Indian	1,844	6,447	13,384
Students	1,344	1,179	873
	9,336	14,448	20,544
Average Per Day			
Out-Patient Visits	26	40	55
Laboratory Tests			
In-Patient		3,394	5,029
Out-Patient		2,834	4,106
		6,228	9,135
X-Ray Examinations			
In-Patient		632	835
Out-Patient		739	908
		1,371	1,743

Statement of Services Performed for the Christian Reformed Home Mission Board

For the Year Ended December 31, 1966

Exhibit 2

Basic Grant		\$43,000.00
Rent—Land and Buildings		16,800.00
		\$59,800.00
Services Performed by the Hospital		
	Billing	Cost
Mission Students	\$ 4,708.75	\$ 3,598.29
Mission Personnel	10,139.00	7,747.92
	\$14,847.75	11,346.21
Free Service — Indians	61,445.62	46,954.90
	\$76,293.37	58,301.11
Excess of grant and rent over services at cost.....		1,498.89

Allowance to Mission Students, Mission Personnel and Indigent Indians		
Services Billed	\$76,293.37	
Cost of Services	58,301.11	
		<u>17,992.26</u>
Net Allowance by Hospital.....		\$16,493.37

Financial Statement

Exhibit 3

Statement of Receipts and Disbursements, Year Ending December 31, 1966

Cash on Hand, January 1, 1966.....			\$1,209.76
		Receipts	Disbursements
Membership and Dues	\$3,150.00		
Contributions	1,924.54		
Nigerian Dental Clinic	330.00	\$ 746.04	
Office Supplies		633.46	
Postage		496.50	
Printing		211.50	
Travel Expense	2,354.79	3,899.53	
Salaries		944.92	
Telephone		354.00	
Legal Fees		706.00	
Miscellaneous		818.95	
Total Receipts, 1966	\$7,759.33		
Total Disbursements, 1966		\$8,321.73	
Balance on Hand, January 1, 1967.....			\$ 647.36
Repayment of Foreign Mission Board Loans:			
Foreign Mission Board	\$1,250.00		
Accounts Payable:			
Foreign Mission Board	\$ 750.00		
Holland & Hart (Legal Fees)	130.00		
Escrow — Mountain States			
Tel. & Tel. (Deposit)	100.00		

Respectfully Submitted,
Gary Ritsema, D.D.S., Treasurer

Audited and found correct by:
Roger D. Hamstra, M.D.

REPORT 27

SUNDAY SCHOOL COMMITTEE

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

Your Sunday School committee presents its annual report to Synod. The committee met monthly throughout the year in addition to special meetings due to the increasing demands on the committee.

I. PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLICATIONS.

A. The six weekly papers have been published without interruption: Bible Stories, Bible Light, Bible Guide, Bible Truth, Bible Crusader, and Bible Studies.

B. The Key to the Sunday School lesson has been published quarterly.

C. The average number of papers published in 1966 is as follows:

Bible Stories	19,200 copies weekly
Bible Light	22,027 copies weekly
Bible Guide	19,808 copies weekly
Bible Truth	23,807 copies weekly
Bible Crusader	10,338 copies weekly
Bible Studies	3,282 copies weekly
The Key to the Sunday School Lesson	11,250 copies semi-quarterly

Average total weekly papers for 1966	98,462
Average total weekly papers for 1965	98,135
	Increase.....327 copies
Average total copies of The Key for 1966	11,250
Average total copies of The Key for 1965	11,150
	Increase.....100 copies

During the year 1966 the following amount of Pre-school material was sold:

	Little Ones' Bible Stories	Little Ones' Bible Activities	Little Ones' Bible Pictures	Teacher Manuals
Course I	11,267	10,272	373	232
Course II	6,629	6,109	—	131
Total sold	17,896	16,381	373	363

Samples: Course I — 340 packets

We supply the following approximate quantities to churches and missions of other denominations:

Bible Stories	1,400 copies weekly
Bible Light	2,000 copies weekly
Bible Guide	2,250 copies weekly

Bible Truth	2,200 copies weekly
Bible Crusader	750 copies weekly
Bible Studies	225 copies weekly
The Key	2,500 copies semi-quarterly

At this time the Sunday school committee expresses its appreciation for the resources and facilities of the Publishing House.

II. THE SUNDAY SCHOOL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION.

A part of the Sunday school committee's activity this past year has included consultation with the committee for the study of possible areas of cooperation between the Sunday school committee and the Committee on Education.

The Sunday school committee endorses in principle the study committee's plan of consolidation, but at the moment has not read its complete report. Our committee, therefore, reserves the right to reply, if it so desires, in a supplementary report.

The Sunday school committee wishes to call the attention of Synod to the following matters of concern in this connection.

A. Editors.

1. Should Synod adopt the proposals of its study committee, the Sunday school committee is of the opinion that all editors be theologically and pedagogically trained, preferably ordained men, since they will be expounding Scripture with exegesis and interpretation for which theological training is essential.

2. The Sunday school committee also feels that all editors should be appointed directly by Synod since in their work they will be representing the denomination.

B. Editorial needs.

In the event the study committee's proposal is not adopted, the Sunday school committee respectfully calls Synod's attention to its great need for a full time editor, as requested already of the Synod of 1966. Much necessary work is left undone, and the desired progress has not been made because of the lack of full time editorial service. We are grateful for the fine work of our part time editor, Rev. John Schaal.

1. Recommendations:

a. We recommend the appointment of a full time editor for the Sunday school papers, the appointment subject to the rules of Synod for such appointments.

Ground: The growth in both the number of publications and the number of each publication used has demanded increased editorial work in the following areas:

1) More writers must be obtained and more editorial work is required.

2) More attention needs to be given to promotion and to correspondence with churches of our own and other denominations who are using our Sunday school materials or are interested in them.

3) More numerous and more diverse demands for different kinds of materials and emphases, due to the wide range of needs among churches using our Sunday school papers.

4) More requests for teaching aids, conventions, workshops, conferences, and general leadership work from those using our materials.

5) Greater time required for lesson planning and for discussing and developing new ideas to meet both present and future needs.

6) Need to spend more time in finding, choosing, and guiding writers to implement the kinds of changes needed to remain up-to-date and relevant.

7) Need for increased availability of the editor for consultation and planning with persons from various churches who are having problems with their Sunday school.

8) Increased availability of the editor for making the day-to-day decisions required in printing and distributing some 100,000 pieces of educational materials each week.

9) More time and planning to make our papers bear more definitely a distinctively Reformed, orthodox reflection of the Christian gospel. This is particularly necessary because these papers are used increasingly by denominational groups and individuals outside our ecclesiastical boundary.

10) Graded lessons have become imperative.

b. Rev. J. H. Schaal be appointed to the position of editor of the Sunday school papers.

Ground: Rev. J. H. Schaal is conversant with the field and has served satisfactorily as a part time editor for twenty two years.

III. CURRICULUM AND EXPERIMENT.

A. Presently a committee is planning to prepare a carefully designed questionnaire survey for the Sunday schools and other related agencies to collect data for future planning and improvement of the Sunday school material. This information will contribute to planning the curriculum in the future.

B. Because of the increased demand for graded lessons, a committee is considering the development of experimental materials for one particular age level. The results of this experiment will help the committee in planning and developing lessons in the future.

C. There is an increased awareness in our churches that the Sunday school does not fulfill its function. A variety of reasons may be given, but your committee senses keenly the lack of educational aids for the teacher. Because of the wide area of common concern, the committee on Education in conjunction with the Sunday school committee is concerning itself with teacher education: by having workshops for teacher training, film-strips, manuals and demonstrations.

IV. PUBLIC RELATIONS.

A. In November 1966, a meeting was held for writers in the Grand Rapids area and the members of the Sunday school committee. After the

committee's personal interviews with writers, a joint meeting was held for an interchange of ideas. The committee as well as the writers were alerted to new ideas which will be evidenced in improved publications.

B. Members of the Sunday school committee visited several Michigan classes, presenting the Sunday school publications and urging the churches to inform the committee of their wants.

C. Rev. J. H. Schaal wrote an article for *THE BANNER* stressing the importance of the Sunday school in our present age. An article written by the secretary of the committee, Mrs. Henry Ippel, also appeared with a picture of the workshop group held in November.

D. Members of the Sunday school committee have also during the course of the year appeared at various public meetings representing the cause of the Sunday school. In early December the editor met with the superintendents and teachers of the Denver, Colorado, area for discussion of needs, papers, and policy. Fruitful ideas and suggestions were obtained.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. If the Synod does not adopt the proposal of the Study committee, we request the appointment of a full time editor for the Sunday school papers.

B. We request that Rev. J. H. Schaal be appointed to the position of editor to our Sunday school papers.

C. We request that Rev. William Vander Hoven and Rev. J. H. Schaal represent the Sunday school committee at Synod. Alternate: Rev. S. Kramer.

D. We request that the detailed lesson plan for 1968 be adopted.

E. Elections: Elect one of each group.

- 1) Herbert Kramer or Willard Willink
- 2) Mrs. Henry Schelhaas or Miss Nell De Jonge

Respectfully submitted,

The Sunday school committee

Rev. William Vander Hoven, President

Dr. Dennis Hoekstra, Vice-President

Mrs. Henry Ippel, Secretary

Mrs. John Guichelaar

Mr. Henry Hoekstra

Rev. Siebert Kramer

Mr. Marion Vos

Rev. John H. Schaal, Editor

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON PLAN — 1968

First Quarter

		Unit I: Jesus Begins His Ministry
Jan.	7	Unit title: Jesus Begins His Ministry
		Lesson theme: Life's "must"
		Lesson Scripture: Luke 2:41-52
		Supplementary references: Matt. 26:53, 54; John 3:14, 9:4; Heb. 11:6
		Lesson title: The boy Jesus aware of His calling
		Picture title: "I must be about my Father's business"
		Printed text: Luke 2:41-52

- Jan. 14 Unit title: **Jesus Begins His Ministry**
 (Mission) Lesson theme: The Savior pointed out
 Lesson Scripture: John 1:6-34
 Supplementary references: Psalm 66:16; Matt. 28:19; Acts 1:8; II Cor. 4:13
 Lesson title: Jesus introduced as the Lamb of God
 Picture title: "Behold, the Lamb of God"
 Printed text: John 1:19-34
- Jan. 21 Unit title: **Jesus Begins His Ministry**
 Lesson theme: Power (strength) to resist the devil
 Lesson Scripture: Matt. 4:1-11
 Supplementary references: Luke 4:1-13; Eph. 6:10-13; Heb. 2:14, 15;
 James 4:7; I Peter 5:8, 9
 Lesson title: Jesus resisting Satan's temptation
 Picture title: "Get thee hence" (or, "Begone!")
 Printed text: Matt. 4:1-11 (also Eph. 6:10-12?)
- Jan. 28 Unit title: **Jesus Begins His Ministry**
 Lesson theme: Followers attracted to the Savior
 Lesson Scripture: John 1:35-51
 Supplementary references: John 12:32; 15: 16, 19; 6:44; I Cor. 2:14;
 Jer. 31:3; Hosea 11:4
 Lesson title: Jesus choosing His first disciples
 Picture title: "Come and see"
 Printed text: John 1:35-48
- Feb. 4 Unit title: **Jesus Begins His Ministry**
 Lesson theme: The testimony of Jesus' miracles
 Lesson Scripture: John 2:1-11
 Supplementary references: John 1:14; 17:5; Matt. 11:4-6; John 3:2;
 20:30, 31; Psalm 66:16; II Cor. 5:17
 Lesson title: Jesus amazes with a miracle
 Picture title: The water became wine
 Printed text: John 2:1-11
- Unit II: Jesus Manifests His Divinity**
- Feb. 11 Unit title: **Jesus Manifests His Divinity**
 Lesson theme: Revealing the wonderful plan of salvation
 Lesson Scripture: John 3:1-21
 Supplementary references: Deut. 29:29; Ezek. 11:19; Rom. 11:33;
 II Cor. 5:17; I John 5:1
 Lesson title: Jesus reveals mysteries to Nicodemus
 Picture title: "You must be born again"
 Printed text: John 3:1-16 (if too long, 1-3, 8-16)
- Feb. 18 Unit title: **Jesus Manifests His Divinity**
 Lesson theme: Commanding that we do the impossible
 Lesson Scripture: John 5:1-18
 Supplementary references: Matt. 5:48; 22:37-39; Phil. 4:13; I Tim. 1:12
 Lesson title: Jesus heals a cripple at Bethesda
 Picture title: "Take up your bed and walk"
 Printed text: John 5:2-11
- Feb. 25 Unit title: **Jesus Manifests His Divinity**
 Lesson theme: Healing sinful hearts
 Lesson Scripture: Luke 5:27-32
 Supplementary references: Matt. 9:9-13; Mark 2:14-17; Luke 19:10
 Lesson title: Jesus declares Himself the Great Physician
 Picture title: "I came to call sinners"
 Printed text: Luke 5:17-32

- Mar. 3 Unit title: Jesus Manifests His Divinity
Lesson theme: Showing the pity (compassion) and power of God
Lesson Scripture: Luke 7:11-17
Supplementary references: Isa. 63:9; Matt. 14:14; John 5:25-29;
Rev. 1:18, 21:4
Lesson title: Jesus raises a widow's son
Picture title: "Weep not"
Printed text: Luke 7:11-17
- Mar. 10 Unit title: Jesus Manifests His Divinity
Lesson theme: Opening blinded eyes
Lesson Scripture: Mark 8:22-26
Supplementary references: Matt. 5:8; Luke 2:30; John 14:19; I John
Lesson title: Jesus gives sight to a blind man [3:2
Picture title: Jesus put His hands on him
Printed text: Mark 8:22-26
- Mar. 17 Unit title: Jesus Manifests His Divinity
Lesson theme: Showing His glory
Lesson Scripture: Mark 9:2-10
Supplementary references: John 1:14; 17:5; II Peter 1:16-18; Rev.
Lesson title: Jesus reflects heaven's glory [5:12
Picture title: "It is good to be here!"
Printed text: Mark 9:2-10
- Unit III: Jesus Demonstrates His Saving Love**
- Mar. 24 Unit title: Jesus Demonstrates His Saving Love
Lesson theme: A love to be especially remembered
Lesson Scripture: Luke 22:7-20
Supplementary references: I Cor. 11:23-26; Psalm 103; Form for the
Lord's Supper
Lesson title: Jesus introduces the Lord's Supper
Picture title: "In remembrance of Me"
Printed text: Luke 22:7-20
- Mar. 31 Unit title: Jesus Demonstrates His Saving Love
Lesson theme: A love that made Him willing to suffer
Lesson Scripture: Luke 23:1-25
Supplementary references: Isaiah 50:6, 7; 53:3-5; Luke 19:41; John
12:27; 19:1-19; The Apostles' Creed
Lesson title: Jesus is condemned
Picture title: "Behold, the Man"
Printed text: Luke 23:13-25

Second Quarter

- April 7 Unit title: Jesus Demonstrates His Saving Love
Lesson theme: A love that knows no limit
Lesson Scripture: Luke 23:26-56
Supplementary references: John 15:13; Rom. 8:35; I John 3:16
Lesson title: Jesus lays down His life
Picture title: "Greater love hath no man . . ."
Printed text: Luke 32:33-46
- April 14 (Easter) Unit title: Jesus Demonstrates His Saving Love
Lesson theme: A love that provides great joy
Lesson Scripture: Matt. 28:1-10; Mark 16:1-8; Luke 24:1-10
Supplementary references: Isa. 53:11, 12; Heb. 12:2; Psalm 16:11;
I Peter 1:3-9
Lesson title: Jesus rises from the grave
Picture title: "He is not here!"
Printed text: Matt. 28:1-10

- Unit IV: What God Requires of Us**
- April 21 Unit title: What God Requires of Us
Lesson theme: Confession of the Name of Jesus
Lesson Scripture: Luke 5:1-11; Matt. 16:15, 16
Supplementary references: Matt. 10:32, 33; John 6:69; 11:27;
20:28; Romans 10:9; I John 4:15
Lesson title: A miraculous catch of fish
Picture title: "I am a sinful man"
Printed text: Luke 5:1-11
- April 28 Unit title: What God Requires of Us
Lesson theme: Faith in Jesus
Lesson Scripture: Luke 7:1-10
Supplementary references: Psalm 37:5; Isa. 26:3; 9:29; Heb. 11:1-6; II Tim. 1:12
Lesson title: A centurion's great faith
Picture title: "So great faith!"
Printed text: Luke 7:1-10
- May 5 Unit title: What God Requires of Us
Lesson theme: Love and service
Lesson Scripture: Luke 10:38-42; John 12:2, 3
Supplementary references: Matt. 10:42; Acts 9:6; Romans 12:1;
Eph. 6:5-8; I John 4:19
Lesson title: Love in a home in Bethany
Picture title: Martha served
Printed text: Luke 10:38-42; John 12:2, 3
- May 12 Unit title: What God Requires of Us
Lesson theme: The spirit of forgiveness or readiness to forgive
Lesson Scripture: Matt. 18:21-35
Supplementary references: Psalm 103:3-6; 130:3, 4; Matt. 6:14, 15;
Eph. 4:30-32; Col. 3:13
Lesson title: A parable about forgiving
Picture title: "Pay me what you owe!"
Printed text: Matt. 18:23-33
- May 19 Unit title: What God Requires of Us
Lesson theme: Justice and mercy
Lesson Scripture: Luke 16:10-15, 19-31
Supplementary references: Psalm 103:6; Eccl. 5:19; Micah 6:8;
Matt. 23:12; I Tim. 6:9
Lesson title: A parable condemning selfishness
Picture title: "The dogs licked his sores"
Printed text: Luke 16:19-29
- May 26 (Ascension) Unit title: What God Requires of Us
Lesson theme: Worship
Lesson Scripture: Luke 17:11-19; 24:50-53
Supplementary references: I Chron. 16:29; John 4:24; Psalm 47:2;
I Tim. 3:16; Heb. 1:6; Rev. 14:7
Lesson title: The healed leper
Picture title: He fell on his face before Jesus
Printed text: Luke 17:11-19; 24:50-53
- Unit V: What God Gives to Us**
- June 2 (Pentecost) Unit title: What God Gives to Us
Lesson theme: The presence of the Holy Spirit
Lesson Scripture: Acts 2:1-41; Romans 8:14-16
Supplementary references: Luke 11:13; John 14:16-18; Rom. 8:9;
I Cor. 3:16, 17; Gal. 5:16-26
Lesson title: The Holy Spirit came to dwell with men
Picture title: "This is what Joel foretold"
Printed text: Acts 2:1-6; 12-16; Romans 8:14-16

- June 9 Unit title: What God Gives to Us
Lesson theme: Courage to suffer and die for Him
Lesson Scripture: Acts 6:8-7:60
Supplementary references: Matt. 5:10; 10:22; Romans 8:35-39;
Heb. 11:23-25; Rev. 2:10
Lesson title: Stephen, the first martyr
Picture title: "I see the heavens opened"
Printed text: Acts 6:8-10, 7:54-60
- June 16 Unit title: What God Gives to Us
(Missions) Lesson theme: Proof of His power
Lesson Scripture: Acts 9:32-42
Supplementary references: Matt. 4:19; John 10:16; John 14:12-14;
James 5:20
Lesson title: Miracles performed by Peter
Picture title: "Tabitha, arise!"
Printed text: Acts 9:32-41
- June 23 Unit title: What God Gives to Us
Lesson theme: Guidance in His service
Lesson Scripture: Acts 10
Supplementary references: Psalm 23:3; 73:24; Isaiah 30:21; John
16:13; Acts 13:2, 16:6; Romans 8:14
Lesson title: Peter guided by a vision
Picture title: "Go with them"
Printed text: Acts 10:19-28
- June 30 Unit title: What God Gives to Us
Lesson theme: Wonderful deliverance
Lesson Scripture: Acts 12:1-24
Supplementary references: Psalm 34:19; Matt. 10:28; John 14:13,
15:7; Gal. 1:3, 4; Eph. 3:20, 21; II Tim. 4:18
Lesson title: Prison doors are opened
Picture title: The chains fell from his hands
Printed text: Acts 12:5-12

Third Quarter**Unit VI: God Creates and Directs All Things**

- July 7 Unit title: God Creates and Directs All Things
Lesson theme: God, the Almighty
Lesson Scripture: Gen. 1:1-27
Supplementary references: Job 26:7-14; Psalm 19; Romans 1:18-20;
Heb. 11:3
Lesson title: God is Creator of all
Picture title: "It was very good"
Printed text: Gen. 1:1-13 (or possibly: 1-6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26)
- July 14 Unit title: God Creates and Directs All Things
Lesson theme: Man made glorious master of creation
Lesson Scripture: Gen. 1:26-2:23
Supplementary references: Gen. 9:2; Psalm 8:4-9; James 3:7
Lesson title: God creates and blesses man
Picture title: Adam gave them names
Printed text: Gen. 2:15-23
- July 21 Unit title: God Creates and Directs All Things
Lesson theme: The sad results of man's disobedience
Lesson Scripture: Gen. 3
Supplementary references: I Sam. 12:14, 15; Psalm 130:1, 2; Isa.
59:2; Romans 5:12; 8:19-22; Eph. 5:4-6; Heb. 2:1-3
Lesson title: God withdraws because of man's sin
Picture title: God sent them out of the garden
Printed text: Gen. 3:1-9

- July 28 Unit title: God Creates and Directs All Things
Lesson theme: The mercy of God
Lesson Scripture: Gen. 4:1-16
Supplementary references: Psalm 34:18, 145:18; Isa. 30:1; Ezek. 33:11; Hag. 2:17; Rom. 2:4; II Cor. 7:10
Lesson title: God accepts Abel's offering
Picture title: Bringing gifts to God
Printed text: Gen. 4:1-12
- Aug. 4 Unit title: God Creates and Directs All Things
Lesson theme: The judgments of God
Lesson Scripture: Gen. 6-8
Supplementary references: Psalm 36:5,6; Matt. 24:29-39; II Peter 3:2-7; I John 3:2, 4:17; Jude 14, 15; Rev. 1:7
Lesson title: God saves righteous Noah
Picture title: Noah and his family enter the ark
Printed text: Gen. 7:11-21
- Aug. 11 Unit title: God Creates and Directs All Things
Lesson theme: The glory of God
Lesson Scripture: Gen. 11:1-9
Supplementary references: Psalm 19:1; 69: 30-32; Isa. 42:8; 43:7; Rom. 12:3; I Cor. 3:18-20; 6:20; James 4:10
Lesson title: God humbles man's pride
Picture title: The tower of Babel
Printed text: Gen. 11:1-9
- Unit VII: God Chooses His People**
- Aug. 18 Unit title: God Chooses His People
Lesson theme: The promises of God
Lesson Scripture: Gen. 12:1-9; 13
Supplementary references: Psalm 37:3-5; Isa. 46:11b; Acts 2:39; II Cor. 1:20; Gal. 3:6, 7; Heb. 11:1, 6, 8-10
Lesson title: God calls Abram
Picture title: Abram lets Lot choose
Printed text: Gen. 13:8-18
- Aug. 25 Unit title: God Chooses His People
Lesson theme: The chastening (or correcting) hand of God
Lesson Scripture: Gen. 19:1-30
Supplementary references: Deut. 8:5; Mark 8:34-37; II Peter 2:6-9; Rev. 3:17-19
Lesson title: God chastens wayward Lot
Picture title: Lot flees for his life
Printed text: Gen. 19:12-21
- Sept. 1 Unit title: God Chooses His People
Lesson theme: The sovereignty and the mercy of God
Lesson Scripture: Gen. 21:1-20
Supplementary references: Psalm 86:15, 103:17; Isa. 64:8; Dan. 4:35
Lesson title: God chooses Isaac, rejects Ishmael
Picture title: God heard the boy's voice
Printed text: Gen. 21:12-20
- Sept. 8 Unit title: God Chooses His People
Lesson theme: The mysterious ways of God
Lesson Scripture: Gen. 22:1-19
Supplementary references: Job 23:10-14; Romans 11:33; I Cor. 13:12; Heb. 11:17-19; 12:11; I Peter 1:5-7
Lesson title: God tests Abraham's faith
Picture title: "The Lord will provide a lamb"
Printed text: Gen. 22:4-13

- Sept. 15 Unit title: God Chooses His People
Lesson theme: The irresistible will of God
Lesson Scripture: Gen. 25:19-28; 27:1-46
Supplementary references: Psalm 143:10; Prov. 19:21; Matt. 12:50;
Romans 12:2; Heb. 12:17
Lesson title: God thwarts Isaac's plan (or overrules?)
Picture title: Jacob is blessed
Printed text: Gen. 27:1-13
- Sept. 22 Unit title: God Chooses His People
Lesson theme: The saving grace of God
Lesson Scripture: Gen. 27:41-28:5, 10-22
Supplementary references: Psalm 103:11; Isa. 53:6; Micah 7:18;
Luke 5:31, 32; Eph. 2:8, 9
Lesson title: God appears to Jacob
Picture title: Jacob's dream
Printed text: Gen. 28:10-19a
- Sept. 29 Unit title: God Chooses His People
Lesson theme: Man's complete dependence on God
Lesson Scripture: Gen. 32:3-32; 33:1-20
Supplementary references: Psalm 31:19; 127:1; Isa. 12:2; I Cor.
1:25-27; II Cor. 12:9-10; II Tim. 4:18
Lesson title: God teaches Jacob to depend on Him
Picture title: Jacob wrestles with an angel
Printed text: Gen. 32:19-30

Fourth Quarter

- Unit VIII: God Guides His People
- Oct. 6 Unit title: God Guides His People
Lesson theme: God allows troubles to come
Lesson Scripture: Gen. 37, 39
Supplementary references: Job 1:6-8, 21b; 2:10b; Prov. 22:29;
Hab. 3:17, 18; I Peter 1:5-7; Rev. 2:3
Lesson title: Joseph remains true to God
Picture title: They drew him out of the pit or They sold Joseph
Printed text: Gen. 37:18-28
- Oct. 13 Unit title: God Guides His People
Lesson theme: God prepares surprises
Lesson Scripture: Gen. 40; 41:1-44, 53-57
Supplementary references: I Sam. 2:7; Luke 19:17; John 5:17;
Gal. 6:9; Heb. 10:36-38; Rev. 3:21
Lesson title: Joseph is highly honored
Picture title: Riding in the king's chariot
Printed text: Gen. 41:14-16, 39-44
- Oct. 20 Unit title: God Guides His People
Lesson theme: God has all things planned
Lesson Scripture: Gen. 42-45
Supplementary references: Gen. 3:15; Psalm 37; Isa. 53:10b, 11a;
Luke 12:7; I Cor. 2:7; II Tim. 4:18; Psalm 37:3-5
Lesson title: God brings His people to Egypt
Picture title: "I am Joseph!"
Printed text: Gen. 45:1-10
- Oct. 27 Unit title: God Guides His People
Lesson theme: Faith in God gives ground for courage
Lesson Scripture: Exod. 1:6—2:10
Supplementary references: Psalm 3:6; Romans 10:11; Eph. 6:10-
16; Phil. 4:6, 13; Heb. 11:1, 23
Lesson title: Faith made a mother brave
Picture title: She put the basket in the river
Printed text: Exod. 2:1-10

- Nov. 3 Unit title: God Guides His People
 (Missions) Lesson theme: God calls men to work in His Kingdom
 Lesson Scripture: Exod. 2:11-4:17
 Supplementary references: Matt. 7:21; 9:38; 12:50; Acts 2:3;
 26:19; Eph. 4:11, 12
 Lesson title: God calls Moses to be the leader of Israel
 Picture title: Moses heard the voice from the bush
 Printed text: Exod. 3:1-8a
- Nov. 10 Unit title: God Guides His People
 Lesson theme: God declares Himself Lord of lords
 Lesson Scripture: Exod. 4:27-6:8
 Supplementary references: Job 9:1-4; Psalm 13; Prov. 11:3; Eccl.
 8:11-13; Rom. 2:4-6; Heb. 4:7
 Lesson title: Pharaoh dares to defy God
 Picture title: "Go get you your straw!"
 Printed text: Exod. 5:15-6:2
- Nov. 17 Unit title: God Guides His People
 Lesson theme: God proves Himself Almighty Lord
 Lesson Scripture: Exod. 7:14-10:27
 Supplementary references: Job 5:8, 9; 26:5-14; 28:24-28; Psalm
 14:1; 19:1-6; 139:14; Luke 12:27; Rom. 1:18-21
 Lesson title: God shows His might to Pharaoh
 Picture title: Moses prays for the storm to cease (Exod. 9:33)
 Printed text: Exod. 9:23-33
- Unit IX: God Saves His People**
- Nov. 24 Unit title: God Saves His People
 Lesson theme: God Saves through sacrifice of a Lamb
 Lesson Scripture: Exod. 12:1-37
 Supplementary references: Luke 22:19, 20; Rom. 5:9, 10; I Peter
 1:18, 19
 Lesson title: The angel of death passes over Israel
 Picture title: "When I see the blood"
 Printed text: Exod. 12:21-29
- Dec. 1 Unit title: God Saves His People
 Lesson theme: God rescues from the powers of evil
 Lesson Scripture: Exod. 13-17; 15:21
 Supplementary references: I Chron. 29:11; II Chron. 16:9a; Dan.
 6:22; John 16:33; II Tim. 4:18; I John 5:4, 5; Rev. 17:14
 Lesson title: Pharaoh and his hosts are drowned
 Picture title: The waters were a wall
 Printed text: Exod. 14:13-21
- Dec. 8 Unit title: God Saves His People
 Lesson theme: God tests and humbles His people
 Lesson Scripture: Exod. 15:22-16:15; Deut. 8:2-6
 Supplementary references: Psalm 37:3-5; Prov. 30:8b, 9; Isa. 26:3;
 Micah 6:8c; Matt. 6:31-33; II Cor. 4:17
 Lesson title: God supplies food and drink
 Picture title: Bread from heaven
 Printed text: Exod. 16:1-8
- Dec. 15 Unit title: God Saves His People
 Lesson theme: God provides though faith is weak
 Lesson Scripture: Exod. 17:1-13
 Supplementary references: Gen. 17:17; Matt. 14:31; Mark 9:24;
 Luke 1:20; Rom. 5:7, 8; 11:20-24
 Lesson title: Water flows from rock; and a battle is won
 Picture title: Aaron and Hur support Moses' hands
 Printed text: Exod. 17:3-11

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- Dec. 22 Unit title: God Saves His People
Lesson theme: God provides eternal salvation
Lesson Scripture: Luke 2:1-20; John 3:16
Supplementary references: Exod. 12:5; John 1:29; I Peter 1:19, 20;
Rev. 5:6; II Cor. 8:9; Heb. 10:5-10; I John 4:9
Lesson title: God sends His Son to be our Savior
Picture title: The shepherds in the field
Printed text: Luke 2:8-19
- Dec. 29 Unit title: God Saves His People
Lesson theme: God's people are gathered from all nations
Lesson Scripture: Matt. 2:1-23
Supplementary references: Gen. 22:18; Psalm 22:27; Matt. 28:19;
John 12:32; Acts 2:21, 10:35
Lesson title: Wise men come from afar
Picture title: Gifts for Baby Jesus
Printed text: Matt. 2:1-11

REPORT 28

THE EVANGELICAL LITERATURE LEAGUE (T.E.L.L.)

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

The ministry of The Evangelical Literature League has continued to grow during the past year and has been blessed by the Lord in its program. Numerous letters received in the office testify to many opportunities that present themselves in the distribution of Christian literature in Spanish speaking countries as well as to spiritual blessings that have resulted. It is our hope and prayer that the Lord will continue to use this ministry in an effective way for the extension of His Kingdom.

During the past year particular emphasis has been placed on clarifying objectives and evaluating literature distributed. We desire to provide literature for a variety of people, i.e. the pastor and student, the 'man in the street', the youthful reader, etc. We are not interested in duplicating the efforts of many other Christian book publishers. We are committed to the production and distribution of literature which is in harmony with the confessional standards of the Christian Reformed Church and the Reformed Church in America. Special consideration is given those works recommended by our missionaries concerning books they feel to be particularly effective or useful and in the interest of the Reformed faith in general. We are deeply grateful for the cooperation shown by our missionaries in evaluating both existing and suggested titles for distribution, in order to determine their particular usefulness in the mission program of the church.

We are grateful for the response shown by our missionaries and for the use of literature being made by them as well as others through whom books and tracts are distributed. During 1966 25,000 books were sold at subsidized prices; 750,000 tracts were distributed free and 25,000 copies of *El Heroe Cristiano*, a children's magazine, were distributed free or at modest charge.

Among titles of books distributed by T.E.L.L. appear a number of authors whose names are very familiar in Reformed circles: A. Pieters, J. Bavinck, J. K. Van Baalen, T. Van Halsema, L. Berkhof, H. H. Meeter, R. B. Kuiper, and others. More recently, based on recommendations received from Rev. C. Schemper, representing the Christian Reformed missionaries in Mexico, it has been decided to proceed with the publication of the following books, already translated in Mexico: *Introduction of the Old Testament*—Edw. Young; *New Testament Survey*—M. Tenney; and *Commentary of Pastoral Epistles*—J. Calvin. While the translation and publication of a book is normally a time consuming process, every effort will be made to have these books ready for distribution as soon as possible.

Carrying out the daily activity of any organization are the people who faithfully execute their tasks. In this area T.E.L.L. has experienced change also. The position of Executive Director is currently vacant, with the resignation of Mr. David Vila who resigned in order to devote more time to other responsibilities. Mr. John Yff—who came to T.E.L.L. from other ‘retirement’—has, with the increasing work load, turned over the responsibilities of Business Manager to Mr. Antonio Rubio. Mr. Rubio formerly served T.E.L.L. in this same capacity. To these men as well as others in the office, including numerous volunteers who have given of their time, we are grateful for dedicated service. We are thankful too, for the prayerful and financial support of churches, societies and individuals which have enabled this program to be carried on.

The Board of Directors of T.E.L.L. is comprised of Christian businessmen from the Reformed and Christian Reformed churches. They are dedicated to the objective of publishing and distributing Christian literature, in the Spanish language, which is in harmony with the confessional standards of the denominations. It has been a privilege to serve as your representative on that board. To continue this ministry, we again recommend this cause for the prayerful and financial support of our churches. (A copy of our audited financial report has been submitted to the standing Advisory Budget Committee for their evaluation and recommendation.)

Respectfully submitted,

David W. Bosscher, Secretary

REPORT 29

DENOMINATIONAL HISTORICAL COMMITTEE

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

The Denominational Historical Committee is pleased to report that good progress has been made in the collection and processing of the historical records of the Christian Reformed Church. For this work we are heavily indebted to the staff and volunteer workers associated with Heritage Hall at Calvin College and Seminary. This work is under the direction of Dr. Lester De Koster and, more particularly, Dr. Herbert Brinks.

We present a brief summary of the work accomplished for Synod's information. Two projects are currently reaching completion under the direction of Rev. William Reinsma. They are the card catalog and pamphlet index. These are extremely important aids to the use of the materials which have been collected.

The card catalog is an index to the contents of every collection which has been processed until this time. The catalog includes entries by name and subject matter; for example, the Henry Schultze Papers will have card entries indicating the various topics discussed in letters, speeches, sermons, and class notes, as well as entries indicating the names of his correspondents. The card catalog is the key to the holdings of Heritage Hall. Since Rev. Reinsma began his work the catalog has grown from 2 to 12 drawers. The entry form has been standardized, and the entire catalog has been revised to conform to a standard entry form.

The pamphlet index is a guide to the nearly 2,500 pamphlets which have been collected over the past decades. The collection contains a good representation of the literature produced by the Christian Reformed Church, including sermons, catechisms, biographies, anniversary booklets, periodicals, and the like. The pamphlet index, when complete, will include the title and publication data of each pamphlet arranged alphabetically by author.

Dr. E. Y. Monsma has made steady progress in the preparation of a scrapbook. This book contains newspaper clippings collected by the late Rev. Martin Van Dyke. This huge book, already over 500 pages, contains about two thirds of the Van Dyke newspaper collections. Other projects include a photo collection which contains pictures of church leaders and a complete file of the photos taken at synodical gatherings.

A Guide to the Dutch-American Historical Collection of Western Michigan has been prepared by Dr. Brinks. This guide combines the efforts of Hope College, Calvin College, Western Theological Seminary, Calvin Theological Seminary, and the Netherlands Museum. The intensive work done in this area at Calvin is reflected in the preponderance of materials found in its holdings.

Much use of student assistance has been made in processing these materials. About thirty hours of student time per week is spent in the typing of cards and shelf lists.

A display of Heritage Hall materials is planned for Synod at the time of its meetings. The Historical Committee urges the delegates to view the display and relay their comments and suggestions for further development to the committee.

Synod will be particularly interested in the progress made in the micro-filing of church and school records. As of February 1, 1967, minutes had been picked up, filmed, and returned for 110 churches, and 64 schools. All of the Classes except one are ready to have their minutes picked up, and 58 additional churches have also indicated their readiness for this service. Other churches which have replied negatively or not at all to the invitation have been contacted again.

The following figures will indicate the size and nature of the expenditures for this program. Of the budget allotted to the Colonial Origins Collection for the school year 1966-67, the following has been expended up to February:

	<i>Budget</i>	<i>Spent</i>
Microfilming, pick-up, etc.	\$7,000.00	\$6,626.68
Supplies	1,800.00	297.00
Student Assistants	1,800.00	500.00
Full-time Assistants	10,326.00	on salary schedule

The synodical contribution to this work authorized by last year's Synod was \$7,000, which was calculated to be about one third of the anticipated expenses. The volume of response to invitations and of work processed has been such that the total budget will be overspent.

Against this background we raise the question of a synodical contribution for the forthcoming year. The highly important work of micro-filing irreplaceable records is proceeding more rapidly than anticipated. Costs of picking up and returning the materials will increase temporarily, since the bulk of the work accomplished has been for the area near Grand Rapids, leaving more distant areas still to be serviced. On the other hand, this effort, once completed, need not be repeated for several decades. It appears highly desirable, therefore, that the total budget be raised to about \$30,000 for the forthcoming year, and that Synod authorize a contribution of \$10,000 to this work. There is every reason for confidence that this work will soon taper off, and that after a few years this budget item will be unnecessary. A more precise budget request and supporting financial information will be made available to Synod's Standing Advisory Budget Committee.

One other item needs the attention of Synod. Membership on the Denominational Historical Committee, contrary to Synod's rules for committee memberships, has been unchanged since 1960. Two members of the committee have served for even longer terms. Dr. Kromminga since 1949 and Dr. Monsma since 1952. We take this occasion to urge Synod to replace these last-named members. For Synod's convenience we suggest names of suitable replacements. For continuity's sake the other two mem-

bers ought to be retained for the present, but provision should be made in the future for regular rotation of membership on this committee.

The committee expresses deep appreciation for the work of the Heritage Hall staff in bringing about the truly remarkable advance in the status of our historical holdings. In addition to the individuals named earlier in this report, we make special mention of Mr. E. R. Post, who has labored tirelessly in the acquisition and preservation of the records of churches and schools. We trust that Synod will concur in this expression of appreciation.

Recommendations:

1. That Synod allocate the sum of \$10,000 as its share in the work of preserving the denomination's historical records.
2. That Synod replace Dr. John Kromminga by the appointment of Prof. Henry Zwaanstra, and replace Dr. E. Y. Monsma by the appointment of Dr. Seymour Van Dyken as members of the Denominational Historical Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

J. H. Kromminga

E. Y. Monsma

H. Ippel

L. Oostendorp

REPORT 30

THE FAITH, PRAYER AND TRACT LEAGUE

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

We are happy to report on some items of general interest and significant progress in 1966:

— The number of tracts sold reached a record high of over 12,300,000, and the total sent out passed 17,000,000.

— The number of active distributors in the United States passed the 30,000 mark.

— The Rev. Fred Van Houten of the Warren Park, Cicero, Ill., Christian Reformed Church accepted the appointment to the Board.

— For the past several years we have printed about 1,200,000 tracts per year in India. Because of the devaluation of the rupee, we were able to print 2,100,000 in 1966 at \$1,000 less than previous years. This increased distribution brought increased response which required additional staff help to reply to those who wrote in.

— An arrangement has been worked out with the General Consistory of the Ceylon Reformed Churches whereby we publish two tracts per month in Ceylon. Response to literature evangelism has caused the General Consistory to appoint another evangelist-at-large to visit the inquirers.

— In Spain a League of Distributors has been formed to promote wider distribution of evangelical literature as governmental restrictions continue to relax.

— Our own people are increasingly using tracts in their correspondence, as they travel, in their business contacts, and in their organized evangelical efforts. We supplied 90,000 tracts without charge to various S.W.I.M. teams.

We ask that the League continue to receive the moral and financial support of our churches. A brief financial report is presented here. The audited report has been sent to the Standing Budget Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

John Keuning

Synodical Representative

Financial Report

Balance on hand, January 1, 1966		\$ 3,914.00
Receipts:		
Sale of tracts	\$97,553.33	
Donations	16,999.30	
Membership fees	1,852.47	116,405.10
		<u>\$120,319.10</u>
Disbursements:		
Printing	56,680.91	
Wages	20,061.75	
Postage	16,120.71	
Supplies	5,354.21	
Advertising	4,651.31	
Bank charges	717.30	
Artist	600.00	
Rent	1,410.00	
Social Security Tax Expense	1,163.65	
Miscellaneous expense	2,684.27	
Michigan Sales Tax	176.39	
India Branch expense	6,273.90	
Spain Branch expense	450.00	
Ceylon Branch expense	105.25	116,449.65
		<u>3,869.45</u>
Balance on hand, December 31, 1966		3,869.45
Tracts sold, 1966	12,313,927	
Tracts donated, 1966	5,148,359	
		<u>17,462,286</u>
Total sent out, 1966	17,462,286	
Total sent out, 1965	16,347,509	
Tracts printed, 1965	17,431,000	
Total printed (1922-1966)	146,896,250	

To the Faith, Prayer, and Tract League
Grand Rapids, Michigan

Gentlemen:

We have examined the books and records of your treasurer, Mr. John S. Bronsdema, and have compiled an Operating Statement on the cash basis for the year 1966.

The attached statement of cash receipts and disbursements which is compiled from the books does, in my opinion, reflect fairly the cash transactions of your League.

Respectfully submitted,
Peter B. Vander Meer, C.P.A.

REPORT 31

MINISTERS PENSION AND RELIEF ADMINISTRATION

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

The Board of Trustees of the Ministers Pension and Relief administration humbly submits the following to your honorable body.

Part I

Personnel and Organization

The board is composed of Rev. F. Huizenga, Pres.; Rev. Wm. Van Rees, Vice-pres.; Rev. M. Arnoys, Sec'y; Mr. Wm. Venema, Ass't Sec'y; Mr. Alden Walters, Treas.; Mr. Harry Meyer, Ass't Treas., and Mr. K. Bergsma.

The alternate members of the board are Rev. M. Vanderwerp, Rev. J. Guichelaar, Rev. Thomas Yff, the Messrs Dr. K. Baker, Dr. J. Harkema, M. Langeland and J. Petersen.

Since the Rev. F. Huizenga has served six years his term expires and is not eligible for re-election according to a decision of Synod. The three-year term of Mr. Alden Walters expires, but he can be re-elected. Since Mr. Harry Meyer accepted an appointment of the Foreign Mission Board to work as an accountant in Nigeria, someone needs to be elected for one year, to complete the unexpired term of Mr. Meyer.

The board presents the following nominations to Synod:

Three-year term (vote for two)

Mr. Alden Walters (incumbent) or Mr. R. Baker

Rev. J. Guichelaar (incumbent) or Rev. M. Vanderwerp

Three-year term (vote for one) *Alternate*

Rev. C. De Haan or Rev. N. Veltman

The board proposes that Dr. J. Harkema, at present an alternate member, serve the one-year term for Mr. Harry Meyer, and proposes to Synod to elect an Alternate for one year, for Dr. J. Harkema.

One-year term *Alternate* (vote for one)

Mr. Warren Faber or Mr. James Doezema

The secretary, the Rev. M. Arnoys has been appointed by the committee to represent the board at the Synod of 1967.

Part II

Information on Pensionaries

A. The following pensioners have been removed by death, since the Synod of 1966:

1. Rev. Herman Dykhouse, August 28, 1966; Rev. J. M. Ghysels, Sept.

24, 1966; Rev. Dirk Flietstra, October 28, 1966; Rev. J. J. Steigenga, November 3, 1966; Rev. George Van Der Kooi, January 21, 1967.

2. The following widows have been removed by death: Mrs. Bertha De Jonge, August 7, 1966; Mrs. S. Gerritsen, February 19, 1967; Mrs. J. H. Geerlings, Feb. 28, 1967; Mrs. J. M. Ghysels, March 13, 1967.

B. The following have received approval from their respective classes for their honorable emeritation. As committee we have the requests of their consistories and classes, and we now bring these to the Synod of 1967 for approval.

1. Classis Kalamazoo in session on January 17, 1967 approved the request of the Millwood consistory to grant honorable emeritation to the Rev. George Van Der Kooi, on the grounds of ill health. Effective February 1, 1967. The brother, however, passed away on January 21, 1967. Consequently, we now make request in behalf of the widow Mrs. Betty Van Der Kooi.

2. Classis Grand Rapids South in session January 19, 1967, at the request of Ideal Park granted honorable emeritation to the Rev. Sidney Werkema, because of failing health. Effective February 1, 1967.

C. A notification was received by your committee from Classis Zeeland, in session October 10, 1967 stating "that the reasons for the retirement of the Rev. John Moes have been removed and thereby declare the brother eligible for a call from one of our churches. His status as a retired minister terminated as of Oct. 10, 1966." We received this as information and pass it on to Synod. At no time as a retired minister did Rev. Moes receive financial aid from the fund.

D. The average salary for 1966 on the basis of 583 ministers reporting is \$6,734.52 for the year 1967. A statement of the names of the minister and salary of each, is available, should Synod so desire.

At this time (March 1967) we have 120 Emeriti ministers and 93 widows to support.

Part III

The Ministers Relief Fund

The Relief Fund was established by Synod to aid emeriti ministers and widows, and orphans whose pension may be inadequate, due to extraordinary conditions. This fund is maintained from the free will offerings of our churches, together with the donations and gifts from individuals and congregations and sometimes legacies.

A detailed statement of the Relief Fund's disbursement for the year will be submitted to the Advisory Committee of Synod, and if Synod so desires, to Synod itself in executive session. This is according to the rule of Synod.

Part IV

Matters Requiring Synodical Action

1. The committee would again like to request a \$10 quota for the Fund for 1968.

2. The approval of requested emeritations.
3. The election of two members for three years, and three alternates as proposed.

Part V.

Financial Statement of the Fund

Ministers' Pension and Relief Administration
M. Arnoys, Secretary

Financial Report

Statement of Fund Condition

Reflecting Operation for Period February 1, 1966—January 31, 1967

	Pension	Relief	Total
Balance February 1, 1966	\$266,374.39	\$54,215.43	\$320,589.82
Net Decrease	68,510.71	1,268.36	69,779.07
Balance January 31, 1967	\$197,863.68	\$52,947.07	\$250,810.75

Fund Balances Consist of:

Commercial Accounts	\$ 22,387.77	\$10,284.97	\$ 32,672.74
U.S. Treasury Bills	39,686.29		39,686.29
Certificates of Deposit	10,000.00		10,000.00
Savings Accounts	22,289.62		22,289.62
Government Securities	103,500.00	42,662.10	146,162.10
Totals	\$197,863.68	\$52,947.07	\$250,810.75

Schedule of Operation - 1966

Receipts:

Quota Payments	\$397,081.21		\$397,081.21
Ministers Contributions	155,902.47		155,902.47
Interest	9,804.74	\$ 1,342.91	11,147.65
Donations	1,016.05	1,909.25	2,925.30
Total Receipts	\$563,804.47	\$ 3,252.16	\$567,056.63

Disbursements:

Canadian Exchange Charge	\$ 5,420.35		\$ 5,420.35
Payments to Ministers	378,746.33	\$ 3,182.50	381,928.83
Payments to Widows and Orphans.....	238,878.46	1,338.02	240,216.48
Salary of Secretary	500.00		500.00
Salary of Treasurer	500.00		500.00
Clerical and Office Expense	1,087.50		1,087.50
Travel Expense	79.16		79.16
Miscellaneous Expense	828.84		828.84
Moving Expense	6,274.54		6,274.54
Total Disbursements	\$632,315.18	\$ 4,520.52	\$636,835.70
Net Decrease	\$ 68,510.71	\$ 1,268.36	\$ 69,779.07

1968 Budget					
1966 Operation of Fund Compared to Budget					
Receipts	1966 Budget	Actual	Gain	Loss	Budget 1968
Quotas	\$394,345.00	397,081.21	2,736.21		576,650.00(1)
Ministers	151,305.00	155,902.47	4,597.47		175,975.62(2)
Interest and Donations	10,000.00	14,072.95	4,072.95		10,000.00
Total Receipts	\$555,650.00	\$567,056.63	\$11,406.63		\$762,625.62
Disbursements					
To Ministers	\$376,050.00	\$381,928.83		\$5,878.83	\$450,775.00(3)
To Widows	241,040.00	240,216.48	823.52		277,400.00(4)
Administration	4,000.00	2,995.50	1,004.50		6,000.00
Moving	6,000.00	6,274.54		274.54	7,000.00
Canadian Exchange	7,000.00	5,420.35	1,579.65		6,000.00
	\$634,090.00	\$636,835.70	\$ 3,407.67	\$6,153.37	\$747,175.00
Anticipated Gain					\$ 15,450.62
Anticipated Loss..	78,440.00				
Actual Loss		\$ 69,779.07			

1966 Budget based on 59,300 families Actual 59,770.

- (1) Estimated 60,700 families at \$10.00 less 5% not paid.
- (2) 725 ministers at average salary of \$6,935.00 at 3½% —
 Average salary 1965 - \$6,313.57
 Average salary 1966 - \$6,537.03
 Average salary 1967 - \$6,734.52
- (3) 130 ministers at 50% of average of \$6,935.00 (130 x 3,467.50 = \$450,775) the budget for 1966 was based on 115. As of February 1, 1967, there were 119 ministers receiving pensions.
- (4) 100 widows at 40% of average salary of \$6,935 (100 x \$2,774 = \$277,400) the budget for 1966 was based on 92. As of February 1, 1967, there were 95 widows receiving pensions.

A. Walters, Treas.

REPORT 32

THE UNORDAINED EMPLOYEES PENSION PLAN

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

In compliance with the decisions of the Synod of 1966 (cf. Art. 88, X, Acts of Synod of 1966, page 66), your Unordained Employees Pension Committee has instituted a Pension and Life Insurance Plan through the Occidental Life Insurance Company of California, effective January 1, 1967. The complete plan is on file with the Stated Clerk. The provisions of the Plan, in general, are much the same as outlined in the Proposed Outline of the Plan (see Supplement 10-A, Acts of Synod of 1966, pages 178-181) with the exception of the vesting schedule, as follows:

First five years—No vesting.

Years six through nine—5% for each year.

Years ten through seventeen—10% for each year.

The unordained employees of the Back to God Hour, Calvin College and Seminary (except faculty personnel), Board of Foreign Missions, Board of Home Missions, and Rehoboth Christian Hospital are presently enrolled in the Plan. In addition, several employees of various churches and Classical Home Mission Committees have been enrolled. The Christian Reformed World Relief Committee was desirous of enrolling its employees, but found that, because their present plan had recently been instituted, it was not to the advantage of their employees to change at this time.

There will be opportunity to enroll employees of other organizations and churches at the beginning of each new year.

Respectfully submitted,

Unordained Employees Pension Committee,

D. Vander Ploeg, Chairman

A. Bielema

G. Borst

S. De Young

L. Ippel, Secretary

REPORT 33

THE PLACE AND TRAINING OF LAYWORKERS
IN EVANGELISM

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

I. ORIGINAL MANDATE

In 1963 Synod decided to "appoint a study committee, including representatives from the Board of Home Missions, to study the place and training of layworkers in evangelism" (see *Acts of Synod 1963*, Art. 45, paragraph 1, page 28). Such a study was requested by the Board of Home Missions because, "1. There has been no definite statement on this matter to date. 2. There is no general policy concerning the standardization of employment or educational requirements. 3. The steady growth of evangelism work calls for a solution and necessary definition of the problem involved. 4. Fairness to layworkers laboring among us also calls for attention to these problems" (see *Acts of Synod 1963*, Supplement 32-A, paragraph D, page 392).

II. NEW MANDATE FROM SYNOD OF 1965

Your committee presented recommendations to the Synod of 1965, proposing that full-time male layworkers in evangelism be called "licensed evangelists." However, Synod decided to "recommit the matter of the place and training of layworkers to the committee for further study to report to the Synod of 1966. Grounds: a. Re the designation 'licensed evangelist' further clarification and validation is necessary, because the grounds given under the committee's recommendation for this (no. 2) do not apply to the term 'licensed evangelist' but only to the term 'evangelist.' Moreover the term 'licensed evangelist' is ambiguous in our denominational language and usage. b. Re the four-step plan set forth in the committee's recommendation No. 3, this too needs further validation and explanation because the committee has not demonstrated that the examination by a synodical committee and a classis, and the commissioning by a church are ecclesiastically defensible. Moreover the committee has not made clear the precise status of the fulltime layworker within our ecclesiastical framework."

Synod referred to the committee for consideration in its study the overture of Classis Eastern Ontario and the communication of Dr. D. L. Van Halsema (see *Acts of Synod 1966*, Art. 100, paragraph D, pages 71, 72).

After considering the communications referred to us by Synod of 1965 and facing the problems presented by the advisory committee of Synod, your committee presents new recommendations based on a different approach to the place and training of layworkers in evangelism.

III. NEW APPROACH

Our new approach is based upon the New Testament teachings about men and women in evangelism, the general history of the church, and the history of layworkers in the Christian Reformed Church. In this context we consider the role of the layworker in chapels. This role can be appraised best in light of various factors: a) The relationship of Word and sacraments in Gospel ministry and in the faith and life of believers who worship and witness together; b) The many kinds of spiritual gifts bestowed by God upon His children for service in evangelism; c) The many forms of evangelistic work which can and must be done today; d) The provisions of Christian Reformed Church Order; and e) The urgency with which the evangelistic task must be pressed in our time.

IV. THE NEW TESTAMENT ON LAYWORKERS—MEN

The Lord in His providence established offices in the Church, the ministry of the Word, the ministry of oversight, and the ministry of mercy, represented in ministers, elders, and deacons. Men were ordained to these offices and in the history of the church the offices have continued. Office-bearers were engaged in the work of proclaiming the gospel in word and deed. Those men *had* gifts, and *were* gifts of the Holy Spirit to the Church. "He *gave* some to be apostles; and some prophets; and some, evangelists; and some pastors and teachers" (Eph. 4:11).

The office-bearers, however, are not the only church members who are to be involved in the work of the church. The Holy Spirit does not confine His work to these. Many others in the Church have been given talents and have served effectively. We think of the influence of Aquila and Priscilla. The apostle Paul had many people assisting him in the work of evangelism. Philippians 4:3: "and the rest of my fellow-workers, whose names are in the book of life." Those were not all ordained to the gospel ministry. They were ordinary, talented members of the congregation.

In the New Testament we have examples of men other than office-bearers doing the work of evangelism. Ananias, who is designated as "a certain disciple at Damascus" in Acts 9:10, was used by the Lord in connection with the conversion of the apostle Paul. "And Ananias departed, and entered into the house; and laying his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, who appeared unto thee in the way which thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mayest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit. And straightway there fell from his eyes as it were scales, and he received his sight; and he arose and was baptized" (Acts 9:17, 18).

Another example is that of Barnabas, doing the work of evangelism even *before* he was separated by the Holy Spirit in Acts 13 for the work of foreign missions. Already in Acts 11:26 we read of him and Saul, "And it came to pass, that even for a whole year *they* were gathered with the church, and taught much people." Lenski says of this passage, "Energetically and in a friendly fellowship they worked, successfully teaching a large multitude and bringing them into the church" (see *Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles*, by R. C. H. Lenski, page 457).

V. UNITY OF WORD AND SACRAMENTS

Although there have been exceptions, the preaching of the Word and the administration of the sacraments have been viewed as a unity. The two ordinarily go together. In the Scripture we observe that those engaged in the preaching of the Word as the representatives of the Church also were permitted to administer the sacraments. This was true of Paul even though he did not often baptize, yet he did have the right to do it. "I thank God that I baptized none of you, save Crispus and Gaius; lest any man should say that ye were baptized into my name. And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel; not in wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made void" (II Cor. 1:14-17).

The Belgic Confession stresses the unity of Word and sacrament in Article 33, "We believe that our gracious God, taking account of our weakness and infirmities, has ordained the sacraments for us, thereby to seal unto us His promises, and to be pledges of the good will and grace of God towards us, and also to nourish and strengthen our faith; which He has *joined to the Word of the gospel*, the better to present to our senses both that which He declares to us by His Word and that which He works inwardly in our hearts, thereby confirming in us the salvation which He imparts to us" (emphasis ours).

Those who are ordained to the ministry have as their task, according to the Church Order, "to preach the Word, administer the sacraments, conduct public worship services, and catechize the youth in order that the church may be built and unbelievers won for Christ." Here the two, the Word and the sacraments, are kept together according to the Scriptural example. By way of exception theological students and other unordained men are permitted to exhort without having the authority to administer the sacraments.

VI. THE NEW TESTAMENT ON LAYWORKERS—WOMEN

The Bible indicates that women have an important place in carrying the message of salvation. Romans 16 contains references to women being active in the witness of the Church to God's grace. In verse 1 Phoebe is commended to the Roman Christians. She is believed to have been the bearer of this letter to Rome. She is described by Paul as a "servant of the church that is at Cenchreae." Her ministering was then not a personal and private effort, but a work which was authorized by the Church. Verse 2 says: "For she herself also hath been a helper of many, and of mine own self." She had been a great helper in the cause of Christianity. For this reason she was deserving of the love and honor of the Christians in Rome. Notice that she is mentioned as a helper. Her position is one described by Lenski as being of assistance. His translation is, "For also she herself has become an assistant of many, even of myself" (*Interpretation of Romans*, by R. C. H. Lenski, page 898).

Verse 3 of Romans 16 mentions Priscilla as well as her husband Aquila. An honor is accorded this woman when she is described as a

fellow-worker with Paul in Christ Jesus, as well as her husband. She co-operated with him in the work of the gospel. Acts 18:26 indicates they both taught Apollos.

Another woman mentioned in this letter is Mary. In verse 6 Paul says, "Salute Mary, who bestowed much labor on you." The word *Kopiaio* indicates hard work. It refers to growing tired and to toiling with effort. Mary is placed on this list because of her devotion to and labor for the church.

In verse 12 we read of three women who worked for the cause of Christ. Tryphaena, Tryphosa, and Porsis are mentioned as women who are prominent because of hard work performed for the Lord. They performed untiring labor, having no difficulty in finding hard work to do. They are commended for working in the church of God.

Philippians 4:2, 3 refers to two women who were active with Paul in presenting the gospel. Paul says of Euodia and Syntyche that they "labored with me in the gospel." At the time Paul wrote these two kingdom workers had a disagreement relating to the work, but they had functioned well. They had worked commendably. Paul believes they deserve to be assisted in being brought to a harmonious relationship because they are noble women. They had worked eagerly at Paul's side and also at the side of Clement and others.

There are other ways in which women were active in promoting the extension of the kingdom. In Acts 16:15 and 40 we read of the hospitality of Lydia, "If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us." "And they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia."

VII. LAYWORKERS IN THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

There is no doubt that Scripture accords a place to layworkers, both men and women, in the work of the Church. The general teaching of Scripture indicates that they may work full time in evangelistic efforts. Christian Reformed Church history contains a list of men and women who have worked with blessing in declaring God's grace in Jesus Christ. At some points layworkers were among the few reaching people outside the church. At least 25 churches have been organized as the result of the diligent labors of lay missionaries and others are in the process of organization. Both mission boards of the Christian Reformed Church employ laymen and women in the work of extending the kingdom.

Men and women have worked full time in some of our churches in the witness to the community. Visitation evangelism is being successfully used in many of our churches. With the use of volunteers under the Board of Home Missions several individuals now are giving a year of their life in this kind of service. There is urgent need for their services, and their help is welcomed. Presently our denominational missions employ 153 laymen and women as assistant to the ordained workers, teachers, nurses, and in other capacities. In addition to this the 1966 Year-book lists 43 full time lay missionaries in fields of evangelism.

In the history of the Christian Reformed Church's involvement in missions the names of women appear often. Well-known is the work of

Johanna Veenstra in Nigeria. Her work was effective, and used by the Lord of the Church. In Nigeria, Japan, Formosa, and other fields women have served as nurses, teachers, Bible women, and in other ways. Mission work among the Indians in the southwestern part of the United States has been carried on by a veritable army of men and women, many of them unordained. A history of Jewish evangelism contains a long list of women who worked in the eastern part of the United States and in Chicago. In the past we have permitted the women a place in the work of missions and evangelism. We still acknowledge that they have a place.

VIII. LESSONS FROM HISTORY

The burden of church history in east and west is that multiplication of special offices in the church is unwholesome and dangerous. We must be careful that we do not do the same thing in evangelism. We can accomplish the commission of Christ with the three special offices and by recognizing fully the role of the office of believer in evangelism.

We must recognize that the average believer in the church is important in evangelism. We have been gaining in this awareness and history ought to spur us on. The history of the church reveals the tragic result of clerical monopoly. We see what happens when the clergy is regarded as the church. The Roman Catholics are now trying to find their way out of centuries of error concerning the role of the layman in the work of the church. The editor of the *Catholic World*, January 1966, page 201, expresses concern whether the reform is great enough. He certainly rejects the attitude in which "the layman or laywoman was often considered as a dues-paying non-entity, a second class citizen, to be treated like a child and to be seen but not heard in the affairs of the church." All resources must be used for the advancement of the gospel.

IX. LAYWORKERS IN THE 20TH CENTURY

Men with special gifts, and properly prepared, could be used in nearly every church to spearhead a parish evangelism program. Our churches are becoming more alert to the challenge in their own communities. Laymen, working fulltime in evangelism, are becoming more important in the dissemination of the truth in the community. Opportunities as assistants to the pastors are opening. The possibility of working in the program of the church in counseling, teaching, as youth leaders, heading the Daily Vacation Bible School, and other specialized fields in greater now than it has ever been. We need more layworkers, specially trained in various fields to testify to God's grace in Jesus Christ, to show the mercy of our only High Priest in everyday life, and to spread the gospel as they witness in these areas.

We need more evangelistic workers than ever before in view of the population explosion; in view of the flagrant and violent disobedience to the commands of God and of men; in view of "situational ethics" and the rampant tide of immorality. We need all the workers we possibly can secure, and we ought to redouble our efforts to recruit as large an army of layworkers as possible.

What about the future involvement of unordained men and women in evangelism? We probably shall find that the areas in which they can serve will increase. The need is for many persons to prepare, with specific training, for local evangelism, home missions, foreign missions, and personal witnessing wherever they may be working. There are many ways in which their abilities can be put to use. Women can be used with great profit in instructing children in neighborhood Bible classes and in instruction of small groups of housewives. There is opportunity for women to work full time as nurses and teachers on mission fields. A full musical program for certain areas would be a real asset for bringing the gospel message. Men and women could be involved in the evangelism of a local church while serving as social workers dealing with serious family and personal problems in the community. We have begun to understand how these various vocations can be used for the advancement of the gospel, and more can be learned.

It is not the vocation of every member of the church, however, to forsake his respective calling to be engaged full time as a layworker in evangelism in order to advance the kingdom of God. The normal calling for the majority is to serve as witnesses within their vocation and there testify to those who do not know of their need of the Savior. Within the framework of their vocation the testimony can be given by words fitly spoken and by a consistent Christian life. Contact with a large number of people who do not have a living relationship with Jesus Christ is possible only if every member of the church is involved in the mission of the church, and is deeply committed to advancing the cause of the Lord Jesus Christ.

X. LAYWORKERS IN CHAPELS

The use of layworkers in chapels under Christian Reformed auspices began in 1912. A committee led by Rev. Henry J. Kuiper, then pastor of the Prospect Park Christian Reformed Church, Holland, Michigan, appointed John Vande Water as layworker in that city. In the years that followed many other layworkers were appointed throughout the denomination, some in rescue mission work and others in chapels.

Those layworkers were given assignments to work in centers separate from the local church building. The prevailing use of the Dutch language among us prevented integration of evangelization work with regular worship services and other activities of the congregation. Furthermore, social and economic differences were given weight sufficient to keep such evangelization work separate from the sponsoring congregation, even when distance was not a major factor and even when the language barrier began to disappear.

The service of layworkers in chapels has been of incalculable worth. Their zeal has fostered a growing spirit of evangelization throughout the denomination. Many chapels have grown into sturdy congregations. Hundreds have been led to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, with untold blessing to succeeding generations and to the church at large.

However, in the 65 years that layworkers have increased in numbers among us, times have changed. The language barrier has disappeared

completely, except in a few communities. We confess that we may not keep from our own congregational life and worship persons whose social, racial, and economic background is different from our own.

Furthermore, problems have arisen in connection with the office of layworkers in chapels. To people in the community a layworker is regarded as a clergyman; to the believers among whom he works he is regarded as a minister. In almost every instance, the layworker's appointment and labors were carried on without reference to Church Order or synodical regulation, even while classical examination always has been required of non-ordained persons seeking the privilege to exhort within bounds of classis.

The chapel groups often felt themselves different in spirit and emphasis from nearby, established Christian Reformed congregations. In numerous instances, chapels were perpetuated for decades with little progress towards normal church growth and organization. In many chapels, converts were required to leave natural surroundings and make artificial transfer to the sponsoring congregation, and memberships were not recorded at the chapel. Such practices obscured the working of the Holy Spirit to build a new fellowship of believers in the place where the Gospel was preached and believed upon.

Obviously, the use of layworkers and the existence of chapels no longer can be defended upon the basis of circumstances described in the previous three paragraphs.

Ordinarily when worship services are to be conducted as a part of an evangelistic project, or when a field is to be opened, an ordained man with evangelistic gifts should be appointed for this work so the Word and sacraments may be kept together. When there is difficulty in obtaining an ordained worker and when a layman can work fruitfully in close association with the consistory and pastor of the sponsoring church, a layworker with evangelistic gifts may be appointed to conduct worship services. Once the warrant for such a project has been established, the goal should be the formation of a new congregation of Jesus Christ. In the new fellowship of believers the Word is brought, professions of faith are made, sacraments are administered, memberships are recorded, and all the signs of congregational life begin to appear.

Such considerations concerning the use of the layworker in church extension-evangelism apply whether the project falls under supervision of a local consistory, a classical home missions committee, or a synodical Board of Missions.

XI. LAYWORKERS IN PARISH EVANGELISM

Synod has spoken repeatedly about the sacred obligation of each congregation to engage in local evangelism. In 1954 Synod adopted a *Guide for Neighborhood Evangelization* which stated principles to be followed in the work of evangelism. This guide makes mention of the layworker too. Under C, 4, we find "In view of the magnitude of the task and the need for direction, a full-time worker, ordained or *unordained* should be employed as soon as possible." Synod has recognized the value of the layworker in evangelism.

As our experience in parish evangelism increases, and as a growing number of workers becomes available, more congregations should appoint layworkers in evangelism. Their task in partnership with the membership of the congregation, under the pastor's leadership, and under consistorial supervision, is to help train the congregation for its witnessing responsibility and to assist fellow-members in their evangelistic ministry to their community. Women as well as men can be a great help in this type of work.

XII. LAYWORKERS AND THE CONSISTORY

There must be a close tie between the consistory and layworkers in evangelism. The relationship is one of supervision by the consistory over the layworkers. This is especially appropriate in the work of evangelism, which is the work of the Church. Consider Article 24 of the Church Order, "The elders, with the minister(s), shall have supervision over the congregation and their fellow office-bearers, exercising admonition and discipline and seeing to it that everything is done decently and in order. They shall, with the minister(s), exercise pastoral care over the congregation, and *engage in and promote the work of evangelism.*" Article 74 of the Church Order is also to the point here: "Each church shall bring the gospel to unbelievers in its own community. This task shall be sponsored and governed by the consistory."

It should be kept in mind that the unordained worker is in a position different from that of a man ordained to the gospel ministry. Synod of 1948 recognized this when it said about unordained workers on the Indian field, "The unordained worker shall labor only as an assistant to the ordained missionary, carrying out his labors as much as possible under his direct supervision and direction" (see Acts of Synod 1948, D, 1, page 80). Both the minister of the gospel and the layworker are under the supervision of the elders of the church, though their position is not the same.

XIII. TRAINING OF THE LAYWORKER

Representatives of Christ and His Church ought to be well trained to meet the contemporary world. The Church always has believed that this was necessary for those who enter the ministry of the Word and sacraments. Present attempts to adjust and improve the curriculum in our colleges and seminary indicate that concern for well-trained representatives of the Lord is present. Our ministers do not receive more training than is necessary in the latter part of the 20th century. An increasing number of our ministers is receiving more than the seven years of training beyond high school because of the need for better preparation in an age complicated by heresy and increasing education. The need is for more, not less, education.

It is understandable that those who are going to be involved in the mission of the church on a full-time basis without ordination also will have to be more highly educated than before. They must be able to communicate on the same level with those to whom they witness. Your committee believes that the rising standards of the Reformed Bible

Institute, where most of our layworkers receive their training, are commendable. Churches and boards which employ layworkers ought to seek those best prepared spiritually and educationally for their work, and ought to provide incentives for their workers to improve their educational qualifications.

Men and women interested in serving as full-time layworkers in evangelism ought to receive specialized training in those areas in which they are best qualified and most interested. If they plan to be active in a visitation program of evangelism, this requires specific knowledge and training. If education will be the emphasis, for example in Daily Vacation Bible School, Bible classes, Sunday school, another type of training will be necessary. The training will have to fit the goal that is in mind. Specific training for working with young people in evangelism will be necessary. Some subjects will be taken by all full-time layworkers, but there will be specialization.*

Prospective full-time layworkers need to be trained in a type of education that will make them able witnesses of the Gospel and respectable representatives of Christ to their fellowmen. The layworker looking forward to employment in evangelism should follow a four-year program at an accredited Bible School or Christian College. These are areas in which they must be trained:

A. *Core area*: A well-rounded education in the humanities and a basic grasp of the sciences.

B. *Bible-Theology area*: Individual and collective Bible book study and exegetical courses. Basic and advanced doctrine courses. Courses in comparative religions and sects; in contemporary theological teachings and trends; in philosophical, political, and anti-Christian systems such as communism and nihilism.

C. *Specialized areas*: Evangelism and Missions, Christian Education, Music, Sociology and Anthropology.

D. *Practical area*: Field Work and Christian Service assignments to provide practical experience.

XIV. OUTLOOK AND URGENCY

Your committee prayerfully submits its report to Synod in the hope that its work will be used by God for the stimulation of evangelistic endeavor throughout all of our congregations. Our common hope is that an ever-increasing number of layworkers, men and women, will

*The church ought to make adjustments in the case of men who later in life seek admission to the ministry of the Word and the sacraments. Certain factors in a man's life, such as age and previous experience, may indicate that part of the usual pre-seminary requirements should be waived. This should be considered by Synod. (Certain college courses could be selected as requirements for entrance into the seminary, but not all four years would be required in view of other training or experience. The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has a plan for such delayed vocations. This could be studied and a plan suitable for our situation could be worked out.)

hear God's call and dedicate themselves to this ministry wherever the Lord may lead them.

The situation around us is most urgent. While material ease threatens to choke the church's spiritual life, atheism and the spirit of anti-christ oppose Christ's people from without. God's will is that we proclaim Christ by every means at our disposal. The Holy Spirit empowers us.

Let us pray for, train, and send out thousands of layworkers in this generation.

XV. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

A. *Every Christian a Witness.* Every Christian is called upon to be a witness for his Lord in all of life. Increased alertness to opportunities is necessary. Men, women, and young people can and ought to be used in local evangelism programs as volunteers, in addition to those who may be hired.

B. *More Full-time Workers Needed.* Because of the population growth and the moral-spiritual decay of our age, there is a pressing need for an increased number of men and women in the work of evangelism on a full-time basis.

C. *The Church Must Accept Those Whom the Spirit Endows.* The church must receive and use men and women to whom the Holy Spirit gives gifts that are useful in evangelization who will serve as co-laborers with the ordained clergy to bring the Gospel under supervision of the church.

D. *Variety of Gifts.* The Lord gives many gifts to laymen for service in evangelism: the ability to speak, qualifications for youth work, community work, mercy, education, music, secretarial work, language, visitation and survey work. All these gifts should be used for evangelization.

E. *Women Included as well as Men.* Women who have unique gifts for the work of evangelism should be encouraged to use them, in subordination to the man.

F. *Consistorial Supervision.* Unordained workers in evangelism must work under the supervision of the special offices on the mission field and under the supervision of the consistory in the area of local churches.

G. *Training.* Every Christian involved in evangelization, whether in daily witness, volunteer involvement in the church's program, or full time work, must seek training for the task. Training should be of Reformed Biblical character. Prospective full-time layworkers must be trained along the lines described in Section XIII.

H. *Remuneration.* The layworker ought to be paid adequately for his or her work. Those who employ layworkers for evangelization should be guided by the pay schedules set by the denominational mission boards, and they should take advantage of the pension plan for unordained workers in order to give more security to those in their employment.

I. *Qualifications.* Churches and boards employing layworkers for evangelization ought to examine carefully the personal qualifications

and the training received by each one, in order that the work may be done as well as possible and thus to the greater glory of God.

J. Layworkers and Worship Services. Ordinarily when worship services are to be conducted as a part of an evangelistic project, or when a field is to be opened, an ordained man with evangelistic gifts should be appointed for this work so that the Word and sacraments may be kept together. When there is difficulty in obtaining an ordained worker and when a layman can work fruitfully in close association with the consistory and pastor of the sponsoring church, a layworker with evangelistic gifts may be appointed to conduct worship services.

K. Licensure to Conduct Worship Services. Full-time layworkers must request licensure to exhort from the classis within whose boundaries their work is to be performed. This is in the spirit of the Church Order, Art. 43. Also Art. 53-b of the Church Order must be duly observed.

L. Admission to the Gospel Ministry. Layworkers under the conviction of the Holy Spirit that they ought to be ordained, who have special gifts, much experience, and whose work has been fruitful, ought to seek admission to the ministry of the Gospel by way of a modified pre-theological and theological training. (Persons experiencing "delayed vocation" for the ministry should be assisted in the same way.)

XVI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Your committee respectfully requests that:

1. The chairman and secretary of the committee be granted the privilege of the floor when this report is being considered.
2. Synod approve the general conclusions.
3. Synod discharge the committee and declare that its mandate has been fulfilled by submission of this report.

ADDENDUM

At the meeting of Classis Kalamazoo, held January 17, 1967, the following overture was received:

"The Consistory of the Milwood Christian Reformed Church overtures Classis to overture Synod to authorize layworkers who regularly conduct weekly services under the direction of a consistory to solemnize marriages."

Classis decided to direct this overture in the form of a communication to your committee. Your committee recommends no action by Synod on this matter because of the variation in laws of states and provinces where our layworkers are laboring.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Guichelaar, Chairman
 J. Vander Laan, Secretary
 M. Baarman
 D. Bosscher
 H. Hoekstra
 J. Schaal
 D. Van Halsema

REPORT 34

COMMISSION TO STUDY THE PROBLEM OF ORIGINS

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

In accordance with the instructions of the Synod of 1966, your Committee herewith submits to the Synod of 1967 its advice in regards to the matters submitted to it.

I. HISTORY:

The Synod of 1966 received three separate overtures (Overtures 19, 22, and 28) calling for a study by Synod of matters related to the problem of origins. Two of these appeared in the printed Agenda, the third was submitted too late for that publication, and so came to Synod directly. In order that the matters involved may be clearly before you, we quote the analysis of these overtures presented by the advisory committee of the last Synod.

1. Overture 19 is a request by Mr. Jack Arens "to appoint a committee to study the teaching of Scripture in relation to the subject of creation and evolution." He asks that the committee address itself especially to these questions:

"a. Must we accept the historicity of Genesis 1, 2, and 3, or are these chapters to be viewed as being symbolic?

"b. The Bible repeatedly states that all things were created in six days. Is it Scriptural to assume that these 'days' were very long periods of time—maybe millions of years?

"c. Was Adam really the first man created by God as traditionally accepted, or did he develop gradually from some lower form of animal under the direction of God, as the theistic evolutionists claim?"

2. Overture 22 is a request by the Consistory of the First Christian Reformed Church of Kalamazoo that Synod "appoint a study committee to define the doctrinal position of the Christian Reformed Church with regard to the teaching of Atheistic Evolution and more particularly that of Theistic Evolution." It asks that the specific mandate of the requested study committee be "to determine whether or not the above-mentioned teachings are in conflict with the inspired Scripture; particularly the Genesis account of creation, with special emphasis as to the subject of origins."

3. Overture 28 is a request by Mr. John Wierenga, endorsed in the main by the Consistory of the Bethel Christian Reformed Church of Lacombe, Alta., that Synod "define and clarify the teaching of Scripture on Creation, Creation Periods, and Evolution." Synod is asked to address itself to the question: "May anyone who does not believe the crea-

tion story the way it is written in the Genesis account, and leans to the view of periods and evolution, hold office in our Church, as Minister of the Word, Elder, Deacon, or as a teacher in our Christian Schools?"

—(Acts, 1966, pp. 75, 76)

In addition, there appeared in the printed Agenda a fourth overture (No. 18), sent by the Consistory of Ripon Immanuel Christian Reformed Church and endorsed by the First Christian Reformed Church of Ripon, requesting that Synod "relieve Dr. Berkhout of the 'trust' which he holds in the Christian Reformed Church as a lay member of the Board of Trustees of Calvin College and Seminary." This request was grounded on the allegation that Dr. Berkhout, "in certain public writings, has endorsed a theory of evolution, and has employed a 'reasoning and logic which go contrary to Reformed exegesis of Scripture and the Creeds.'" (From the "analysis" of the advisory committee.)

In response to Overtures 19, 22, and 28, Synod decided to initiate a study of the indicated problem area (see below), and, accordingly, took no action on Overture 18 (cf. Acts, 1966, p. 104).

The general problem area identified by Synod is "to study, in the light of the present status of scientific studies and of Reformed theological scholarship, the matters involved in and clustering around the question of the compatibility of theories of 'theistic evolution' with the Biblical witness and the creedal affirmation concerning the origin of the world and of the human race." (Acts, 1966, p. 78) The specific focus of the study which Synod called for is indicated by these words: "This study is to be undertaken with a view to providing assistance to pastors in counseling their congregations and to serving the ecclesiastical assemblies of the church with guidelines for responsible action in all matters coming before them which are related to this problem area" (Acts, 1966, p. 78).

Synod set forth three grounds in support of its decision to undertake such a study:

"1. Overtures 19, 22, and 28 bring to the attention of Synod a matter of great complexity and importance concerning which there is manifestly extensive concern and confusion in the church, often resulting in mutual distrust and suspicion.

"2. In counseling the members of their congregations with respect to matters related to this problem area, ministers and elders are increasingly being confronted with problems with which they cannot reasonably be expected to cope adequately without the assistance of the broadest counsels of the church.

"3. It is evident that, in the future, assemblies of the church will be required ever more frequently to decide on matters that directly or indirectly impinge on this problem area, which is so large and involved that these assemblies ought to be served with further light in order that they may judge more competently in such matters" (Acts, 1966, p. 78).

Having so decided, Synod judged that "the complexity of this problem area is such that both the formulation of the specific mandate of this committee and the selection of its membership call for more careful and

extensive consideration than can be devoted to them by Synod during its present sessions" (Acts, 1966, p. 78). For that reason, it appointed an interim advisory committee to consider these matters more fully and to advise the Synod of 1967 in regards to them. It is, therefore, to these specific matters that we have addressed ourselves.

II. MANDATE OF THE INTERIM ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

Our specific instructions are spelled out in the fore-part of the following decision of the Synod of 1966:

"That Synod appoint a committee of six members (jointly representing the related scientific and theological disciplines) to advise the Synod of 1967 as to the membership and specific mandate of a commission which is to be appointed to study, in the light of the present status of scientific studies and of Reformed theological scholarship, the matters involved in and clustering around the question of the compatibility of theories of 'theistic evolution' with the Biblical witness and the creedal affirmation concerning the origin of the world and of the human race.

"This study is to be undertaken with a view to providing assistance to pastors in counseling their congregations and to serving the ecclesiastical assemblies of the church with guidelines for responsible action in all matters coming before them which are related to this problem area" (Acts, 1966, p. 78).

III. RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. *Mandate:*

After lengthy consideration of the decision of the Synod of 1966, and looking to the needs of the Christian community in our time, we recommend that Synod charge its prospective committee to undertake the following mandate:

To serve Synod with a study of the problem of origins, as it confronts the Christian community today, which will assist pastors, ecclesiastical assemblies, and the whole body of Christian believers in dealing with this problem in Biblical perspective.

Specifically, the committee is asked to address itself to such matters as the following:

I. Matters of Perspective:

A. The proper role of the church as community of believers, and the specific role of the church as ecclesiastical organization, in dealing with the problem of origins.

B. The Christian evaluation of the cultural context in which the question of origins has arisen among us as a *problem*.

C. The proper function of Scripture and of General Revelation in the development of a Christian understanding of the origin of the universe and of man.

D. The nature of the sciences (natural, anthropological, theological, etc.), from the Christian perspective, and an evaluation of their conse-

quent contributions to our knowledge of the origin of the universe and of man.

II. Matters of Specific Concern:

A. What is the nature of the Divine revelation in Gen. 1-11?

B. What is the essential teaching of Gen. 1-11 regarding the origin of the universe and of man?

C. In the light of these considerations, how should we deal with questions of detail such as have arisen among us?

B. *Committee:*

In view of the mandate which we hereby offer to Synod, and in view of the nature of the problem under consideration, we recommend to Synod that its committee be made up of men respectively possessing special competence in a variety of relevant fields, and known to be wholly committed to the Scriptures and to the Reformed Confessions.

Specifically, we recommend a committee made up of the following persons:

Dr. Gordon Spykman, Prof. of Religion and Theology, Calvin College (Convener)

Dr. Lawrence Den Besten, Prof of Surgery, University of Iowa Medical School (1952 graduate of Calvin Theological Seminary)

Dr. Calvin Seerveld, Prof. of Philosophy, Trinity Christian College

Dr. Henry Stob, Prof. of Ethics and Apologetics, Calvin Theological Seminary

Dr. Robert Vander Vennen, Dean of Trinity Christian College

Dr. Gordon Van Harn, Prof. of Biology, Calvin College

Rev. Clarence Vos, Prof. of Religion and Theology, Calvin College (presently on leave to complete a program of Doctrinal studies in Old Testament at the Free University, Amsterdam)

Rev. Jacob Vos, Pastor of Grace Christian Reformed Church, Chatham, Ont.

Your committee requests that Synod recognize Prof. John H. Stek and Dr. Edwin Roels as spokesmen for the Interim Committee of Advice when its recommendations are being considered.

We pray for Synod the leading of the Holy Spirit when considering these recommendations, and in all its deliberations.

Humbly submitted,

J. Stek, Chairman-Sec'y.
E. Feenstra
R. Kooistra
E. Roels
H. Vander Laan
E. Wolthuis

REPORT 35

CHRISTIAN REFORMED WORLD RELIEF COMMITTEE

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

This year marks the 5th anniversary of CRWRC. It was another year of expression of Christian concern by a growing number of our people who contributed generously through our deacons toward the alleviation of suffering among the needy in many areas. The work is directed by a board composed of a diaconal delegate from each classis, who upon recommendation by the local Diaconal Conference is elected by Classis and approved by Synod. Six members at large chosen by Synod, representing various professional fields, complete the Board.

I. ORGANIZATION

A. Board members:

Classis	Delegate	Alternate
Alberta North.....	H. Konynenbelt.....	C. Visser
Alberta South.....	D. Vander Molen.....	J. Kooy
British Columbia.....	J. De Jong.....	
Cadillac.....	W. Vander Ark.....	E. Meyering
California Central.....	H. Veneman.....	J. Brouwer
California South.....	H. Wigboldy.....	B. De Young
Chatham.....	A. Bisschop, Jr.....	W. Kuindersma
Chicago North.....	A. Hoving.....	H. Buurma
Chicago South.....	G. Jousma.....	H. Jager
Eastern Ontario.....	J. Vander Windt.....	W. Piersma
Florida.....	H. Kross.....	R. Zeeff
Grand Rapids East.....	J. Penning.....	R. Prince
Grand Rapids South.....	F. Kass.....	G. Rietberg, D.D.S.
Grand Rapids West.....	K. Holtvluwer.....	A. De Vries
Grandville.....	H. Zondervan.....	H. Lankheet
Hackensack.....	P. Borduin.....	D. Van Heemst
Hamilton.....	P. Zwart.....	J. Kamps
Holland.....	J. Bareman.....	K. Beelen
Hudson.....	S. Greydanus.....	W. Tanis
Kalamazoo.....	J. J. Vander Ploeg.....	H. Van Hamersveld
Lake Erie.....	E. Breuker.....	H. Danhof
Minnesota North.....	M. Aeikens.....	A. Zondervan
Minnesota South.....	H. Schaap.....	H. Vanden Bosch
Muskegon.....	K. Van Hemert, D.D.S.....	R. Vredeveld
Northcentral Iowa.....	H. Hiemstra.....	J. Eekhoff
Orange City.....	D. W. Van Gelder.....	H. B. Mulder
Pacific.....	J. Anema.....	J. Braaksma
Pella.....	G. Rus.....	M. Hocksema
Rocky Mountain.....	R. Paauw.....	R. L. Ver Schure
Sioux Center.....	L. Nyhoff.....	G. Kroese
Toronto.....	W. Ubbens.....	J. Gehrels
Wisconsin.....	J. Mulder.....	M. Ten Hoer
Zeeland.....	R. Mast.....	O. Aukeman

Members at Large

Classis	Delegate	Alternate
Medical.....	A. De Boer, M.D.....	M. Sharda, M.D.
Businessman.....	S. Tamminga.....	H. Bloem
Sociologist.....	D. De Haan.....	H. Ryskamp
Attorney.....	C. Van Valkenburg.....	
Accountant.....	D. J. Boes.....	P. Timmer
Minister.....	Rev. J. Mulder.....	Rev. W. VanderHoven

B. Officers

President, S. W. Tamminga
 Vice-President, John. J. Vander Ploeg
 Secretary, Frank Kass
 Treasurer, Donald J. Boes
 Asst. Sec'y Treas., Kenneth Van Hemert, D.D.S.

During the course of the year we were saddened by the sudden passing of two alternate Board members—Hon. Judge Waalkes, our alternate attorney member and Mr. Harold Waslander, alternate from Classis British Columbia. CRWRC mourns their passing and shares the loss with their families and dear ones.

C. Government Relations

The nature of CRWRC's activities and involvement in many countries occasions a wide range of interest and by a variety of governmental units. Early in its program CRWRC was recognized by our federal government as an organization eligible to which contributions by donors are deductible for Federal Income Tax purposes. The United States State Department has registered CRWRC with the U.S. Agency for International Development—AID. In accordance with this recognition the Attorney General of the State of Michigan recognized CRWRC as not being subject to the supervision of the state under the Charitable Purposes Act.

D. Study of An International Reformed World Relief Organization

Following a discussion of the possibility of an International Reformed World Relief organization at the August 1963 meeting of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod, a formal request was made by the RES that CRWRC undertake such a study. This request was adopted by our Synod of 1964. (Acts 1964—Art. 109, C-2-b, p. 70).

CRWRC contacted the 20 member denominations by letter and sought information through a questionnaire regarding their existing programs for world relief and their interest in—first, formation of an international effort and second, their views on the scope and extent of such a possible organization. On the basis of very limited replies to CRWRC's inquiry the following report was adopted by our Board at its annual meeting in February, and ordered to be forwarded to the Interim Committee of the RES:

In view of the information received through the questionnaires submitted to member denominations of RES the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee judges that it is not feasible to establish an International Reformed World Relief Committee of RES at this time, and that RES and the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church be so informed.

Grounds:

(a) There is a great lack of interest in such an organization among member denominations of RES (only 8 of the 20 denominations replied to the questionnaire).

(b) Most of the member denominations of RES are too small and financially unable to make significant contribution to an International World Relief Committee.

CRWRC submits this report of its actions in carrying out the 1964 mandate of Synod and awaits further instructions from our Synod on this matter.

In the meantime CRWRC has and will, maintain contacts with the relief agencies of individual member denominations of the RES for the purpose of assisting each other in the common task of providing a growing Christian concern to an increasing number of the world's needs.

II. THE OUTREACH OF CHRISTIAN MERCY IN 1966

A review of the past year is always appropriate. In view of CRWRC's Fifth Anniversary it is especially meaningful. It is not only significant that the "what" and "why" be reviewed and evaluated, but also the "how."

The "why" of CRWRC is appropriately expressed in the Preamble of the Constitution for CRWRC as adopted by the Synod of 1962.

"Whereas our Savior and Lord entrusted His people with the care of the poor of the world when He said, 'the poor ye have always with you,'

And whereas we live in a sin distorted world in which severe misery and distress frequently occur,

And whereas the sacrifice of Christ was made for the redemption of the whole man, body and soul,

And whereas Christ has ordained that His church must be engaged in a ministry of mercy in deed, as well as in word,

The Christian Reformed Church in humility and gratitude to God hereby establishes this Christian Reformed World Relief Committee to minister in the name of our Lord to man distressed by reason of the violence of nature, the carnage of war or other calamities of life, and to relieve the suffering of the needy of the world."

CRWRC's Constitution defines the "what," namely:

To receive and administer the offerings and contributions of the churches for our work of relief and rehabilitation of the needy of the world. (Art. IV-A)

The "how" is keynoted in several references to deacons, area deacons, and deacons conferences. CRWRC serves as an extension of the diaconal work performed by our deacons—work which represents Christ's high priestly task. CRWRC serves in areas of need where individual congregational diaconates are limited because of time, resources and competent Christian personnel. CRWRC is unable in and of itself to add or enhance the "why" and the "what" of Christian mercy. It does, however, add a significant new dimension in the "how." Essentially CRWRC and our deacons exercise the same careful and responsible concern in evaluating the respective needs that the Lord in His providence lays before them.

Deacons meet the needs in their congregation and, through a conference reach out to the needs of the community. CRWRC extends our Christian concern and love for our neighbors in need where local diaconates and conferences are unable to function adequately because of the distance involved or the nature of the help required. The deed is done "as unto Christ."

Understandably, meeting a variety of domestic and overseas needs requires planning by the Board and implementation through a properly administered staff.

In October our Grand Rapids office welcomed Peter N. Bosch to the position of Director of Material Resources, a position previously filled by W. J. Penninga. We wish Mr. Penninga the Lord's blessings in his retirement. Mr. Bosch brings a Christian commitment and competency to our program. It is our prayer that his efforts will be richly blessed by the Lord. Our Chicago Clothing Center functions effectively under the direction of Art. B. Schaap.

CRWRC's outreach in 1966 included a measure of emergency and disaster aid along with a continuance of efforts toward programmed aid.

A. Disaster and Emergency Relief:

Unlike the previous year there were no catastrophic emergencies within our own country that required help. Help was, however, given to several areas throughout the world.

1. *Mexico* — Two occasions arose in which we extended a helping hand to our southern neighbor. The first came when hurricane "Inez" with its high winds and flooding beat upon the coastal area served by the Rev. Hans Weerstra. Funds were provided for materials needed to reconstruct homes damaged by the storm.

A second occasion came in early November when a flash fire ravaged an area in Tijuana, served by Rev. Robert Ruis, causing severe loss of homes, clothing, and other personal items. Arrangements were promptly carried out by our deacons in Southern California to distribute clothing from the Clothing Center in Pasadena, California.

Regular shipments of clothing, blankets, vitamins and drugs were made through the cooperation of a warehouse in Texas. Funds were provided to meet other medical needs. A shipment of Multi-purpose Food also filled a real need for the dietary deficiencies of many in areas served by our missionaries.

On the basis of information received from our missionaries in Mexico, it appears that there will continue to be a need for meeting a range of human needs in areas served by their ministry. CRWRC anticipates the opportunity for providing continued help through our missionaries.

2. *Japan* — Assistance was provided at the request of our missionaries for a group of aged Japanese Christians. A grant of \$900 made it possible to establish daytime facilities for the older folk where they could enjoy Christian fellowship and activity. There are indications that this project will soon become self-supporting.

The fall typhoons damaged the homes of Christians in an area served

by our missionaries. An emergency grant of \$1500 was promptly forwarded to help in repairing the damage.

3. *The Philippines*—Acute poverty continues to be met in several ways. The versatile protein rich food supplement, Multi-purpose Food, was made available for distribution by Dr. Lily Villaruel Friolo—a native doctor—in consultation with our missionaries. A shipment of used clothing and blankets was also provided. Several smaller shipments of non-prescription drugs and vaccines were effectively distributed by Dr. Friolo. Especially helpful were nearly 800 personal gift packs for women and children that were sent by several societies, school groups and individuals. Prepared cartons and instructions are provided by the CRWRC office upon request. Soap, towel, toothpaste and brush, handkerchief, pencil, and other useful items, along with a gospel message in their native language, are included. These packs are then distributed by Vince and Lucy Apostol to those in need. This project has been enthusiastically undertaken throughout the denomination.

The arrival of Rev. Blankers in the Philippines will enable a first-hand assessment of the needs and the most effective way for meeting them.

4. *Viet Nam*—The assignment of chaplains of our denomination to this area has made it possible for CRWRC to direct more than 1200 personal gift packs to the Chaplain's office in strategic areas. Chaplains Hoogland, Friend, and Swierenga have gratefully acknowledged the receipt of many of the packs. They were able to enlist the help of evangelical missionary pastors in securing effective and responsible distribution of these packs.

The interest on the part of our people for helping in this effort of Christian concern is growing rapidly. The CRWRC office is happy to provide cartons and instructions at no cost to those who are interested.

With the cooperation of the World Relief Commission of the National Association of Evangelicals, a shipment of 15,000 pounds of clothing was made from our Chicago Clothing Center.

Following his arrival in Viet Nam, Chaplain Bruce Hemple has found occasion for sending additional supplies. CRWRC looks forward to added opportunities of Christian service in this critical area of human suffering.

5. *Nigerian Mission Aid*—In response to requests from our Board of Foreign Missions an increased measure of aid was provided our Nigerian Mission staff. A grant in the amount of \$2,492 was given for setting up an agricultural training program. Aid for the leprosy work in Benue was also provided in the amount of \$5,000. Help for the Mkar and Takum hospitals was provided in the form of medicines and cash totaling \$10,534.

Our Board of Foreign Missions has further requested CRWRC to provide continued aid for the leprosy work and for the care of indigent patients at the Mkar and Takum hospitals.

6. *Other Areas*—Taiwan was provided with a total of 1600 gift packs for distribution by our missionaries.

The shipment of Multi-purpose Food to India in 1965 filled a genuine need. Many diaconates and individuals sent gifts designated for India, making it possible to send added help in 1966. The aid is directed toward a group of needy Christians living in the area that was once served by missionaries of our denomination.

Designated gifts for relief in Hong Kong were channeled through organized Christian agencies.

B. Programmed Christian Mercy

Cuban Refugee Aid — The renewed influx of Cuban Refugees began in December of 1965, continued at a rather stable pace during 1966. Approximately 42,000 refugees—mostly relatives of refugees already in the U.S.—arrived in Miami, Florida on twice daily airlights. The U.S. officials did not relax their goal of immediate resettlement in an effort to prevent an unwarranted increase in the already 100,000 population in southern Florida. As a result more than 75% of the new arrivals spend only a few days in Miami before joining relatives in other parts of the country.

Upon arrival in Miami, the refugees are befriended by many church agencies. CRWRC continues to cooperate with Church World Service, which is officially designated by our government as the Protestant agency for resettlement purposes.

CRWRC's effort in helping the needy refugees is carried on in close cooperation with the Board of Home Missions program in Miami. The Spanish speaking Good Samaritan Christian Reformed Church, through its pastor and missionaries, ministers to the needs of the soul, while CRWRC staff at the Good Samaritan Center provides medical aid, food and clothing assistance, family consultation, and employment counseling.

Our missionary staff consists of:

Mr. Jerald Sandall, Director
 Teofilo R. Vega, M.D.
 Mrs. M. Magally, Secretary
 Miss Omelia Ruano, Pharmacist
 Mrs. Y. Izquierdo, Receptionist
 Mr. Robert Palma, Stock Clerk

During the year the Good Samaritan Center moved into more suitable space at 555 S.W. 22nd Avenue in Miami. Larger quarters now provide an office for Rev. A. DeBerdt of the Home Mission staff. This makes it possible for him to make immediate contact with the arriving refugees and thereby strengthens the cooperation between CRWRC's work and that of the Home Mission program.

A total of 31 refugee families, representing 66 individuals were resettled by our churches mainly in Michigan, New Jersey, and California. The total number of families resettled has now reached 165 families or nearly 500 people. It is anticipated that resettlement needs will continue at much

the same level in 1967 and 1968. Our deacons have enthusiastically and generously aided the refugees by opening their hearts and their homes to them. It is gratifying to hear of continued occasions of refugees making profession of faith. In this connection CRWRC shares in the joy and gratitude for the graduation of Carlos Cortina from our Calvin Seminary and his ordination to the ministry of the gospel.

Our Board expects the need for refugee aid to continue and requests permission for this work as a programmed effort for 1968.

2. *Korean Aid Program*

A further expansion of this program took place in 1966. Korea presents a dilemma in many ways. In spite of economic growth serious difficulties continue. However, remarkable progress is being accompanied in road building, industrial production and other significant areas. During all this progress the average family must get along with \$500 per year. Unemployment persists at 12-15% of the workforce. Each year the number of children cared for in institutions increases.

CRWRC, along with many other church and secular agencies seeks to alleviate the human suffering. Our concern is an expression of Christ's concern for those in need by our missionaries:

Peter Feddema, Agriculturist
Henry J. Hubers, Director
Heung Chu Lee, M.D.
Sook Kyung Lim, M.D.
Date J. Mulder, M.D.
Elvinah Spoelstra, M.S.W.

Dr. Peter Boelens left the field in February, after completing two terms of service. He was a true pioneer of Christian mercy. Our present program owes much to him. He looks forward to an extended period of study in pediatrics at the University of Minnesota. His medical efforts were always accompanied with a reminder of the individual's need of Christ's saving power as well as the Master's healing power.

During the year the staff welcomed Miss Elvinah Spoelstra, a trained social worker and member of our Denver II church. Her addition to the staff fills a long felt need for a sound sociological approach to the problem of adequately caring for the many homeless children of Korea.

In keeping with the goal of developing the program to the point where it can be turned over to an all-Korean staff, a competent Christian Korean doctor was engaged—Dr. Heung Chu Lee. Her experience includes service on the staff of the Seoul Red Cross Hospital, Il Sin Women's Hospital of Seoul, and the Queen Victoria Hospital of Melbourne, Australia. She comes recommended as a Christian worker who has had wide experience in showing Christian compassion to those in need.

Specific phases of CRWRC's work in Korea include:

a. *Medical Aid*

Our doctors carried on an exhaustive work to meet the needs of young and old. Dr. D. J. Mulder devoted much of his time to the care of abandoned children at the Seoul Municipal Babies Home. Dr. Boelens served as a Pediatrician on the staff of the Chungbo Hospital.

Both doctors were active in slum clinic and village clinic work. Efforts were directed toward preventive medicine. Emphasis was placed on immunization of children and other means of instruction for improved health practices.

Dr. Sook Kyung Lim conducted "Well Baby Clinics" in areas where there were parents having adopted children. Health instruction and material and child health care are among her many tasks.

b. *Child Adoption Program*

The Christian Adoption Program of Korea (CAPOK) is one of the most heartwarming endeavors in our work of mercy. The response has been most encouraging. Acute poverty is the greatest cause for abandonment of children by their natural parents. The Korean Ministry of Health and Social Affairs reports that during 1965 7,868 children were abandoned. Of this number 6,957 found their way into orphanages and other institutions. The disadvantages of continued institutional confinement are many. The value of placing children in a home setting is both scripturally and sociologically sound. The addition of Miss Elvinah Spoelstra, with her professional training and experience in care of indigent children has been of great value in our program. During 1966 123 homeless children were given new hope through adoption into Christian Korean homes.

c. *Agricultural Aid and Community Development*

The great need for this work stems from the combination of the causes of poverty, lack of tools and know-how, and the lack of adequate land to grow needed crops. While it is easy to oversimplify and to generalize, it can, however, be safely stated that more effective land utilization and teaching of better methods go a long way in reducing the acute poverty that afflicts so many rural people. This work is carried on by Peter Feddema, assisted by a native staff. Presently efforts to show Christian concern for our neighbors in need include:

- Preparation of Demonstration plots.
- Combination Gift and Loan Program for purchase of tools and small farm machines. 50% is considered as a gift and the balance is to be repaid in installments. Last year 82 pieces of equipment were provided.
- Irrigation Dams and Water Spillways have made possible large areas of land for cultivation which previously were lacking in adequate water supply.
- Greenhouse construction has been a new endeavor and proven extremely rewarding.

— Livestock development was highlighted by the Goat Project whereby several individuals, church and school groups, contributed toward the purchase and shipment of 60 goats for Korea. A quantity of 100 Angora rabbits was purchased and shipped from Japan. The rabbit population had increased to 275 by the end of the year. Already a good harvest of angora wool has been shorn and sold as a cash crop by the farmers.

— Swine and oxen have also been obtained locally in Korea and are made available on a limited basis to destitute farmers.

— Terracing, Fertilizing, and Land Conditioning programs are well received.

— Roof Construction, whereby the farmers are encouraged to use clay tile in place of rice straw has proven worthwhile. The rice straw can be made into rope and mats which are useful and saleable items.

The thrust of the farm program is in the nature of "self help" projects. The people are taught skills to become self reliant and to increase their earning capacity. By this practice they are taught in a Christian way to use their God-given talents.

d. Relief Efforts

When an emergency requires food, clothing, and other assistance, CRWRC stands ready to aid. Such was the case in 1966 when the summer floods destroyed large areas of rice fields, and damaged homes. Bulgur wheat, Multi-purpose Food, clothing and blankets were provided. Generous quantities of gift packs provided by church groups and individuals were distributed by our staff as they made many visits to the homes of needy families.

Mr. Henry Hubers, director of CRWRC's efforts of mercy in Korea, maintains constant liaison with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church efforts and with the emerging Hapdong Presbyterian Church. Efforts to involve the deacons of the latter group are being pursued. Mr. Hubers also maintains contacts with the various agencies of the Korean government and with other orthodox groups working in Korea.

It is the considered judgment of the Board of CRWRC that the Lord is still calling us to an important task in Korea and requests Synod's approval for continuance of the work.

III. FINANCING AND IMPLEMENTING CRWRC

Carrying out a program of this nature and scope requires a range of resources. The "how" of CRWRC was described above as an extension of the work of the deacons. Without the deacons CRWRC would not be able to carry on a denominational effort of Christian compassion to those in need. As in previous years, the greatest source of income to CRWRC is through diaconal offerings.

The income and disbursements of CRWRC are detailed in the following report:

Christian Reformed World Relief Committee
Condensed Statement of Cash Receipts and Disbursements
Year ended December 31, 1966

Balance - January 1, 1966	\$111,653.45
Receipts:	
Contributions:	
General	\$137,602.52
Nigerian Hospitals	7,089.03
Hong Kong	1,000.00
Korean Relief	150,321.61
Cuban Relief	7,444.51
	\$303,457.67
Interest income	3,950.36
U.S. Shipping refunds	13,886.49
Repayment of advance to Committee on Korean Seminary Building	10,000.00
	\$331,294.52
Total Receipts	\$331,294.52
Total Available	\$442,947.97
Disbursements:	
Relief Programs:	
Nigerian aid	\$ 18,026.25
Hong Kong	1,141.47
Korean Relief - programmed	178,404.42
Korean Relief - special projects and emergencies	42,513.33
Cuban Relief	55,060.87
Unusual benevolence - domestic ..	8,573.57
Philippines	3,446.88
Mexico	3,176.94
Japan	2,404.20
India	1,649.50
Vietnam	215.70
Taiwan	529.53
Overseas emergency - blankets ..	1,744.06
Operation of Clothing Centers	19,321.13
Administrative and general	51,409.26
	316,886.72
	19,321.13
	51,409.26
Total Disbursements	\$387,617.11
Balance - December 31, 1966	\$ 55,330.86

January 30, 1967

Christian Reformed World Relief Committee,
 Grand Rapids, Michigan.

We have examined the condensed statement of cash receipts and disbursements of the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee, Grand Rapids, Michigan for the year ended December 31, 1966. Our examination was made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, and accordingly included such tests of the accounting records and such other auditing procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.

In our opinion, the accompanying condensed statement of cash receipts and disbursements presents fairly the recorded cash transactions of the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee for the year ended December 31, 1966 on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

Den Braber, Helmholdt & Lyzenga
 Certified Public Accountants

In addition to cash expenditures for relief, an amount of \$315,000 in the form of clothing, donated medicines, food, transportation and other services were given to the needy.

While there was an increase in gifts and contributions by individual donors, there was a marked decline in the number of congregations holding offerings in 1966. The receipts from church offerings declined from \$269,454 in 1965 to \$198,212 in 1966. The following summary details the decline in church offerings in another way:

Number of offerings taken per year	1966	1965
	No. of churches	
No offerings	138	69
One offering	226	125
Two or more offerings	260	417
Average contribution per family	\$3.36	\$4.62

The increase in the number of churches holding "no offerings" and those holding only "one offering" is a matter of concern. CRWRC firmly believes that calling this information to the attention of our diaconates will result in a hearty response to the needs of our denominational endeavor of showing Christ's concern to the needy. While some congregations may not have benevolence needs in their own fellowship, the needs outside their congregation cry out loud and clear. The message of the Good Samaritan teaches us that we must function as neighbor to those in need. Our concern for others must be greater than that of only meeting the need of those close to us. (Gal. 6:10)

IV. PLANS FOR CONTINUED BENEVOLENCE

Anticipating the generous response of our deacons to meet needs that the Lord in His providence places before us, we present the following:

A. Budget of Proposed Expenditures

1. Programmed Aid

Korea	1967 (Revised)	1968
Salaries and Operational Expense	\$112,350	\$124,600
Medical Aid	53,500	52,000
Social Aid and Child Care	55,500	55,000
Agricultural Aid	35,650	36,400
Cuban Refugee Aid	57,900	59,000
Philippine Aid	4,570	8,000
Mexican Aid	4,560	8,000
Japan Aid	2,000	2,000
Nigerian Hospitals	10,000	10,000
Nigerian Leprosy Work	5,000	10,000
Hungarian Refugee Aid	1,400	
Clothing Center Operation	19,540	21,600

2. Emergency Aid

Domestic and Unusual Benevolent Aid	15,000	15,000
Overseas	15,000	15,000

3. Administrative

.....	60,600	64,860
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Totals	\$452,570	\$481,460
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B. *Request for Continued Offerings*

To be assured of both an adequate and a stable income for carrying on its denominational work of Christian concern CRWRC requires a steady source of funds. The 1967 and 1968 budgets require monthly expenditures averaging \$38,000 and \$40,000 respectively. Because CRWRC is without the benefit of assured income through Quota Funds it is especially dependent on the goodwill and support of our deacons.

In January the Policy Committee of CRWRC met with representatives of diaconal conferences of 13 central classes to review and study ways of closer cooperation between CRWRC and diaconal conferences. Included in this helpful discussion was the repeated expression by the deacons that benevolence giving should be motivated rather than legislated. They felt that the deacons would respond when made aware of needs.

To achieve this, CRWRC requests that Synod establish a special category in the "Quotas and Recommended Causes List for 1968" as follows:

Denominational Benevolence for two or more offerings: Christian Reformed World Relief Committee.

Grounds:

1. This denominational benevolence cause should be categorized separately from "Above Quota" and special causes in order to direct attention to the urgent need for stable income.
2. The total receipts for 1966 fell significantly short of disbursements.
3. Synod can thus encourage each congregation to respond to this great need.

V. ADMINISTRATION

A. *Office*

It is anticipated that by the time of this reading our office will be in the newly enlarged Denominational Building. We look forward to this improved arrangement which will permit closer workings with other denominational activities.

B. *Clothing Center Activities*

Continued response by our people to requests for clothing by our deacons assured an adequate supply for our Chicago Clothing Center, the Toronto Ontario Center, and the Modesto California Center. Shipments amounted to 221,000 pounds to Korea, Philippines, Mexico, Taiwan, and to our Cuban Refugee work in Miami. In addition, shipments were made to Viet Nam and to Chile to assist in programs of the National Association of Evangelicals. Clothing was also made available to the Mennonite Central Committee for their work in Algiers.

More than 100 Ladies and Young Peoples' groups generously gave 3,275 hours of service at our Chicago Clothing Center to further the

arm of Christian love. Our Ladies Groups in Toronto also gave a much appreciated helping hand.

C. Appointments to Board

The following recommendations are submitted to fill board positions:

1. Ministerial Delegate:

Rev. John A. Mulder has served in this capacity for five years. The need for staggering terms of board members arose when CRWRC was officially constituted. Therefore 3-year and 2-year terms were employed. Rev. Mulder was appointed by the Synod of 1965 to a 2-year term. Due to a rapid change-over in board personnel in other areas CRWRC requests that Rev. Mulder's term be extended one year, giving him the normally allowed term of six-year service:

Alternate: Rev. Melvin D. Hugen—Rev. Wilbert M. Van Dyk

2. Sociologist:

Nominees submitted:

Philip Van Heest—Gerald Vander Tuig

Alternate: Dr. H. J. Ryskamp (incumbent)—Dr. T. Rottman

3. Attorney:

Alternate: Donald F. Oosterhouse—David Vander Ploeg

VI. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND REQUESTS

A. Representation at Synod

CRWRC requests that its President S. W. Tamminga; Ministerial Advisor, Rev. John A. Mulder, and the Executive Director, be granted the floor when matters pertaining to our work are discussed.

B. Approval of 1968 Projects

1. Cuban Refugee Aid Work II-B-1

2. Korean Aid Program II-B-2

3. Philippine Aid II-A-3

C. Approval of Request for Offerings

Denominational Benevolence for two or more offerings: Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (See Section IV-B for grounds)

D. Appointment of Board members from suggested nomination. V-C

Respectfully submitted,

Louis Van Ess, Exec. Dir.

REPORT 36

STUDY ON CONSOLIDATION OF SUNDAY SCHOOL
COMMITTEE AND COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

The present committee was called into existence and given its mandate by the Synod of 1966, which adopted the following recommendation:

“That Synod appoint a study committee to investigate the desirability of consolidating the work of producing Sunday School materials, Daily Vacation Bible School materials, and Catechetical materials under one committee, and, if feasible, to present a plan for such consolidation to the Synod of 1967. Adopted.” (*Acts of Synod*, 1966, p. 67)

In fulfillment of the mandate prescribed in this decision your committee herewith respectfully submits the following report, which is subdivided into four parts:

- I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND ORIENTATION
- II. CASE FOR CONSOLIDATION
- III. PLAN FOR ORGANIZATION
- IV. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND ORIENTATION

A. *History of the Sunday School Committee*

The mandate to produce our own Sunday School materials was given to a special committee by Synod in 1936 (*Acts of Synod*, 1936, pp. 79, 80, 119). It is interesting that already at that time Synod was concerned about unifying the educational efforts of the Christian Reformed Church. As a part of its mandate to the newly appointed committee to produce Sunday School materials, Synod said:

“In order that the highly desirable goal of greater unification in the educational work of the Church be kept in mind, Synod instruct the Committee for editing of a Sunday School paper of our own to consider in conjunction with the Committee for the editing of a Revised Compendium the proper correlation of our Sunday School work with the work of our catechism classes.” (*Acts of Synod*, 1936, p. 119, No. 4)

Such concern for a more unified approach in producing educational materials and giving educational leadership in the church has been strongly emphasized by every major synodical study committee on education from 1912 to the present.

In spite of this recurring stress on unifying our educational efforts, it appears that somehow close coordination of our Sunday School, Cate-

chism and other educational efforts has not become a reality. For years the work of editing and producing Sunday School materials was in the hands of the denominational Publication Committee, while Synod appointed separate and unrelated committees to work on such tasks as the revision of the Compendium for catechetical work.

It is clear, however, that the separation of the Sunday School and catechism materials and the committees producing them caused continuing problems, partially because the Sunday School has had to serve both evangelistic and covenantal instructional purposes. (Cf. *Acts of Synod*, 1918, pp. 150-151; 1951, p. 57; 1952, pp. 118-19; 1965, pp. 72-3.)

In 1952 Synod adopted a plan to produce a more adequately graded series of Sunday School materials. By 1953 production of adequate Sunday School materials became such a large task that the Publication Committee could no longer handle it. Synod then appointed a standing Sunday School Committee with the mandate "to work in consultation with the Publication Committee in respect to publication and distribution of materials, and with the Committee on Education in respect to the function of the Sunday School as related to other educational agencies." (*Acts of Synod*, 1953, p. 119.) Here again the need for close coordination of the church's educational work is clearly stated. Even in 1956, when due to a heavy work load and geographical separation the Committee on Education could no longer have a regular representative on the Sunday School Committee, Synod still affirmed that "such liaison as is needed may be established when and in such ways as the joint committees consider feasible and necessary." (*Acts of Synod*, 1956 p. 29)

It is not surprising that during the 1940's and 50's the workload of both committees was so heavy that serious efforts at coordinating their educational work did not materialize. During this period a completely new series of graded Sunday School materials was developed, the number of separate publications and the total number of materials printed and distributed nearly doubled; yet the editorial work continued to rest upon the shoulders of one part-time editor who carried a full-time load in addition to this task. Furthermore, the fact that the Committee on Education was centered in New Jersey and the Sunday School Committee in Grand Rapids only increased the tendency of each committee to attempt a fulfillment of its large and difficult mandate independently.

Leaders of various educational agencies in the Christian Reformed Church recognized in 1963 that the fragmentation and overlapping of uncoordinated educational efforts might well be costly and inefficient. The meetings of this *ad hoc* committee were reported to Synod in 1964. Synod then declared the following:

"Synod take note of the cooperation between the various educational agencies in the denomination as reported by the Committee on Education in the area of coordinating our educational program, and that Synod go on record as encouraging its agencies to continue such cooperation." (*Acts of Synod*, 1964, p. 97)

In 1965 Synod, becoming increasingly aware that Sunday School materials should serve the church in evangelistic outreach, gave the Sun-

day School Committee the mandate to look into this question and to try to create materials more evangelistically oriented. In looking into this problem, the Sunday School Committee saw that its task had grown so large that additional staff was required. Furthermore, it saw that developing materials fitted for evangelistic use might make them less well fitted for use with covenantal children who make up the majority of the children in our Sunday Schools. Joint consultation with the Committee on Education and a request to the 1966 Synod for a full-time editor (*Acts of Synod*, 1966, pp. 250-252) resulted from the discussions of the present day task and demands of the church's educational and evangelistic task.

In rejecting the Sunday School Committee's request for a full-time editor, the Synod of 1966 agreed that the work load justified it, but that the recurring theme of coordinating the educational work of the church should be investigated carefully first. This discussion led to the appointment of the present committee on consolidation.

B. *History of the Committee on Education*

The history of the Committee on Education dates from the year 1946, when Synod considered three overtures requesting the appointment of a committee to study the problems of catechetical instruction and to give leadership in this area of the church's educational ministry. Synod responded by appointing a committee of five to do exploratory work in this area and to suggest ways and means of securing a proper correlation of the work done for our children in the Sunday School, catechism classes, Christian day school, and our youth organizations. In supporting this action Synod noted that this was consistent with actions taken by past Synods and expressed its concern for promoting greater efficiency and uniformity in our educational endeavors. (*Acts of Synod*, 1946, p. 91)

The Synod of 1947 decided to continue this committee, not merely as a study committee, but as a standing committee with membership in the New Jersey area. In clarifying its mandate, Synod commissioned this committee to prepare a prospectus of integrated and unified study manuals for catechetical instruction from the primary to compendium levels and to proceed with the publication of these materials. It further asked this standing committee to investigate ways and means of integrating our various educational agencies, the Christian day school, Sunday School, and catechism classes. (*Acts of Synod*, 1947, p. 57)

In 1950 Synod enlarged the committee and the following year designated this committee as the Committee on Education, asking it to also take into account youth Bible conferences as they exist in our church circles. (*Acts of Synod*, 1950, p. 16; 1951, p. 57)

In 1951 and 1952 (*Acts of Synod*, 1951, p. 51; 1952, pp. 47, 72) the Committee on Education proposed its curriculum to Synod, which the Synod of 1953 adopted in a revised and modified form, together with the pedagogical principles as submitted. Synod further provided a budget to publish the proposed set of catechism textbooks and requested that samples be submitted to the following Synod. In response to recommendations from the Committee on Education the Synod of 1953 de-

cided to create a new standing committee of five members to be known as the Sunday School Committee, including in its membership, among others, a qualified educator, a member of the Publication Committee, and a member of the Committee on Education. This new Sunday School Committee was instructed to work in consultation with the Committee on Education to clarify the function of the Sunday School as related to other educational agencies. (*Acts of Synod*, 1953, p. 117)

In 1954 the Committee on Education recommended to Synod certain realignments of committee structure and the appointment of a secretary of education. This proposal was recommitted for re-study in consultation with the Sunday School Committee and the Publication Committee, with the mandate to report to the following Synod. In taking this action Synod acknowledged that a secretary of education might well be needed to serve in an over-all editorial and administrative capacity and to assist in furnishing leadership in the church's educational task. Action was delayed, however, in view of the fact that the Sunday School Committee, while expressing approval of the establishment of the post of secretary of education, felt that the proposal was premature and should be returned to the committees involved for consultation, study, and recommendations. The Publication Committee, moreover, felt that it should have opportunity to discuss this whole plan and have time to envision its significance and consider its feasibility. (*Acts of Synod*, 1954, pp. 84, 85, 100)

In 1957 Classis Hackensack overtured Synod to appoint a full-time editor for Sunday School papers (*Acts of Synod*, 1957, pp. 25, 26). In this connection Synod again instructed the Committee on Education, in consultation with the Sunday School Committee, to investigate the appointment of a full-time secretary of education, and to report in 1959. As grounds Synod noted that this matter had been assigned to the Committee on Education already in 1954, and that this matter merited serious consideration, since there was reason to believe that such a secretary was desirable if our educational program were to be pursued more effectively.

In 1959 the Committee on Education again proposed to Synod the appointment of a Secretary of Education within a Department of Education with a broad mandate. Synod referred this matter to the churches for further study, with instructions to submit reactions to the Committee on Education. (*Acts of Synod*, 1959, pp. 29-32)

In 1960 the Committee on Education, presenting an opinion survey which showed two-thirds of the responding churches favoring a consolidated educational agency, again submitted its previous proposal. The Synod of 1960, however, decided not to adopt this recommendation. Instead Synod decided to reconstitute the committee with its membership in the Michigan area. At the same time Synod expanded the Committee's mandate to include the production of VBS materials. It also authorized the committee to engage the services of a part-time editor to implement its program, allowing for the appointment of a full-time editor by the following Synod if the mandate should warrant it. (*Acts of Synod*, 1960, pp. 58, 59, 110, 111)

The Synod of 1961 urged the Committee to implement the program authorized by the Synod of 1960. (*Acts of Synod*, 1961, p. 64) Accordingly, a part-time editor was engaged during 1961-62. The Synod of 1962 proceeded to authorize the appointment of a full-time editor, citing the fact that the urgent need for materials requires that this program be pursued without delay. (*Acts of Synod*, 1962, pp. 11, 12)

In 1963 Synod authorized the Committee on Education to apply for incorporation (*Acts of Synod*, 1963, p. 34) The committee reported to the Synod of 1964 that such incorporation had been accomplished (*Acts of Synod*, 1964, p. 342) Within this organizational structure and under its given mandate the committee continues to carry on its work.

It is apparent from this survey that the histories of the three committees involved in the present study (namely, the Sunday School Committee, the Committee on Education and the Publication Committee) are closely interwoven. Moreover, Synod repeatedly has gone on record in favor of achieving a pattern of closer coordination in the publication of educational materials within our church circles. Finally, across the years synodical decisions reflect a tendency to expand the mandates given to educational committees in response to felt needs in the church.

II. CASE FOR CONSOLIDATION

A. *General Rationale*

Having carefully considered its mandate during the past several months, and during that time having maintained close contact with the three synodical committees involved in this study, your committee now lays before Synod its unanimous conclusion that consolidation of the work of producing Sunday School materials, Vacation Bible School materials and Catechism materials is highly desirable; that such consolidation can best be achieved by the establishment of a single educational committee; and that such a consolidated education committee should be appointed by this Synod.

The historical surveys given above clearly indicate that during the past several decades those commissioned by our Synods to promote the educational ministry of the church have repeatedly come to the conclusion that greater consolidation is desirable. This was true of the original Eastern Committee on Education which laid its consensus before Synod in the form of a concrete recommendation. Again in 1964 Synod took note with approval and gave encouragement to the present Committee on Education in its cooperation with a broad *ad hoc* committee on coordination of efforts among the various educational agencies in our circles.

Significant for this present study is the questionnaire circulated during 1966 by this *ad hoc* committee to ministers, educators and other leaders in our church circles. This survey uncovered a number of areas in our educational ministry which call for a measure of reinforcement. Notably there was a strongly felt need for greater attention to adult education in the church. Of those responding 52% sensed a serious weakness in our

development of a sense of Christian expression and witness through our educational programs. Guidance in such evangelistic outreach requires solid support in our covenantal instruction, which appears to argue for greater integration of our covenantal and evangelistic educational programs.

It should be noted, however, that we are experiencing a tremendous growth in the educational ministries of the church. The Sunday School Committee publishes about 120,000 pieces of instructional material weekly. The Committee on Education had a sales volume of about \$35,000 in Daily Vacation Bible School materials in 1966, in addition to a series of catechism books for lower grades which involves thousands of volumes per year. A high school curriculum is now in the process of development. This committee is also engaged in the production of a converts' instruction booklet and faces the challenge of a great potential in the area of adult education. The growing magnitude of our task points up the need for greater consolidation and coordination of our efforts in every field of education in the church.

Joint meetings of the Sunday School Committee and the Committee on Education have uncovered several areas where close cooperation seems advisable. Both committees require increased staff to expedite and improve their publications. Joint operation would seem to offer the best prospect for fulfilling our multiple mandate in an expanding educational ministry on many fronts. There is need for greater coordination in lesson planning to avoid needless overlap and duplication; there is need for producing better teaching aids; there is need for teacher training programs in the various branches of our educational ministry—all of which argues strongly for united action by a single educational committee.

Furthermore, in view of the long-standing need for greater clarification of the lines of communication between Sunday School instruction and catechetical instruction, joint action appears to offer the best hope of achieving greater consensus in our teaching objectives in these two areas. Moreover, since the evangelistic thrust of the Sunday School program is so closely related to our objectives in Daily Vacation Bible School instruction, it would seem mandatory that these programs be worked out jointly, rather than separately.

B. Specific Argumentation

Your committee advances the following more specifically defined arguments in support of its case for consolidation.

1. We cite the inability of the various educational committees of our church in their separate co-existence to implement the often expressed desire for greater unification and coordination in our educational ministry.

2. We cite further the obvious overlap and lack of coordination of functions in the work of the two committees manifested in the fact that the Sunday School Committee, while presumably being primarily concerned with evangelistic educational materials, serves mostly covenantal children; whereas the Committee on Education publishes evangelistic

Daily Vacation Bible School materials, while presumably having as its primary task the publication of materials for covenantal youth.

3. We also cite the inability of the Sunday School Committee to implement Synod's repeated demand for more evangelistically oriented materials. Fact is, 80% or more of its materials are being used for teaching covenant children. This problem would be much easier to solve if distinct materials for a program of evangelistic instruction and covenantal instruction were produced by a unified committee.

4. The tremendous growth in the educational ministries of our churches in recent years requires the best available personnel in the church to work on a unified effort to meet this challenge, rather than to compete for the available talent through fragmented and separate agencies.

5. There are constant requests from our churches to produce more and better Sunday School materials, high school age catechism books, instructional books for converts, guides for teacher training and teaching aids, and materials suitable for adult education. These demands require our best talent and our most efficient effort, which can best be supplied by a coordinated committee rather than by overlapping efforts and competition for competent board members, editors, writers, staff personnel, etc.

6. Joint use of specialized personnel as well as clerical staff and facilities would create the possibility of acquiring persons and functions now needed but not available for irregular part-time assignments.

7. Other conservative denominations, such as the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod, have a powerful influence for good far beyond their own denomination by producing a broad spectrum of high quality educational materials through a unified educational effort. We already sell 11,000 copies per week of our Sunday School materials and many Daily Vacation Bible School and catechetical materials to other church groups. Our Reformed witness beyond our denomination could be greatly enhanced through materials and leadership made possible by a unified educational agency.

8. A consolidated educational committee would provide a sound basis for ecumenical cooperation with closely related churches in seeking jointly to fulfill certain phases of the educational ministry of the church, should such ecumenical action be deemed desirable by Synod.

III. PLAN OF ORGANIZATION

Your committee submits the following constitutional structure, plan of organization, and committee functions as a suitable framework for carrying out a consolidated educational program.

A. *General Mandate*

The following guidelines are advanced as a general mandate for the consolidated educational committee here being proposed.

1. To publish educational materials for our churches, and to enhance

their effectiveness by giving leadership, offering teaching aids, and rendering services in support of the teaching ministry of the churches.

2. To respond to felt needs in the educational ministry of the churches, submitting to Synod its recommendations for action.

3. To cooperate with existing denominational boards and agencies in augmenting their teaching enterprises, and possibly to seek ways of cooperating with closely related churches in common educational ministries.

B. Status

Your committee submits the following constitutional arrangements within which the proposed consolidated committee shall regulate its activities.

1. The consolidated educational committee here proposed shall be established by a merger of the existing Sunday School Committee and the Committee on Education. This new committee shall receive its mandate from Synod and be responsible to Synod for the execution thereof, submitting an annual progress report to Synod.

2. The committee shall be given independent status and be authorized to seek incorporation, a status similar to that presently held by the Committee on Education.

3. For the printing and mailing of Sunday School materials the proposed consolidated educational committee shall utilize the publication facilities of the denominational Publishing House on a non-competitive, annually renewable contractual basis; and for all other educational materials the proposed consolidated educational committee shall also utilize the facilities of the denominational publication facilities of the Publishing House unless weighty reasons and special circumstances dictate otherwise.

C. Division of Labors

Your committee submits the following division of labors as a working arrangement within the framework of the consolidated educational committee here being proposed.

1. A sub-committee on evangelistic education, concentrating on such aspects of the church's educational ministry as the following:

- a. Sunday School materials.
- b. Daily Vacation Bible School materials.
- c. Converts' Booklets.
- d. In-Service Training Workshops.
- e. Audio-Visual Aids.

2. A sub-committee on covenantal education, concentrating on such aspects of the church's educational ministry as the following:

- a. Catechism materials.
- b. Church School materials.
- c. Adult Education materials.

- d. In-Service Training Workshops.
- e. Audio-Visual Aids.
- f. Correspondence Courses for Christian Instruction.

Note: an additional function pertaining to the committee as a whole is the supervision of an "Educational Department" in *The Banner*, designed to give leadership in various aspects of the church's educational ministry.

3. A sub-committee on business affairs, concentrating on such matters as the following:

- a. Accounting and Bookkeeping.
- b. Business Policy.
- c. Publication Procedures.
- d. Publicity.

Note: this committee shall include two members of the Business Committee of the Publication Committee, cf. E, 3 and E, 5, c below).

D. *Personnel for Committee Operations*

Your committee foresees the following administrative and staff needs for the proposed consolidated educational committee.

- 1. Executive Secretary.
- 2. Editorial Assistants.
- 3. Business Manager.
- 4. Clerical Staff.

E. *Levels of Responsibility and Committee Functions*

Your committee submits the following descriptive plan of organization and operation for the proposed consolidated educational committee.

1. That the Sunday School Committee and the Committee on Education be merged to form a new consolidated education committee to be known as the Committee on Education of the Christian Reformed Church.

2. That Synod assign to this committee a mandate comprising such tasks as are listed under the "Division of Labors," Part III, C (above).

3. That regular appointments to this committee, which shall be composed of about 15 members, shall take place annually at Synod from a slate of candidates submitted by this committee on the basis of interest and competence in the educational ministry of the church and in accordance with the "division of labors" outlined above. Moreover, two members of the Business Committee of the Publication Committee shall be appointed by the latter body as regular members of this committee in order to assure proper liaison with the Publication Committee and to safeguard the interests of the denominational Publishing House.

4. That annual appointments and reappointments to service on this committee shall be governed by a schedule of retirement and rotation which is in agreement with the established synodical rules for tenure on synodical committees.

5. That the work of this committee be divided into the following three sub-committees corresponding to the threefold "division of labors" as outlined above:

a. A sub-committee on evangelistic education composed of a suitable number of qualified persons from the proposed consolidated educational committee, together with two of the four synodically appointed businessmen members of this committee, these assignments to be delegated within the committee itself; plus one representative appointed by the Home Mission staff and the Foreign Mission staff respectively; these two appointees serving as regular members of this sub-committee; with the understanding that this sub-committee be authorized to utilize the services of additional consultants and specialists representing particular competences as the workload requires such augmentation, these additional members to serve in an advisory capacity.

b. A sub-committee on covenantal education composed of a suitable number of qualified persons from the proposed consolidated educational committee, together with two of the four synodically appointed businessmen members of this committee, these assignments to be delegated within the committee itself; plus one representative appointed by the staff of the National Union of Christian Schools and the staff of the United Calvinist Federation respectively, these two appointees serving as regular members of this sub-committee; with the understanding that this sub-committee be authorized to utilize the services of additional consultants and specialists representing particular competences as the workload requires such augmentation, these additional members to serve in an advisory capacity.

c. A sub-committee on business affairs composed of the four businessmen appointed by Synod as members of the proposed consolidated educational committee, plus two representatives of the Business Committee of the Publication Committee who also serve as regular members of the full committee; with the understanding that this sub-committee be authorized to utilize the services of additional consultants and specialists in particular competences as the workload requires such augmentation, these additional members serving in an advisory capacity.

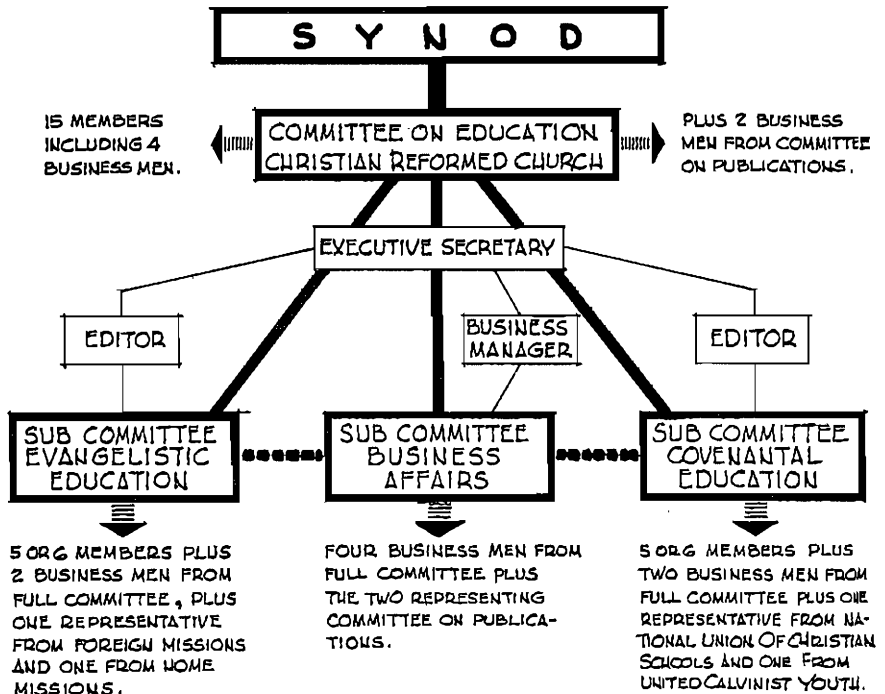
6. That the ongoing work of the full committee and its sub-committees be implemented in accordance with the synodical mandate through the services of a full-time Executive Secretary, to be selected by Synod at stated intervals from a nomination submitted by this committee in accordance with the synodical rules pertaining thereto.

7. That an Editor for evangelistic education, an Editor for covenantal education, a Business Manager and other necessary personnel be appointed as the workload requires and as the budget allows.

F. Organizational Diagram

In the interest of clearer presentation your committee submits the following chart outlining the structures and functions of the proposed consolidated educational committee.

ORGANIZATIONAL DIAGRAM



IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. In fulfillment of its mandate your study committee respectfully submits to Synod the following recommendations pertaining to the permanent work of the proposed consolidated educational committee. In view of the historical background sketched in Part I, and on the basis of the case for consolidation advanced in Part II, and in consideration of the plan of organization outlined in Part III, your study committee proposes that Synod take the following action:

1. That Synod authorize the merger of the existing Sunday School Committee and the Committee on Education to be known as the Committee on Education of the Christian Reformed Church, with the understanding that this consolidated educational committee is not to be regarded as a continuation of the existing Committee on Education, but as a new committee constituted upon a merger of the two existing committees.

2. That Synod give the new Committee on Education of the Christian Reformed Church the following general mandate:

- a. To publish both evangelistic and covenantal educational materials for our churches, and to enhance their effectiveness by giving leadership,

offering teaching aids, and rendering services in support of the teaching ministry of the church.

b. To respond to felt needs in the educational ministry of the churches, submitting to Synod its recommendations for action.

c. To cooperate with existing denominational boards and agencies in supporting their teaching enterprises, and possibly to seek ways of cooperating with closely related churches in common educational ministries, should such cooperation be deemed desirable by Synod.

3. That the Committee on Education of the Christian Reformed Church be granted an independent status under Synod and be authorized to seek incorporation.

4. That the Committee on Education of the Christian Reformed Church be instructed to utilize the publication facilities of the denominational Publishing House for the printing and mailing of Sunday School materials on a non-competitive, annually renewable contractual basis; and that all other educational materials produced shall also be printed by the denominational Publishing House unless weighty reasons and special circumstances dictate otherwise.

5. That Synod endorse the division of labors within the Committee on Education of the Christian Reformed Church among the three sub-committees on evangelistic education, covenantal education, and business affairs, as prescribed in the above report under Part III, C (1, 2, 3) and Part III, D, 5 (a, b, c).

6. That Synod authorize membership in the Committee on Education of the Christian Reformed Church of approximately fifteen persons to be elected by Synod from annual nominations submitted by the Committee on Education of the Christian Reformed Church to Synod in its annual report, which nominations shall honor the threefold division of labors in this committee; all this in accordance with the established synodical rules for appointment, reappointment, and tenure of service on synodical committees.

7. That Synod authorize the Publication Committee to appoint two members of its Business Committee to serve as regular members of the Committee on Education of the Christian Reformed Church and its sub-committee on business affairs in order to assure proper liaison with the Publication Committee and to safeguard the interests of the denominational Publishing House.

8. That Synod authorize the appointment of a full-time Executive Secretary for the Committee on Education of the Christian Reformed Church to be elected by Synod from a nomination submitted by the Committee on Education of the Christian Reformed Church in accordance with synodical rules pertaining to such appointments and reappointments.

9. That Synod authorize the Committee on Education of the Christian Reformed Church to engage the services of an Editor for evangelistic

education, an Editor for covenantal education, a Business Manager, and other personnel as the implementation of its mandate requires and its budget allows.

B. To facilitate an effective merger of the present work of the two existing committees, your study committee respectfully submits the following implementing recommendations pertaining to the transitional year 1967-1968:

1. That Synod instruct the Committee on Education of the Christian Reformed Church to submit to the Synod of 1968 a staggered schedule of retirement for the present members of the two merging committees resulting in a permanent membership of approximately fifteen persons, which schedule shall take into account both the need for continuity with the present operations and the established synodical rules governing appointment, reappointment, and tenure of service on synodical committees.

2. That Synod instruct the present study committee to implement any synodical actions pertaining to the establishment of the proposed Committee on Education of the Christian Reformed Church by serving in a convening capacity to effect such organization on or before September 15, 1967; that the present study committee shall continue to serve the new Committee on Education of the Christian Reformed Church as needed in an advisory capacity until final organization is legally enacted on or before December 31, 1967; and further that Mr. E. R. Post and Mr. I. Zylstra, both members of the present study committee, be appointed by Synod to serve as convener and vice-convener respectively for purposes of achieving such organization.

3. That Synod implement the proposed plan of consolidation by the immediate appointment of the Rev. W. Vander Haak as Executive Secretary.

4. That Synod authorize the reappointment of the present staffs of the two existing committees and budget funds for these reappointments.

5. That Synod instruct the Sunday School Committee, the Committee on Education, and the Publication Committee to turn over to the new Committee on Education of the Christian Reformed Church on or before December 31, 1967 all assets and materials owned by or used primarily for the work of the present Sunday School Committee and Committee on Education, such as all previously published materials, printing rights, inventories, art work, copyrights, equipment, files, etc.

6. That Synod instruct the Sunday School Committee, the Committee on Education, the Publication Committee, and all employees of these committees to cooperate fully with the new Committee on Education of the Christian Reformed Church and its employees so that the official transition to be effected on or before December 31, 1967 may be worked out smoothly step by step during the approximately six months prior to this date.

C. With respect to synodical procedures your study committee requests that its spokesmen, Dr. G. Spykman and Mr. J. Daverman, be granted speaking privileges at Synod.

D. To implement the plan of consolidation here being proposed your study committee submits the following budgetary recommendations for the forthcoming fiscal year:

1. That Synod accept as information the following composite budgetary statement for the Committee on Education of the Christian Reformed Church for the coming fiscal year:

Salaries and Payroll Expenses	\$ 45,710.00
Outside Contributors and Services	37,200.00
Publication Expenses	198,210.00
Rent and Utilities	10,000.00
Total Budget	\$291,120.00
Anticipated Receipts:	
Sale of Publications	\$250,000.00
Quota Receipts	44,827.00
Total Anticipated Receipts	\$294,827.00
Contingency (possible Excess Receipts)	\$ 3,707.00

2. That Synod authorize a quota appropriation for the new Committee on Education of the Christian Reformed Church for the fiscal year 1968 in the amount of \$44,827.00 or \$.75 per family.

Respectfully submitted,

Study Committee on Consolidation of
Sunday School Committee and
Committee on Education

Dr. D. Hoekstra, Chairman

Dr. G. Spykman, Secretary

Mr. J. Daverman

Mr. E. R. Post

Mr. I. Zylstra

REPORT 37

SPECIAL STUDY OF THE MINISTERS' PENSION
AND RELIEF FUND

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

I. INTRODUCTION

Mandate of Synod—(Taken from Acts of Synod, 1966) page 65c

“Synod appoint a committee composed of two members of the Pension Committee and two financial experts. This committee shall present to the Synod of 1967 recommendations for appropriate action with regard to the operation of the plan, addressing itself particularly to the following matters:

1. “Non Quota” members: There is an increasing number of ministers accepting appointments for “Spiritual Work” in Christian High Schools, Seminaries, Sanitoriums, etc., who pay only 3½% per year (compared to an average cost for our coverage of 18%) for whom no quota payment is provided. At present such instances total 16.
2. “Using present mortality tables, advising what prospects are for the quota over the next ten years.”
3. “Study the impact of Social Security coverage in the U.S. (voluntary) and Canada (mandatory)”

II. BASIS FOR COMMITTEE ACTION AS DESIGNATED BY SYNOD:

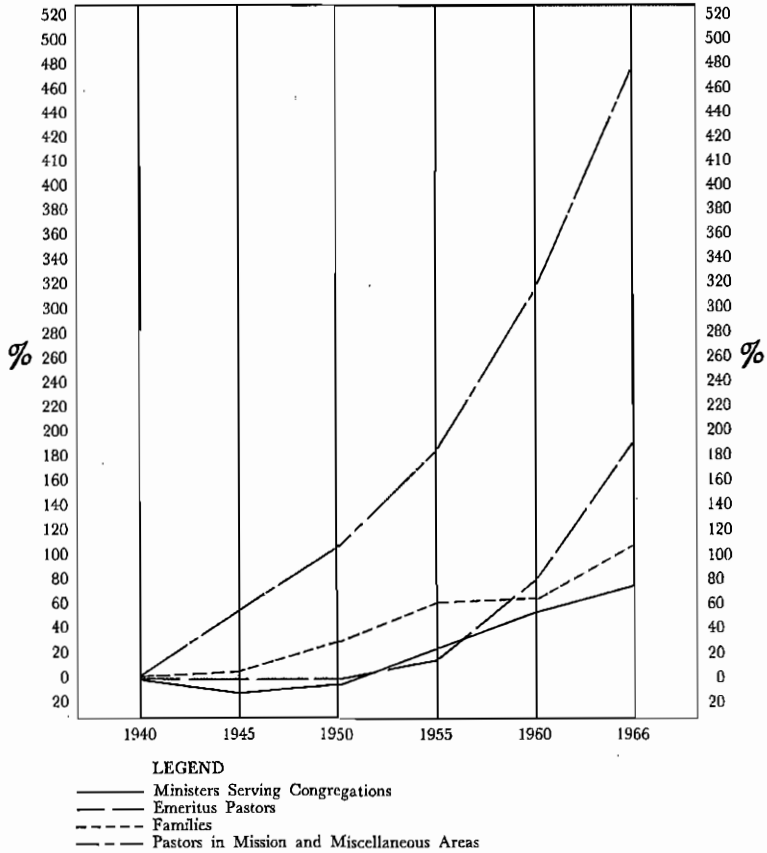
Growth of the Denomination and Number of Pastors:

When the plan began in 1940, there were 300 pastors in the Christian Reformed Church. In 1966 there were 817.

Increase in retiring pastors has been from 40 in 1940 to 117 in 1966. See chart. (This includes disabled ministers and early retirees for health reasons.)

Since there has been a corresponding increase in the number of widows who receive a pension, 40% of the average pastor's salary, the cost has increased significantly.

In 1940 there were 35 ministers in non-pastoral positions, which is approximately 11% of total active ministers; i.e. missions, educational institutions, etc. In 1966 there were 210 ministers in non-pastoral positions or 30% of the total active ministers. There has been an increase in financial commitments without corresponding increases in revenue. The



Pension Fund receives its revenue from the pastors who contribute 3½% of their salary into the fund. In addition, congregational quota assessments bring in revenue. Thus, as pastors have been led into non-pastoral areas in the church, which do not contribute correspondingly, this source of revenue base has not been expanded according to need.

There has been an assumed increase in longevity of pastors and a tendency toward earlier retirement than previously experienced.

III. "INADEQUACY" OF PRESENT PLAN TO MEET THE GROWTH

The Pension and Relief Fund as instituted in 1940 was a credit to the Christian charity of the denomination. This venture, which had its emphasis on faith to provide for Emeriti pastors and widows, fulfilled an excellent plan and purpose to care for those who had given their lives for the service of the King. However, with the growth as indicated above, the inadequacies of the plan should be reckoned with:

	No. of families	Quota	Average salary
1940	28,000	1.60	\$1750.00
1945	29,300	1.75	2200.00
1950	35,400	3.25	3600.00
1955	45,000	4.50	4200.00
1960	52,500	6.50	5200.00
1966	59,500	10.00	6540.00

It can be noted that the quota increases were about six times that of 1940, as compared to a two-fold increase in families. This reflects the increase in average salary as well as the increase in number of retirees. (A retired pastor receives 50% of the total average salary.)

There has been an increasing actuarial concern over the existing plan. It is difficult to determine how long the existing plan could be financially met with its growing commitments. If we were to place our plan on an actuarial basis, our past service liability would be approximately 17 million dollars. In other words, we would need this amount of money on hand to insure payment of pension to those now active in the ministry.

Social Security implications for ministers in Canada and the United States should be recognized since this source of money can be included as pension revenue. The committee recommends that now is the time to put a "temporary ceiling" on the pension payment to pastors and widows from the retirement plan. It further recommends that the plan be reviewed periodically, and in no event should there be more than a 5 year lapse. Another recommendation is that Synod encourage our ministers to include Social Security payments as part of their plan for retirement.

The present "Ministers Pension and Relief Fund" provides for pensions for retirees and payments for early disability in other hardship cases for ministers' families.

IV. RECOMMENDED CORRECTIVE MEASURES

A. *Revenue Recommendations*

1. Separate funds be established according to the nature of the activity.
 - a. The Relief Fund to derive revenue from church offerings and other sources.
 - b. The Pension Fund to be actuarily set up to receive funds from the synodical quota and a percentage of ministers salaries.
 - c. Other funds to be established as required.
2. Revenue to be based on a minister's total income including value of services given in various ways by the church.
3. Funds from other denominations coming with ministers should be available for purchase of pension credits.
4. Pensions should be given to all ministers as long as they are classified or considered ministers of this denomination.

5. It is recommended that payment for pensions for ministers now serving congregations be made by the local church. This would be consistent with the Pension Plan for unordained workers adopted in 1966.

a. Ministers serving in capacities other than regular pastorates should have pension payments paid by the "employing unit." (This could be Home Mission Board, Foreign Mission Board, schools, or some other synodically approved denominational activity.)

B. Administration

All funds for the Pension Fund should be channeled in the most expeditious manner possible, to a central denominational office or agent.

C. The Proposed Pension Plan

This will be forwarded to Synod by means of a separate report. This report will also include specific recommendations for synodical action.

Humbly submitted,

M. Arnoys, Chairman

H. Meyers, Secretary

Wm. Post

L. Kuipers

REPORT 38

CHURCH HELP FUND, INC.

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

Herewith the Church Help Committee presents its 1966 report of the work performed in aiding "weak and needy" congregations in the building of churches and/or parsonages.

The personnel of the committee remained unchanged during the year past in view of the fact that Synod reappointed the Rev. G. J. Rozenboom for another three-year term. He remains as secretary, whereas the Rev. P. Vander Weide and Mr. M. Wiersma continued to serve as president and treasurer respectively. Mr. Elmer Duistermars retires from the committee this year, having served two three-year terms.

The committee met as necessary to consider applications for aid received and to perform other necessary business. A sizeable number of churches again made inquiry concerning loans from the Church Help Fund. Some churches which applied were considerably in excess of 100 families, and yet received classical endorsement. Not all churches and classes appear to take seriously the provisions of our rules, that only "*weak and needy*" churches are eligible to receive aid. After carefully studying all applications received, 27 churches were promised loans totaling \$278,100. Repayment schedules vary from 5 to 20 years. Although all eligible churches that applied were helped, the committee was not always able to grant the amount legitimately requested. In extraordinary instances we judged that even the \$20,000 limit allowed did not appear altogether realistic for a church and parsonage, when present costs of land and building are considered.

The Church Help Committee has again had consultation with the Board of Home Missions regarding emerging congregations with extraordinary needs. The Home Mission Board expressed the desirability of having one of our members serve on their board as a member at large. We concurred that this could prove beneficial for both. We have also had correspondence with a committee of a classis relative to the possibility of the Church Help Fund becoming a Denominational Loan and Insurance Company, and other related questions.

The following figures present a brief account of the financial condition of the Church Help Fund, as of December 31, 1966:

Total receipts from repaid loans	\$ 195,133.21
New loans paid during 1966	227,600.00
Total loans outstanding	2,138,112.62
Cash in Banks	74,148.45
Loans promised, not yet called for	112,500.00
Deficit	\$ 38,351.55

The financial regulations of Synod regarding safety of bank accounts is being followed by the Church Help Committee. Administrative expenses were more than covered by interest on short term investments.

MATTERS REQUIRING ACTION BY SYNOD:

1. The committee requests that the privilege of the floor be granted to Rev. G. Rozenboom, secretary of the committee, on matters pertaining to the Church Help Fund.

2. We request that Synod express thanks to Mr. Elmer Duistermars for his six years of faithful service on the Church Help Committee.

3. We recommend that Mr. Sam Holtrop be appointed to replace Mr. E. Duistermars.

4. Since the Rev. P. Vander Weide has served one three-year term, we recommend that he be reappointed for another three-year term.

5. We recommend that Mr. Marion Wiersma, whose six-year term expires in July 1967, be continued as treasurer of this committee for another term of three years.

Grounds:

a. Because of the continuous turn-over of personnel in this committee, it is highly desirable to retain an experienced man to insure stability.

b. Since the committee is given supervision of a fund totaling more than 2 million dollars, it is advisable to retain an experienced treasurer.

c. Past synodical actions regarding treasurers, warrant this action.

6. We recommend that the Church Help Committee be permitted to exceed the present limits on loans, in cases of extraordinary need, by an additional \$10,000. (Present limit is a total of \$20,000 long and short-term loans on church and parsonage. A \$30,000 limit is requested.)

Grounds:

a. Costs of building, land and financing have risen sharply.

b. The present limit is not realistic in some cases and areas.

7. We recommend that Synod establish a quota of \$1.50 for the Church Help Fund, in order to build up the size of this fund.

Grounds:

a. The size of the present revolving fund is inadequate to meet the needs under the present loan limits. (The committee must constantly pare down legitimate requests.)

b. This is indispensable to implement recommendation 6 — to permit a higher loan ceiling in cases of extraordinary need.

Humbly submitted,
Church Help Committee

Rev. P. Vander Weide, president

Rev. G. J. Rozenboom, secretary

Mr. M. Wiersma, treasurer

Mr. E. Duistermars

Rev. C. R. Veenstra

The Church Help Fund
Schedule A
Statement of Assets--Analysis Cash in Bank

Northwestern State Bank, Orange City, Iowa

--General Checking Account--

Balance on hand, December 31, 1965 ----- \$ 17,582.11

Receipts:

Loan Repayments -----	\$195,133.21	
Northwestern State Bank - O.C. - Savings acct. -----	87,500.00	
Northwestern State Bank - O.C. - Interest -----	3,688.00	
U.S. Canadian Exchange -----	1,992.33	
Gift -----	<u>97.41</u>	<u>288,410.95</u>
Total -----		\$305,993.06

Disbursements:

New Loans -----	\$227,600.00	
Northwestern State Bank - O.C. -----	20,000.00	
Security National Bank, Sioux City, Iowa	15,000.00	
First National Bank, Sioux Center, Iowa	15,000.00	
U.S. Canadian Exchange -----	2,329.56	
Administration Expense -----	<u>1,915.05</u>	281,844.61

Cash on Hand ----- \$ 24,148.45

Bank balance, December 31, 1966

\$ 49,164.85

Less outstanding checks no. 1110	7.00	
no. 1117	5,000.00	
no. 1118	5,000.00	
no. 1119	15,000.00	
no. 1121	<u>9.40</u>	25,016.40

Cash on hand ----- \$ 24,148.45

Statement of Assets--December 31, 1966

Northwestern State Bank - Orange City, Iowa - checking	\$ 24,148.45
Northwestern State Bank - Orange City, Iowa - time certificate	20,000.00
Security National Bank - Sioux City, Iowa - time certificate	15,000.00
First National Bank - Sioux Center, Iowa - savings a/c	15,000.00
Loans to Churches	<u>2,138,112.62</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u><u>\$ 2,212,261.07</u></u>

SCHEDULE B

ANALYSIS - LOANS OUTSTANDING

Church	Balance 12-31-65	New Loans	Repay	Balance 12-31-66
1. Abbotsford, B.C.	\$ 6,156.25	\$	\$ 606.25	\$ 5,550.00
2. Ackley, Iowa	300.00		300.00	none
3. Acton, Ont. - Bethel	11,281.25		1,437.50	9,843.75
4. Ada, Michigan	4,875.00			4,875.00
5. Agassiz, B.C.	8,500.00		500.00	8,000.00
6. Alameda, California	100.00		100.00	none
7. Alamosa, Colorado	700.00		350.00	350.00
8. Allison, Iowa - Bethel	1,681.00		150.00	1,531.00
9. Alliston, Ont.	8,500.00	5,000.00	500.00	13,000.00
10. Ann Arbor, Michigan	10,400.00		700.00	9,700.00
11. Arcadia, California	2,760.00		620.00	2,140.00
12. Athens, Ont.	8,312.50		687.50	7,625.00
13. Austinville, Iowa		10,000.00	2,000.00	8,000.00
14. Aymer, Ont.	2,125.00		375.00	1,750.00
15. Barrhead - Westlock, Alta.	8,850.00		800.00	8,050.00
16. Barrie, Ont.	7,750.00		687.50	7,062.50
17. Bauer, Michigan	4,000.00		500.00	3,500.00
18. Bejou, Minnesota	1,805.00		440.00	1,365.00
19. Belleville, Ont. - Maranatha	10,500.00		750.00	9,750.00
20. Bemis, South Dakota	350.00		350.00	none
21. Bigelow, Minnesota	3,575.00		325.00	3,250.00
22. Blenheim, Ont.	13,000.00		1,000.00	12,000.00
23. Bloomfield, Ont. - Bethany	8,000.00		500.00	7,500.00
24. Blyth, Ont.	5,000.00		750.00	4,250.00
25. Bowmanville, Ont.-Rehoboth	6,750.00		600.00	6,150.00
26. Bradenton, Florida	9,000.00		1,000.00	8,000.00
27. Brampton, Ont. - Immanuel	6,100.00		700.00	5,400.00
28. Brandon, Man.	8,876.25		706.25	8,170.00
29. Brantford, Ont. - 1st	5,187.40		937.50	4,249.90
30. Britt, Iowa	11,475.00		825.00	10,650.00
31. Brockville, Ont. - Bethel	3,750.00		375.00	3,375.00
32. Brooks, Alta.	6,750.00		675.00	6,075.00
33. Brooten, Minnesota	1,050.00		700.00	350.00
34. Burdett, Alta.	8,250.00			8,250.00
35. Burlington, Ont.	10,125.00		625.00	9,500.00
36. Burnaby, B.C.	13,150.00		750.00	12,400.00
37. Byron Center, Mich. - 2nd	6,500.00		500.00	6,000.00
38. Caledonia, Michigan	4,000.00		500.00	3,500.00
39. Calgary, Alta. - Emmanuel	29,400.00		4,000.00	25,400.00
40. Calgary, Alta. - 1st	6,600.00		600.00	6,000.00
41. Calgary, Alta. - Maranatha	12,250.00		750.00	11,500.00
42. Cascade, Michigan	6,750.00		1,000.00	5,750.00
43. Cedar, Iowa	6,375.00		870.00	5,505.00
44. Cedar Springs, Mich.-Pioneer	8,750.00		475.00	8,275.00
45. Charlottetown, P.E.I.	15,000.00		3,000.00	12,000.00
46. Chatham, Ont. - 1st	3,962.70		1,350.00	2,612.70
47. Chilliwack, B.C. - 1st	14,600.00		1,350.00	13,250.00
48. Clara City, Minnesota	3,725.00	600.00	525.00	3,800.00
49. Clarkson, Ont.	6,768.75		656.25	6,112.50
50. Cleveland, Ohio-Maple Heights	6,500.00			6,500.00
51. Clinton, Ont.	6,706.25		500.00	6,206.25
52. Cobourg, Ont.	11,500.00	3,500.00		15,000.00
53. Cochrane, Ont.	6,806.80		531.25	6,275.55
54. Collingwood, Ont.	9,950.00		400.00	9,550.00
55. Columbus, Ohio - Olentangy	3,250.00		250.00	3,000.00
56. Conrad, Montana	870.30		552.00	318.30
57. Cornwall, Ont. - Immanuel	6,687.50			6,687.50
58. Crown Point, Indiana	17,000.00		1,500.00	15,500.00
59. Cutlerville, Mich. - East	5,000.00		500.00	4,500.00
60. Decatur, Michigan	4,714.16		1,100.00	3,614.16
61. Denver, Colorado -Fairview	12,300.00		675.00	11,625.00

Church	Balance 12-31-65	New Loans	Repay	Balance 12-31-66
62. Denver, Colorado - Hillcrest	10,500.00		1,500.00	9,000.00
63. Denver, Colorado - Third	4,000.00		500.00	3,500.00
64. Denver, Colorado - Trinity	7,250.00		500.00	6,750.00
65. Drayton, Ont.	7,200.00		600.00	6,600.00
66. Dresden, Ont.	6,500.00		625.00	5,875.00
67. Duncan, B.C. - 1st	9,225.00		743.75	8,481.25
68. Dundas, Ont. - Calvin	13,000.00		1,500.00	11,500.00
69. Dunnville, Ont. - Bethel	14,500.00		750.00	13,750.00
70. East Martin, Michigan		10,000.00		10,000.00
71. Edmonton, Alta. - Maranatha	6,687.50		625.00	6,062.50
72. Edmonton, Alta. -Ottewell	13,750.00		750.00	13,000.00
73. Edmonton, Alta. -2nd	5,400.00		600.00	4,800.00
74. Edmonton, Alta. -West End	11,739.07		1,000.00	10,739.07
75. Edson, Alta.	11,517.40		750.00	10,767.40
76. Emo, Ont.	14,350.00		1,020.00	13,330.00
77. Escalon, California	10,625.00		1,000.00	9,625.00
78. Escondido, California	3,312.50		1,062.50	2,250.00
79. Essex, Ont.	8,980.00		820.00	8,160.00
80. Estelline, So. Dak.	3,700.00		250.00	3,450.00
81. Exeter, Ont.	11,500.00		750.00	10,750.00
82. Flint, Michigan - 1st		20,000.00		20,000.00
83. Forest, Ont.	11,656.25	5,000.00		16,656.25
84. Fort Lauderdale, Florida	6,500.00		500.00	6,000.00
85. Ft. William, Ont.	5,837.50		750.00	5,087.50
86. Framingham, Mass.	8,500.00		1,000.00	7,500.00
87. Frederickton, N.B.		5,000.00		5,000.00
88. Fremont, Mich. - Trinity	5,000.00		500.00	4,500.00
89. Fruitland, Ont.	5,343.75		506.25	4,837.50
90. Fruitport, Michigan	9,500.00		750.00	8,750.00
91. Galt, Ont. -Maranatha	14,500.00			14,500.00
92. Gary, Indiana -Beacon Light	9,850.00		1,500.00	8,350.00
93. Georgetown, Ont.	12,000.00		750.00	11,250.00
94. Goshen, Indiana	12,333.34		1,166.66	11,166.68
95. Grande Prairie-La Glace, Alta.Peace		5,000.00		5,000.00
96. Grand Rapids,Mich.-Arcadia	11,500.02		916.66	10,583.36
97. Grand Rapids,Mich.-Calvary	8,500.00		1,500.00	7,000.00
98. Grand Rapids,Mich.-Grace	4,500.00			4,500.00
99. Grand Rapids,Mich.-Ideal Park	8,666.68		666.66	8,000.02
100. Grand Rapids,Mich.-Millbrook	4,500.00		500.00	4,000.00
101. Grand Rapids,Mich.-Plymouth Heights	375.00		375.00	none
102. Grand Rapids,Mich.-Princeton	15,000.00		1,500.00	13,500.00
103. Grand Rapids,Mich.-Riverside	8,000.00		700.00	7,300.00
104. Grand Rapids,Mich.-Roger Heights	7,000.00		500.00	6,500.00
105. Grand Rapids,Mich.- 36th	4,500.00		500.00	4,000.00
106. Grandville,Mich.-Hanley	4,000.00		500.00	3,500.00
107. Grandville,Mich.-Ivanrest	14,750.00		1,250.00	13,500.00
108. Grandville,Mich.-South	5,000.00		500.00	4,500.00
109. Granum, Alta.	3,275.00	10,000.00	500.00	12,775.00
110. Grimsby, Ont. -Mountainview	13,500.00		750.00	12,750.00
111. Guelph, Ont. - 1st	11,255.00		1,500.00	9,755.00
112. Halifax, Nova Scotia	4,250.00	5,000.00	250.00	9,000.00
113. Hamilton, Ont. -Emmanuel	14,225.00		775.00	13,450.00
114. Hamilton, Ont. -Mt. Hamilton	7,250.00		600.00	6,650.00
115. Hammond, Indiana	16,600.00		5,225.00	11,375.00
116. Hancock, Minnesota	8,125.00		500.00	7,625.00
117. Haney, B.C.	5,587.50		637.50	4,950.00
118. Hartley, Iowa	11,950.00		1,150.00	10,800.00
119. Hawarden, Iowa	5,000.00		500.00	4,500.00
120. Hayward, California		10,000.00		10,000.00
121. High River, Alta.	10,300.00		2,500.00	7,800.00
122. Hills, Minnesota	2,500.00		950.00	1,550.00
123. Hoboken, New Jersey	1,900.00		400.00	1,500.00
124. Holland, Mich. -Calvary	9,000.00	11,000.00	500.00	19,500.00

Church	Balance 12-31-65	New Loans	Repay	Balance 12-31-66
125.Holland,Mich. - Calvin	6,000.00		500.00	5,500.00
126.Holland,Mich. -Maranatha	6,000.00		1,000.00	5,000.00
127.Holland,Mich. - Park	4,500.00	15,000.00	500.00	19,000.00
128.Holland, Minnesota	590.00	7,500.00	150.00	7,940.00
129.Hollandale, Minnesota	8,000.00		500.00	7,500.00
130.Holland Center, So. Dak.	3,950.00		500.00	3,450.00
131.Holland Marsh, Ont.	6,188.44		500.00	5,688.44
132.Houston, B.C.	2,250.00		500.00	1,750.00
133.Hudsonville,Mich.-Messiah		15,000.00		15,000.00
134.Hull, Iowa - Hope	14,750.00		750.00	14,000.00
135.Ingersoll, Ont.	12,240.00			12,240.00
136.Iron Springs, Alta.	5,468.57		911.43	4,557.14
137.Jackson, Michigan	4,000.00		250.00	3,750.00
138.Jarvis, Ont.	4,550.00		1,200.00	3,350.00
139.Jenison, Mich. -Trinity	3,000.00		250.00	2,750.00
140.Kalamazoo, Mich. - Faith	20,000.00		1,000.00	19,000.00
141.Kalamazoo, Mich. -Knollwood	20,500.00			20,500.00
142.Kalamazoo, Mich.-N. Heights	20,000.00		1,000.00	19,000.00
143.Kalamazoo,Mich.-Prairie Edge	10,000.00		750.00	9,250.00
144.Kalamazoo,Mich.-S. Heights	15,000.00		1,000.00	14,000.00
145.Kalamazoo,Mich.- Westwood	4,000.00		500.00	3,500.00
146.Kemptville, Ont. - 1st	1,800.00		1,000.00	800.00
147.Kentville, Nova Scotia	14,250.00		500.00	13,750.00
148.Kingston, Ont. - 1st	5,750.00		750.00	5,000.00
149.Kitchener, Ont.	6,593.75		656.25	5,937.50
150.Lacombe, Alta. - Bethel	10,750.00		750.00	10,000.00
151.Lacombe, Alta. - 1st	1,175.00		700.00	475.00
152.Ladner, B.C. - 1st	9,550.00		600.00	8,950.00
153.Langley, B.C.	7,260.00		687.50	6,572.50
154.LeMars, Iowa - Calvin	4,500.00		500.00	4,000.00
155.Lethbridge, Alta.	6,100.00		1,000.00	5,100.00
156.Lindsay, Ont.	12,875.50		862.50	12,013.00
157.Listowel, Ont.	12,750.00		750.00	12,000.00
158.London, Ont. - 1st	4,150.00		387.50	3,762.50
159.Lucknow, Ont.	12,400.00		850.00	11,550.00
160.Luverne, Minnesota	4,625.00		750.00	3,875.00
161.McBain, Michigan	9,000.00		1,000.00	8,000.00
162.Medicine Hat, Alta.	10,750.00		750.00	10,000.00
163.Miami, Florida	18,000.00		1,000.00	17,000.00
164.Midland Park,N.J.-Irving Park	5,500.00		500.00	5,000.00
165.Milwaukee,Wisconsin - 1st	3,400.00		700.00	2,700.00
166.Minneapolis,Minn.-Calvary	4,250.00		250.00	4,000.00
167.Minneapolis,Minn. -First	1,533.83		1,533.83	none
168.Momence, Ill.	14,000.00		1,000.00	13,000.00
169.Monroe, Washington	2,700.00		450.00	2,250.00
170.Montreal, Quebec	30,000.00		1,500.00	28,500.00
171.Morrison, Ill.	1,250.00		1,250.00	none
172.Mountain Lake, Minnesota	1,639.00		168.25	1,470.75
173.Mount Vernon,Washington-1st	6,500.00		500.00	6,000.00
174.Muskegon, Mich. - Calvin	4,100.00	10,000.00	350.00	13,750.00
175.Muskegon, Mich. - Grace	12,057.08			12,057.08
176.Neerlandia, Alta.	2,250.00		500.00	1,750.00
177.New Liskeard, Ont.	10,675.00		850.00	9,825.00
178.Newmarket, Ont.	14,750.00			14,750.00
179.New Richmond, Michigan	3,750.00			3,750.00
180.Newton, New Jersey	2,350.00		625.00	1,725.00
181.New Westminster, B.C.	6,937.50		600.00	6,337.50
182.Niagara Falls,Ont.-Rehoboth	12,500.00		750.00	11,750.00
183.North Haledon, New Jersey	11,700.00		1,200.00	10,500.00
184.Oak Forest, Ill.-Hope	12,000.00		1,500.00	10,500.00
185.Oak Harbor, Washington		5,000.00		5,000.00
186.Ogilvie, Minnesota	8,400.00		1,000.00	7,400.00
187.Omaha,Nebr.-Prairie Lane		20,000.00		20,000.00
188.Ontario, California-1st	4,500.00		500.00	4,000.00
189.Orangeville, Ont.	10,265.00		860.00	9,405.00
190.Orillia, Ont. -1st	13,250.00		750.00	12,500.00

Church	Balance 12-31-65	New Loans	Repay	Balance 12-31-66
191.Oshawa, Ont. - Hebron	11,062.50		750.00	10,312.50
192.Oshawa, Ont. - Zion	15,000.00		500.00	14,500.00
193.Oskalosa, Iowa - Bethel	4,750.00		550.00	4,200.00
194.Ottawa, Ont. - Calvin	8,875.00		625.00	8,250.00
195.Ottawa, Ont. - East	7,726.67			7,726.67
196.Owen Sound, Ont.	2,462.50		637.50	1,825.00
197.Palos Heights, Ill.	7,200.00		700.00	6,500.00
198.Paramus, New Jersey	4,250.00		500.00	3,750.00
199.Parchment, Michigan	7,000.00		500.00	6,500.00
200.Paterson, N.J.-Madison Ave.	10,000.00		500.00	9,500.00
201.Peers, Alta.	10,812.50			10,812.50
202.Pembroke, Ont. -Zion	8,500.00		1,375.00	7,125.00
203.Peterborough, Ont. -Cephas	12,450.00		800.00	11,650.00
204.Phoenix, Airzona -Orangewood	15,000.00		1,000.00	14,000.00
205.Pipestone, Minnesota	4,500.00		500.00	4,000.00
206.Plainfield, Michigan	9,425.00		1,675.00	7,750.00
207.Port Alberni, B.C. - 1st	3,600.00		300.00	3,300.00
208.Port Arthur, Ont.-Bethlehem	15,000.00		750.00	14,250.00
209.Portland, Michigan	2,000.00		500.00	1,500.00
210.Randolph, Wisconsin -2nd	2,250.00		750.00	1,500.00
211.Raymond, Minnesota	695.00		250.00	445.00
212.Red Deer, Alta.	6,375.00		562.50	5,812.50
213.Redlands, Calif.-Highland Ave.	7,225.00		1,675.00	5,550.00
214.Regina, Sask. -1st	13,795.00		750.00	13,045.00
215.Renfrew, Ont.	11,250.00		700.00	10,550.00
216.Renville, Minnesota-Emden	7,000.00		1,000.00	6,000.00
217.Richmond, B.C.	9,000.00		500.00	8,500.00
218.Rock Rapids, Iowa	3,695.00		800.00	2,895.00
219.Rocky Mountain House, Alta.	5,850.00		637.50	5,212.50
220.Roseville, Mich.-Immanuel	5,250.00		750.00	4,500.00
221.Saginaw, Michigan-Community	15,000.00			15,000.00
222.San Diego, California	8,600.00		1,600.00	7,000.00
223.Sarnia, Ont. -1st	4,850.00		3,950.00	900.00
224.Sarnia, Ont.-2nd, Rehoboth	6,700.00		650.00	6,050.00
225.Saskatoon, Sask.-Bethel	11,500.00		1,550.00	9,950.00
226.Seattle, Wash. -Calvary	9,500.00		750.00	8,750.00
227.Seattle, Wash. -1st	6,475.00		775.00	5,700.00
228.Sheboygan, Wis. -Calvin	9,750.00	5,000.00	750.00	14,000.00
229.Sibley, Iowa	1,530.00			1,530.00
230.Simcoe, Ont.-Emmanuel	9,100.00		1,450.00	7,650.00
231.Sioux City, Iowa	10,500.00		900.00	9,600.00
232.Smithers, B.C.	10,035.00		855.00	9,180.00
233.South Bend, Indiana	1,351.75		175.00	1,176.75
234.South Holland, Ill.-Peace		5,000.00		5,000.00
235.Springdale, Ont.	9,000.00		1,000.00	8,000.00
236.St. Catharines, Ont.-Maranatha	5,550.00		637.50	4,912.50
237.St. Thomas, Ont. -1st	9,550.00		762.50	8,787.50
238.Stratford, Ont.	10,000.00		500.00	9,500.00
239.Strathroy, Ont. -East	5,562.50			5,562.50
240.Strathroy, Ont. -West		10,000.00		10,000.00
241.Sun Valley, Calif.-Bethel	7,250.00		750.00	6,500.00
242.Surrey, B.C.	13,750.00		750.00	13,000.00
243.Sussex, New Jersey	3,150.00		575.00	2,575.00
244.Taber, Alta.	12,991.62		1,448.97	11,542.65
245.Telkwa, B.C.	9,985.00			9,985.00
246.Terrace, B.C.	8,625.00		625.00	8,000.00
247.Terra Ceia, North Carolina	3,105.00		595.00	2,510.00
248.Toronto, Ont. -1st	3,800.00		450.00	3,350.00
249.Toronto, Ont.-Grace, Scarborough	10,000.00			10,000.00
250.Toronto, Ont.-Rehoboth	2,812.50			2,812.50
251.Toronto, Ont. -Second	11,250.00		750.00	10,500.00
252.Toronto, Ont.-Willowdale	7,200.00		800.00	6,400.00
253.Tracy, Iowa	3,000.00		250.00	2,750.00
254.Transcona, Man.	3,500.00		250.00	3,250.00
255.Trenton, Ont. -Ebenezer	5,775.00		600.00	5,175.00

Church	Balance 12-31-65	New Loans	Repay	Balance 12-31-66
256.Truro,Nova Scotia-John Calvin	8,000.00		500.00	7,500.00
257.Tucson,Arizona-Bethel	18,750.00			18,750.00
258.Tyler, Minnesota	270.00		45.00	225.00
259.Vancouver,B.C.-Bethel	7,312.50	5,000.00	562.50	11,750.00
260.Vancouver,B.C.-First	1,500.00		1,000.00	500.00
261.Vauxhall, Alta.	3,450.00		400.00	3,050.00
262.Victoria, B.C.	9,275.00		625.00	8,650.00
263.Vogel Center, Michigan	3,000.00		500.00	2,500.00
264.Wallaceburg, Ont.	9,600.00		762.50	8,837.50
265.Waupun, Wisconsin -Bethel		15,000.00		15,000.00
266.Wayland, Michigan	6,000.00		500.00	5,500.00
267.Welland Junction, Ont.	13,000.00		750.00	12,250.00
268.Wellandport,Ont.-Riverside	6,250.00		625.00	5,625.00
269.Western Springs, Ill.	2,475.00		1,025.00	1,450.00
270.Wheaton, Ill.	3,000.00		500.00	2,500.00
271.Williamsburg, Ont.	8,125.00		625.00	7,500.00
272.Willmar, Minnesota	8,000.00		500.00	7,500.00
273.Winfield, Ill.	20,000.00		2,000.00	18,000.00
274.Winnipeg, Man.	4,550.00		650.00	3,900.00
275.Winnipeg,Man. - Kildonan	14,000.00		1,000.00	13,000.00
276.Woodstock, Ont.	3,999.50		800.00	3,199.50
277.Wyoming, Ont.	6,725.00		662.50	6,062.50
278.York, Ont.	8,400.00		500.00	7,900.00
279.Zeeland, Michigan -Bethel	2,000.00		500.00	1,500.00
280.Zeeland, Michigan -Haven		15,000.00		15,000.00
281.Zillah, Washington	975.00			975.00

TOTALS	\$2,105,645.83	\$227,600.00	\$195,133.21	\$2,138,112.62
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SUMMARY

Balance on hand December 31, 1965 ----- \$ 17,582.11

Receipts:

Loan Repayments-Schedule "B"-----	\$195,133.21
NW State Bank - savings a/c - Schedule "A" -----	87,500.00
NW State Bank - interest - Schedule "A" -----	3,688.00
U.S. Canadian Exchange - Schedule "A" -----	1,992.33
Gift - Schedule "A" -----	97.41
TOTAL -----	<u>288,410.95</u>
	\$305,993.06

Disbursements:

New Loans - Schedule "B"-----	\$227,600.00
NW State Bank-O.C.Time Cert.-Schedule "A" -----	20,000.00
Security National Bank-Sioux City,Iowa-Schedule "A" -----	15,000.00
First National Bank - Sioux Center, Iowa -Schedule "A" -----	15,000.00
U.S. Canadian Exchange - Schedule "A" -----	2,329.56
Administration Expense - Schedule "C" -----	<u>1,915.05</u>
	281,844.61
Cash on hand December 31, 1966 -----	<u>\$ 24,148.45</u>
TOTAL -----	\$305,993.06

Administration Expense--Schedule "C"

Total Administration Expense ----- \$ 1,915.05
(Itemized Accounts Available)

REPORT 39-A

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON ECUMENICITY
AND THE WORLD COUNCIL

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

The Synod of 1966 appointed this committee and gave it the mandate to

- a) define our position with respect to the World Council of Churches
- b) prepare a statement which could serve as our reply to the resolution of the Gereformeerde Kerken
- c) report to the Synod of 1967, if at all possible.

Grounds:

- a. Synod has never explicitly defined its position.
- b. The Gereformeerde Kerken in the Netherlands are awaiting our reaction to their decisions, before they take any further action.
- c. In order to promote a helpful confrontation at the meeting of the RES in 1968, our position should be articulated and published in 1967. (ACTS 1966, p. 60.)

In seeking to comply with its mandate and to present a report to the Synod of 1967, the committee held its first meeting on July 21, 1966. Synod charged the committee to organize itself, and Rev. C. Boomsma was elected chairman and Prof. F. H. Klooster was elected reporter. Although Rev. M. Baarman attended parts of three meetings, he did not attend any of the other meetings. Hence he does not appear as a signatory to either of our reports.

At the July, 1966 meeting the committee planned its work and assigned special studies to various members of the committee. Subsequently the committee has met at least one full day each month from September through March. It became apparent in the January 1967 meeting that the committee would not be able to present a united report. The majority and minority groups then held various additional meetings as were judged necessary by each group. The first draft of each group's report was seen by the other group, and an entire day's meeting was devoted to the discussion of these draft reports. The committee recognizes that there is a measure of duplication of material in the majority and minority reports. However, there has not been adequate time to eliminate this duplication without destroying the unity of the position set forth in each report. The committee regrets that the reports are as extensive as they are, but Synod's mandate was large and complex and we have not been able to do justice to our mandate in briefer compass.

Here, then, follow the reports of the majority and of the minority.

Respectfully submitted,

C. Boomsma, Chairman
F. H. Klooster, Reporter

Committee on Ecumenicity and the World Council

A. Majority Report

Esteemed Brethren:

The undersigned herewith present the majority report of the Committee on Ecumenicity and the World Council in fulfillment of the mandate of the Synod of 1966. We regret that it was not possible for the committee to present a united report on this important subject of ecumenicity. The complexity of the issues and the divergent viewpoints on these matters is in part evident from our inability to present a united report. We pray that the Holy Spirit may guide Synod and the churches as we together seek to pursue our ecumenical responsibilities in this challenging age in obedience to the Christ of the Scriptures, the Head and King of the Church, unto the glory of the triune God.

The mandate of the Synod of 1966 implies that we should first attempt to "define our position with respect to the World Council of Churches." In the light of this definition of our own position regarding the WCC, we shall then attempt to prepare a statement which can serve as Synod's reply to the resolutions of the Gereformeerde Kerken.

Since the nature of our mandate requires an extensive report, we shall here present a synopsis of the report which follows.

Synopsis of the Majority Report

- I. *A Survey of Past Synodical Action by the CRC*
 - A. A General Summary
 - B. Specific Synodical Decision Expressing the Ecumenical Stance of the CRC Prior to 1967
 1. Expressions of general principle
 2. Decisions concerning the Federal (National) Council
 3. Decisions concerning the National Association of Evangelicals
 4. Decisions concerning the World Presbyterian Alliance
 5. Decisions concerning the World Council of Churches
 - C. The Synodical Report of 1944
 1. Ecumenical Activities of the CRC Since 1944
 2. The Ecumenical Responsibility of the CRC
- II. *Biblical Teachings Concerning the Church and Ecumenicity*
 - A. The Nature of Christ's Church
 1. It belongs to Jesus Christ
 2. Christ's ownership is based on his redemptive work
 3. It is the church of the triune God
 4. It is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church
 5. It comes to clear manifestation in the world
 6. It is radically distinct from that which is not church
 - B. The Calling of Christ's Church
 1. It must live and labor as God's people in the world
 2. It must be a confessing, witnessing church

3. It must witness consistently in word and deed
4. It must plan its program in direct response to the gospel
- C. The Unity of Christ's Church
 1. The definition and description of church fellowship
 2. The nature of church fellowship
 3. The duty to withhold fellowship from the unbelieving and the unfaithful
- III. *An Analysis of the World Council of Churches*
 - A. What Is the WCC?
 - B. Types of Member Churches
 - C. Doctrinal Diversity in the WCC
 - D. Character of the Ecumenical Consensus
- IV. *An Evaluation of the World Council of Churches*
 - A. The Nature of the WCC
 - B. The Basis of the WCC
 1. The Christology of the Basis
 2. The Trinitarian Character of the Basis
 3. The Scriptural Doctrine of the Basis
 - C. The Maintenance and Functioning of the Basis
 - D. The Socio-Political Activities and Declarations of WCC
 - E. The Implications of Membership in the WCC

Conclusion:
- V. *Other Problems Related to Membership in the WCC*
 - A. Membership in the WCC and Our Mission Work
 - B. Syncretistic Tendencies in the WCC
 - C. The Prospect of Ecumenical Achievement in WCC
 - D. Possible Injury to Ecumenical Relations with Reformed Churches
- VI. *Other Avenues of Ecumenical Action (Suggestions)*
- VII. *Reply to the Resolution of the Gereformeerde Kerken*
- VIII. *Recommendations*

I. A SURVEY OF PAST SYNODICAL ACTIONS BY THE CRC

A. *A General Summary*

One of the grounds for the mandate to "define our position with respect to the WCC" was that "Synod has never explicitly defined its position." The committee therefore began its work by making a comprehensive review and study of past synodical action regarding various facets of ecumenicity.

The synodical material dealing with ecumenical relations is actually very rich. Among the many excellent documents, the Synodical Report of 1944 is especially outstanding and has served to guide Synod's Stand-

ing Committee on Ecumenicity and Inter-Church Correspondence. This Report of 1944 continues to supply us with important guidelines, and we will return to it repeatedly in this present report. There are, however, certain aspects of the problem of our relationship to the WCC which are not covered by the situation which obtained when the report for 1944 was written.

The position of the Christian Reformed Church on ecumenical matters has been expressed in general statements of principle as well as in decisions regarding the Federal Council of Churches (now the National Council of Churches), the National Association of Evangelicals, the World Presbyterian Alliance, and other ecumenical bodies. Some of these statements may also have implications for our present study. There are also a few statements that deal directly with the World Council of Churches. Although these statements originated with the Reformed Ecumenical Synod, they have been endorsed by our church (ACTS 1957, p. 102) and thus they are significant for determining our position with respect to the WCC.

Therefore the committee judges that a presentation of the major synodical decisions dealing with ecumenical matters that implicitly or explicitly express the ecumenical stance of the Christian Reformed Church will serve a useful purpose. This will provide the necessary background and context for the mandate "to define our position with respect to the WCC."

B. Specific Synodical Decisions Expressing the Ecumenical Stance of the Christian Reformed Church Prior to 1967

Under this heading there are five areas to be considered:

1. Expressions of general principle
2. Decisions concerning the Federal Council (National Council)
3. Decisions concerning the National Association of Evangelicals
4. Decisions concerning the World Presbyterian Alliance
5. Decisions concerning the World Council of Churches

1. Expressions of General Principles Re Ecumenicity in Decisions of Synods of the CRC

Under this heading we shall cite some of the synodical decisions that express general principles concerning the church's ecumenical responsibility. First there are the important guidelines from the Report of 1944. Second there is a brief statement submitted to the synod of 1950. Under a third heading a number of isolated statements of ecumenical significance are brought together.

a. Twelve-point program for inter-church relations—the Report of 1944

A comprehensive twelve-point program for inter-church relations was approved in substance by the Synod of 1944 and adopted "as a basis of further study and action" (ACTS 1944, pp. 83-84). The full text of these twelve points is presented in the ACTS 1944 (pp. 357-361). Here we shall simply quote a summary or abbreviation which was submitted to the Synod in 1961:

"1. We assume that other churches than our own are Christian churches and are closely related as manifestations of the Body of Christ.

"2. The term 'sister church,' which originally refers to congregations in the same denomination which cannot merge into one for physical reasons, can in this context be applied to denominations who so fully agree in polity and practice that they could merge into one were it not for physical and geographical barriers.

"3. The spiritual unity of all true churches of Christ should come to expression as much as possible in unity and uniformity of doctrine, polity and liturgy.

"4. 'Sister churches' as defined in No. 2, which cannot merge because of geographical and-or language barriers, should engage in correspondence in the spirit of Art. 48 of the C.O.

"5. The churches of Christ can be roughly divided into these groups:

"a. The Oriental churches;

"b. The Roman Catholic Church;

"c. the Reformed churches, including Presbyterian;

"d. The non-Reformed Protestant churches.

"6. Reformed churches may be classified as:

"a. Those that are actually and in daily practice Reformed in doctrine, polity, and liturgy.

"b. Those that are officially Reformed but not in fact.

"7. We must, whether there be hope of success or not, endeavor to win those who are not true to the principles of the Reformed faith.

"8. There is no scriptural warrant for the present pluriformity of churches.

"9. The wise thing is to begin with those closest to us.

"10. The first stage should be to seek the closest possible association with those which are 'sister' churches as described in No. 2.

"11. All faithful Reformed churches in North America should be confederated.

"12. The general principle governing such efforts at confederation is the distinction between what is essential and non-essential in Reformed doctrine, polity and liturgy." (ACTS 1961, pp. 478-479)

The Synod of 1944 "express[ed] agreement with the substance of the 12 propositions" in the report and added these grounds:

"a. They present the Biblical position on inter-church relationship.

"b. They can serve as a basis of further study and action.

"c. Present world conditions make early progress in these matters imperative." (ACTS 1944, p. 85)

b. *Report to the Synod of 1950 on Interchurch Affiliation*

The Synod of 1950 received an eight-page report from a study committee which presented scriptural and creedal principles relevant to inter-church relations. This report is mainly devoted to a consideration of basic passages from Scripture. The committee presented the following summary of its conclusions:

"The Creeds present no specific guidance which is not found in the presentation of Scriptural teachings on the matter of interchurch affiliation, except for the statement re the Arminian heresy. Further, the Creeds are in no way in conflict with but are in harmony with the following Scriptural principles bearing upon interchurch affiliation.

"1. It is wrong to cooperate in spiritual matters with those who reject the truth, i.e., the essentials of the Gospel.

"2. It is our duty to cooperate in spiritual matters with fellow-believers.

"3. It is proper to cooperate even when, in non-essentials, fellow-believers differ with us or have not reached the level of our spiritual illumination.

"4. It is our duty to guard the purity of the message, also when cooperating with fellow-believers. Nothing must be allowed to detract from the soundness of the Gospel. Hence if in any phase of our cooperation there should be danger that our message would begin to lose its clear and Reformed emphasis and our warnings remain unheeded, such cooperation should cease." (ACTS 1950, p. 385)

This report was presented to the Synod of 1950 in connection with the question of whether the Christian Reformed Church should continue its membership in the National Association of Evangelicals. The exact status of these conclusions is uncertain. The Synod of 1950 decided to maintain the "status quo" with respect to the NAE "until our churches have had ample opportunity to consider the principles set forth in the report of the study committee" (p. 69). However, later decisions of synods make statements and present grounds which at least indicate an implicit endorsement of these principles of 1950 (cf. ACTS 1958, p. 92).

c. Isolated decisions or actions of CRC synods involving explicit or implicit statements of principle concerning ecumenicity and inter-church relations

In this section of this historical survey of CRC decisions, reference is made to six principal statements that were expressed in the context of specific decisions on ecumenical questions.

1) "The unity of the Church of Jesus Christ, a unity which, though essentially spiritual, should also as much as possible come to visible expression in the organized church . . ."

This principle was already expressed in 1930 at the time that Synod felt compelled to reject a proposal for organic union with five other Presbyterian or Reformed bodies. This principle is again enunciated in the Report of 1944 (cf. especially no. 3 of the 12-point statement). The full text of the 1930 statement follows:

"However much we believe in the unity of the Church of Jesus Christ, a unity which, though essentially spiritual, should also as much as possible come to visible expression in the organized Church; and

"However much we desire to cultivate the spirit of mutual understanding and cooperation between the Calvinistic branches of historical Christendom;

"We cannot cooperate in any movement whose avowed aim is to effec-

tuate *organic* union between our Church and the five affiliated Churches mentioned above." (ACTS 1930, p. 104)

Four reasons were given as grounds for this decision. Reference is made to the "widespread indifference toward great essentials of the Reformed faith" present in at least one of these churches; to the struggle between modernism and orthodoxy in which the CRC can stand only for orthodoxy since modernism is "not only tolerated ecclesiastically, but also openly propagated in pulpit, press, and theological education" in at least one of these five denominations; to the fact that "ecclesiastical discipline . . . has in some of the five aforementioned cooperating Churches practically fallen into disuse;" and to the difference of opinion with respect to the compatibility of membership in secret, oathbound organizations and membership in the church.

2) "Ecclesiastical alliances of any kind between orthodox and liberals are contrary to God's Word."

This principle was expressed as "a burdening conviction in our churches" when in 1924 Synod decided to sever our relations with the Federal Council of Churches of which we were members since 1918. The same principle was repeated in 1958 with reference to the National Council of Churches. (Cf. section 2 below for the full text of these decisions.)

3) The need of judging a church not only by its creed or confession but also by its faithfulness in the exercise of discipline.

This principle is expressed at various times and in various ways in the acts of Synod. It is expressed above as one of the reasons for not seeking organic union with the five churches since some of these churches did not administer discipline when there was departure from the official doctrine of the church. The same principle was expressed in connection with the invitation to churches to participate in the Reformed Ecumenical Synod: "All churches which profess the Reformed faith are to be invited unless they fail to exercise discipline in the case of departures from the Reformed faith" (RES ACTS 1946, p. 48; CRC ACTS 1947, p. 91).

4) The church must pursue her ecumenical responsibilities with specifically ecclesiastical organizations.

This principle is enunciated as the sole reason in 1961 for not re-affiliating with the NAE. The ground for the negative decision was simply: "The NAE is not an exclusively ecclesiastical organization" (ACTS 1961, p. 99).

5) A distinction must be made between what the church must do as church and what Calvinistic individuals may do as individuals or unitedly by means of some society.

Although there is no specific synodical decision on this in 1943, the matter comes up in the advisory committee report of that year. It is a position widely held in the CRC and may be expressed in some reports other than those of an ecumenical nature. The occasion for its mention in 1943 was consideration of the question of a Reformed Alliance of Churches and the question of establishing a Christian university. (ACTS 1943, p. 142)

6) Non-membership in inter-church organizations when clearly expressed for sound reasons may itself be a significant ecumenical witness.

This viewpoint was expressed in a report to the Synod of 1959 which considered the question of membership in the World Presbyterian Alliance. The report stated:

"The very non-membership when expressed in a Christian spirit and with sound Christian concern, that is with a clear conscience, is itself a witness which is apt to become more vocal than membership in a large organization. This is what has happened to the Reformed Ecumenical Synod." (ACTS 1959, p. 272)¹

2. Decisions of the CRC relating to the Federal Council (National Council)

Suggestions for joining the Federal Council of Churches were presented to the Synod of 1914. In 1918, mainly for practical reasons, Synod decided to join the Federal Council, but in 1924 it was decided "to sever all connections with the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America." Three grounds were presented for this decision:

"(1) There is a burdening conviction in our churches that ecclesiastical alliances of any kind between orthodox and liberals are contrary to the Word of God;

"(2) Liberalism is strongly in evidence in the Council as is clearly seen from its emphasis on the social gospel and its humanitarian tendencies.

"(3) The Council stand committed to elaborate programs pertaining to industrial, national, and inter-national affairs which our churches have never endorsed and should not endorse, even if we could fully agree with them, since they do not belong to the province of the church as an organization." (ACTS 1924, p. 112)

Again in 1958 this issue was before the Synod. Synod was called upon to deal with a protest against the Alameda Christian Reformed Church for having joined the Alameda Council of Churches. The synodical decision was as follows:

"Although recognizing with appreciation the evangelistic zeal which motivated the Alameda Church in joining the Alameda Council initially, Synod declare that it does not approve of any consistory or congregation of our churches identifying itself by membership with any local council or agency of the National Council of Churches, or a similar local organization which included 'churches' that deny the orthodox faith and Scriptural teaching.

"Grounds:

"1) Scripture forbids such association with unbelievers and with those who preach another Gospel. Cf. II Cor. 6:14-18 and Galatians 1:8-9.

"2) Synod has taken a position against membership in the National Council after initially joining it, also for reasons of gaining opportunities for service, on the ground that:

"a) Ecclesiastical alliances of any kind between orthodox and liberals are contrary to God's Word.

1) This statement apparently does not have the status of a synodical decision but only that of a study committee report. The decision of 1960 does not express itself with respect to the report of 1959 (cf. ACTS 1961, p. 10).

"b) Liberalism is strongly in evidence in the Federal (now National) Council.

"c) The Council stands committed to programs . . . which our churches . . . should not endorse." (ACTS 1958, pp. 92-3)

3. *Decisions of the CRC relating to the NAE*

The Christian Reformed Church joined the NAE in 1943. In the face of overtures to the contrary, the Synod of 1944 decided to continue membership in the NAE listing four grounds which were repeated substantially in 1947, namely:

"a. The N.A.E. has, as the committee report shows, a positive doctrinal basis, expressing a number of the essentials of the christian faith, emphasizing that on which its members agree.

"b. The N.A.E. is a highly necessary organization which is and promises to be an excellent medium to combat unbelief, and to keep clear the channels by which the truth can be proclaimed by the co-operating groups.

"c. Our delegates to the N.A.E. have received positions of leadership in its councils, and may hereby be instructed to guard against practices inconsistent with our principles and to help direct its development in the right direction.

"d. Our church remains free to sever its relation with the N.A.E. whenever membership in that organization becomes inconsistent with our doctrine or harmful to our church life." (ACTS 1944, p. 87)

The Synod of 1950 which received the study committee report on inter-church affiliation referred to above, decided to retain its membership in the NAE "until our churches have had ample opportunity to consider the principles set forth in the report of the study committee for the matter of Interchurch affiliation" (ACTS 1950, p. 69). The Synod of 1951 decided to withdraw from the NAE and formulated its reasons in an approved letter submitted to the NAE (cf. ACTS 1951, p. 79). The Synod of 1961 in response to objections, appeals etc. decided not to re-affiliate with the NAE. As the single ground for that decision, Synod declared that the NAE was not "an exclusively ecclesiastical organization" (ACTS 1961, p. 99).

4. *Decisions of the CRC relating to the World Presbyterian Alliance*

The question of affiliation with the World Presbyterian Alliance has been considered by several CRC synods also. The decisions of 1924 and 1960 are relevant to our present study. In 1924 a study committee considered the basis of the WPA, its nature, and the implications of membership. It recommended the following grounds for not affiliating with the WPA and the advisory committee of that synod endorsed these grounds:

"a. the basis of the Alliance is too indefinite. There is no agreement on what is Reformed;

"b. the present drift is entirely away from helping each other maintain the historical Reformed faith. This should be emphatically the aim of the Alliance;

"c. affiliation would mean ecclesiastical alliance and cooperation with

churches in which representative liberal forces are in good and regular standing;

"d. a proposed revision of the Constitution of the Alliance makes it well nigh impossible to say what the character of the Alliance will be in the future;

"e. the practical work of the Alliance lacks the specific Reformed stamp." (ACTS 1924, p. 160)

The Synod of 1924 expressed itself in these words:

"Synod decides not to affiliate at this time with the 'Alliance of the Reformed Churches Holding the Presbyterian System,' because a proposed revision of its constitution makes it well-nigh impossible to say what the character of the Alliance will be in the future. At the same time Synod voices its profound interest in the work of the Alliance, and trusts that the proposed revision of the Constitution will set forth clearly what should emphatically be the aim of the Alliance, namely, helping each other maintain the historical Reformed faith." (ACTS 1924, p. 160)

The Synod of 1959 received a report from the Committee on Ecumenicity and Inter-church Correspondence with respect to the WPA but did not act upon it. The same committee in 1960 repeated its recommendation not to join the WPA and the Synod adopted that advice. The committee report of 1959 and again of 1960 recommended:

"That Synod do not consider seriously membership in the World Presbyterian Alliance:

"Grounds:

"a. The basis of the Constitution is indistinct.

"b. The World Presbyterian Alliance is closely affiliated with the World Council of Churches.

"c. The constituency of the World Presbyterian Alliance is theologically mixed. The situation is intensified due to membership of all types on both sides of the Iron Curtain." (ACTS 1960, pp. 107, 379). [Note: This is the report which contained the statement that non-membership when clearly expressed was itself an important ecumenical witness. Cf. above.]

The synodical decision of 1960 was expressed, however, in other words than those recommended, namely:

"Synod do not apply for membership in the World Presbyterian Alliance.

"Grounds:

"Such membership has far-reaching implications which have not been sufficiently explored by our church in order to take final action at this time." (ACTS 1960, p. 107)

However, the Committee on Ecumenicity and Inter-church Correspondence reported to the Synod of 1966 that it had accepted an invitation to send an observer to the Theological Committee of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. The committee further stated: "We trust Synod will approve of our continuing to send an observer to these meetings" (ACTS 1966, p. 226). The response of Synod was a decision to "permit its Committee on Ecumenicity and Inter-Church Correspondence to send

an observer to the Theological Committee of the North American Area of the World Presbyterian Alliance" (ACTS 1966, p. 59).

5. *Decisions of the CRC relating to the WCC*

We also find in the decisions of past synods some explicit statements dealing with the World Council of Churches. Although these decisions sometimes originated with the Reformed Ecumenical Synod, endorsement of them by the CRC has made them our own as well.

Decisions of the RES of 1953 with respect to the WCC are quoted in the CRC ACTS of 1954; they are appealed to in 1955; and they are given synodical endorsement by the CRC in 1957. The 1953 RES decisions are quoted in the CRC ACTS of 1954 as follows:

"a. Synod advises the member churches of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod not to join the World Council of Churches as now constituted.

"Grounds:

"(1) The World Council of Churches actually permits essentially different interpretations of its doctrinal basis, and thus of the nature of the Christian faith

"(2) The World Council of Churches represents itself as a Community of faith, but is actually not this, for Churches of basically divergent positions are comprised in the World Council of Churches.

"b. Without intending to limit the freedom of the Churches to determine their own affiliations, Synod requests those Reformed Churches which are already members of the World Council of Churches to reconsider their position in the light of the foregoing." (ACTS 1954, pp. 549-550)

The CRC Synod of 1955 received a communication from its sister churches in New Zealand contending that the RES decision of 1953 was ambiguous. The letter was referred to the Committee on Ecumenicity and Inter-Church Correspondence for study and advice (ACTS 1955, p. 31). This committee reported to the Synod of 1957 which decided as follows:

"a. Synod advise the Ecumenical Synod of 1958 to abide by the decision of the RES of Edinburgh of 1953 re membership in the Reformed Ecumenical Synod and in the World Council of Churches.

"Grounds:

"(1) The RES of Edinburgh gave a positive testimony in urging members holding membership in the WCC to review their position.

"(2) The condition of membership in the RES as stipulated in Art. IV of the *Rules Pertaining to the Reformed Ecumenical Synod* (cf. pp. 35-36 of ACTS of RES) are sound and specific.

"(3) A matter of this kind should be approached through persuasion rather than through legislation.

"b. Synod declare the adoption of the above recommendation as its reply to the New Zealand Reformed Churches." (ACTS 1957, p. 102)

Mention may also be made of the action of the Synod of 1962. The Synod of 1961 referred to its Committee on Ecumenicity and Inter-Church Correspondence for study and recommendation the report on

"Ecumenicity and Pluriformity" received from the Gereformeerde Kerken in the Netherlands. The Committee on Ecumenicity and Inter-Church Correspondence presented a summary and evaluation of this report and the Synod of 1962 decided to send this material to the secretary of the Committee of Deputies of the Gereformeerde Kerken of the Netherlands (ACTS 1962, p. 42). It was forwarded to the Netherlands committee with the observation that "the occasion for the report lies in the interest in the Netherlands in affiliation either with the World Council of Churches or with the International Council of Churches" (ACTS 1962, p. 391). Among other things the evaluation expresses the judgment that the Dutch "report under study is weak" with respect to:

"the examining of the question whether, and to what extent, accordance of confession and maintenance of confession are necessary to be able to come to ecumenical co-operation. Such examination should, in our judgment, involve an evaluation of the strong influence of Barthianism in modern ecumenism; of the attitude of existing ecumenical councils toward world-wide Communism; of the practical reality of the liberal leadership in such organizations as the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council; and whether our Reformed standards and the Word of God allow ecclesiastical fellowship with those who are not 'of like precious faith with us'." (ACTS 1962, p. 391)

The subsequent submission by the Gereformeerde Kerken of the Netherlands of their report entitled "Communion of Saints" has led to the appointment of the present study committee with the mandate that has occasioned this report.

C. *The Synodical Report of 1944* (ACTS 1944, pp. 330-367)

Although the Christian Reformed Church was affiliated with the Federal Council of Churches from 1918 to 1924 and was a member of the National Association of Evangelicals from 1943 to 1951, it terminated membership in both of these bodies. It is now a member of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod but of no other ecumenical body. The Christian Reformed Church has never been a member of the World Council of Churches. However, observers have been present at World Council meetings on various occasions.¹

1. *Ecumenical Activities of the CRC since 1944*

For the most part, the ecumenical responsibilities of the Christian Reformed Church have been discharged through the standing Committee on Ecumenicity and Inter-church Correspondence (now the Committee on Inter-church Relations). The Report of 1944 has provided the general guide for this activity. The Synod of 1961 charged the Committee on Ecumenicity and Inter-church Correspondence to remind "the churches of

¹The Back to God Hour reported that it was sending Rev. P. Eldersveld and Rev. H. Dekker as observers to the Evanston Assembly. The Committee on Ecumenicity and Inter-Church Correspondence received approval to send an observer to Evanston. (ACTS 1954, pp. 40-41, 50). Rev. R. Greenway attended the New Delhi Assembly in 1961 as an unofficial observer and Prof. F. H. Klooster attended the Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order at Montreal in 1963 as an unofficial observer.

the decision of the Synod of 1944 with respect to our ecumenical responsibilities" (ACTS 1961, p. 70). In 1962 this committee reported

"that the whole of our work consists of implementing the decisions of 1944. The ecumenical conversations that have taken place with the Orthodox Presbyterian, Reformed Presbyterian, Protestant Reformed Churches, are all implementations of 1944 To the general task of implementing the decisions of 1944, we, as a committee, shall continue to give our best efforts as synod decides and circumstances permit." (ACTS 1962, p. 392)

The Report of 1944 also took up the matter of a Reformed Ecumenical Synod, and it was in response to that element of the report that a preparatory meeting was held in Grand Rapids in 1946. Since then the Christian Reformed Church has actively supported the work of this body at its subsequent meetings at Amsterdam (1949), Edinburgh (1953), Potchefstroom (1958), and Grand Rapids (1963). It has also faithfully contributed to committee assignments between synodical sessions.

Although the wider ecumenical responsibilities of the Christian Reformed Church have not officially been carried out beyond those described above, one must remember that world-wide ecumenical activities have been inhibited by a number of factors, chief of which were World War II and postwar adjustment. The preparatory meetings for the WCC were held in Utrecht in 1938, but the WCC was not constituted until 1948 in Amsterdam and has met in plenary session only twice since then—at Evanston in 1954 and at New Delhi in 1961.

The Christian Reformed Church has become less isolated since 1944, even though it has not pursued all the avenues of ecumenical activity contemplated in the Report of 1944. In addition to the official ecumenical contacts already referred to, our church has increased its unofficial witness. For example, our radio work reaches many of the churches envisioned in the Report of 1944, and members of our churches have frequent opportunities to speak at conferences which other churches have sponsored. Speakers and writers from the Christian Reformed Church are attaining a hearing which is not insignificant. While this is not the precise form of correspondence which the Report of 1944 envisioned, these may be mentioned here as ecumenical contacts which are to be appreciated.

2. The Ecumenical Responsibility of the Christian Reformed Church

The Report of 1944 also recognized an ecumenical responsibility of our church with respect to non-sister churches that should be discharged officially and seriously. It challenged the church, and suggested broad outlines of procedure. The Synod of 1961 expressed the desire that the Christian Reformed Church be reminded of these responsibilities as outlined in this significant report (ACTS 1961, p. 70). A review of the avenues of approach and the ecumenical methodology suggested in this Report of 1944 will provide a background for our present consideration of the WCC and the determination of our position in relation to it.

a) Statement of ecumenical responsibility, Report of 1944

The Report of 1944 recognized that, in addition to sister churches, our

church has an ecumenical responsibility with respect to other groups of churches. They are:

"a. Reformed Churches that differ from the Christian Reformed Church to such an extent that they are qualitatively other churches. This otherness may have a double basis.

"1. These other Reformed Churches may be quite similar to the Christian Reformed Church if not wholly so in official respect but decidedly dissimilar in respect to the actualities of ecclesiastical life, e.g., as regard doctrine actually taught in pulpit and otherwise, and in discipline touching doctrine and life as practiced and/or neglected.

"2. Again, there may be Reformed Churches that differ from the Christian Reformed Church officially and consequently, in practice to such an extent, that, though still Reformed, broadly speaking, they can hardly be identified with our church.

"b. Non-Reformed Protestant Churches, whether true or not to their distinctive creeds and historic position.

"c. The Roman Catholic and the Oriental Churches that are akin to the Roman Catholic Church." (ACTS 1944, p. 340)

Following this classification, the Report of 1944 considered denominationalism, pluriformity, and the nature of our responsibility to the churches it described. As it emphasized our ecumenical responsibility, the 1944 Report warned against isolationism:

"Our present purpose is, to see clearly, that our segregation and aloofness—the line of least resistance—is not in accord with our plain and bounden duty. We have not altogether escaped the isolationist tendencies that are the correlatives of the sad pluriformity of the institutional church of Christ. And possibly our rebound from the mistaken methodology of modern ecumenicalism has tended to strengthen our unwarrantable isolationism." (ACTS 1944, p. 350)

b) *The concept "correspondence with other churches"*

Although the Report of 1944 speaks of "the mistaken methodology of modern ecumenicalism," it did not wish to avoid a genuine and biblical ecumenical responsibility. The Report alerted Synod to "the need of re-vamping our whole notion of correspondence." It was the concept *correspondence* which became the essential element in the 1944 Report's description of our church's ecumenical obligations. It was a broad concept, as the following elucidation of its meaning indicates:

"A. Correspondence proper, ala Art. 48 C.O., with churches that are ecclesiastically identical with ourselves, but cannot consolidate with our church by reason of geographical distance and/or language employed. This correspondence is, in effect, the next thing to corporate action as one body.

"B. Correspondence—another and more suitable term should be contrived—with Reformed churches that are delinquent, whether officially or empirically or both, and that are located in our own territory. This correspondence is designated to reclaim these faulty churches and to re-

store them with God's help to their original and Reformed character, and so to pave the way for that union with them which their territorial proximity suggests and their eventual restoration renders imperative, in view of the unity of the body of Christ.

"C. Correspondence with non-Reformed Protestant Churches with a view to winning them over to the Reformed faith and to union with them on that condition, and with the hope, if not of achieving this objective, then at least of helping them to preserve their Protestant character or to restore it, in so far as it has already deteriorated, by strengthening them against the attacks of Romanism on the one hand and Modernism on the other" (Acts 1944, p. 350-351)

Although the Report of 1944 refers to the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches in a separate discussion, we may well describe their evaluation of these churches as a fourth category of correspondence:

"[D.] It will be difficult enough to practice correspondence as suggested under B and C above. Perhaps correspondence, or even anything approaching it, is out of the question with respect to the Roman Catholic and the Oriental Churches. Be this as it may, the question may not be out of order, whether Protestantism has done its duty by these churches by holding so completely aloof from them after the great separation of the 16th century, that it has practically ignored them, and by that token, disowned them. If these churches are, after all, churches of Christ, though greatly in error and badly defective, as our recognition of their baptism would seem to imply, there is no justification for the purely negative attitude we have assumed toward them But if we are not prepared to identify them with the world in the evil sense of the term and hence to include them in our missionary purview, then we ought to do something with respect to them by way of correspondence in the broad sense of that term. . . ." (Acts 1944, p. 351)

c) *Potential of Report of 1944 not realized*

The Synodical Report of 1944 provides us with a significant base on which to build our ecumenical relationships with other denominations. Furthermore, it presents concepts which are relevant to the present situation and which must not be overlooked. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that we have not realized the potential of the 1944 document, and, without question, we must be prepared to move beyond the Synodical decision of 1944 when and if new circumstances arise which demand new kinds of ecumenical contact.

This historical survey indicates that our church has repeatedly faced ecumenical possibilities with respect to which it has taken concrete decisions. Some of these decisions also express principles which are to guide the church in the exercise of its ecumenical responsibility. Synod's mandate now requires that this committee attempt to define our position with respect to the World Council of Churches.

Before directing attention specifically to the WCC, however, a review must be made of the biblical teachings concerning the church and ecumenicity.

II. BIBLICAL TEACHINGS CONCERNING THE CHURCH AND ECUMENICITY

In seeking to carry out its mandate the committee realized that it should listen to what God's Word has to say about the nature of Christ's church and its calling in the world. Apart from an understanding of the biblical teaching we can arrive at no satisfactory answer to the issues which are implicit in a proper and defensible assessment of the church's ecumenical responsibilities.

Now the Bible does not make reference in so many words to any organization or fellowship of churches which can be regarded as paralleling what we find on the ecumenical scene today, including the WCC. Nevertheless we believe that it clearly lays down certain basic principles relative to ecumenical relationships which no true church can afford to neglect.

These questions include at least the following:

- A. What is the nature of Christ's church?
- B. What is the calling of the church in the world?
- C. What is the unity which the church should manifest?
- D. What is the fellowship which is to be sought?

All these issues arise in connection with any serious consideration of the *basis* on which the WCC has organized and continues to maintain itself.

A. *The nature of Christ's church*

That the question of the nature of the church arises first of all need occasion no surprise. The WCC both calls itself "a fellowship of churches" and requires that all who join recognize the constituent members as in some sense "churches" with which fellowship can and should be exercised in the name of Christ. It becomes mandatory, therefore, to hear what Scripture itself has to say about the nature of the church.

1. *It belongs to Jesus Christ*

The church belongs in the fullest sense of the word to Jesus Christ alone, never to any man or group of men. He calls it *my church* (Matt. 16:18). He builds his church as the Spirit brings men to confess him as the Christ, the Son of the living God. Those who so confess him are the *ekklesia*, the ones "called" or "called out" to be the distinct company which is his. By affirming this, however, we do not intend any radical divorce of the New Testament church from the Old Testament reality of Israel as the people of God who were assured of full salvation through the promised Messiah. Repeatedly Old Testament designations are applied directly to the church of Christ, as for example "the Israel of God" (Gal. 6:16), "God's husbandry, God's building" (I Cor. 3:9) which parallels such descriptions of Israel as God's vineyard (Isa. 5, etc.), "an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession" (I Pet. 2:9), and many others.

What is unique, however, is that now God's peculiar people, intended to be a source of blessing to all men everywhere and thus gathered out of all nations (Gen. 12:3; 17:4, 5; 18:18; Isa. 60:3; Zech. 9:9, 10; etc.), are recognized as his because of their special relationship to Christ Jesus.

They are his because he came to give his life a ransom for them (Mark 10:45; John 10:11), and therefore they participate in such gifts as the forgiveness of sins, the Holy Spirit, and life eternal (Luke 11:3, 13; John 6:51; 10:28, etc.). Thus the church is repeatedly designated *the body of Christ*, of which he alone is the supreme Lord and Head (Eph. 1:22, 23; Col. 1:18), the source and goal of its growth in and unto full salvation (Eph. 4:15, 16; Col. 1:18, 19, 22), and thus the object of his special love and activity (Eph. 5:23).

2. *Christ's ownership is based on his redemptive work*

This sustained emphasis of the New Testament on the life-relationship of the church to Christ is based on the great work which he has accomplished for the salvation of his people. He came into the world to seek and to save sinners (Matt. 15:24; 18:11; Luke 19:10; John 1:29). This he did by sacrificing himself on the tree of the cross as a ransom for sin (I Pet. 2:24; Rev. 5:9) and as our deliverance from the power of death and the devil and from the wrath of God (II Cor. 1:10; Col. 1:13; I Thess. 1:10). The efficacy of his death is attested by his resurrection from the dead (Acts 2:22f.; Rom. 1:4), and as the resurrected one in whom the Father delights he received from him a name which is above every name (Acts 5:31; Phil. 2:9, 10). All authority in heaven and on earth is his to guarantee the proclamation of this gospel everywhere, to gather together all them that believe, and to bring full salvation to all who trust in his name (Matt. 28:18-20; Gal. 1:4; Rev. 5:10; Hebr. 7:25; etc.). On this basis the New Testament, as is especially evident in Paul's epistles, does not hesitate to stress strongly that the church exists *in Christ* (Eph. 1:1-13).

3. *It is the church of the triune God*

This teaching of the complete dependence of the church on Christ, however, should not tempt us to overlook the fact that the Bible never ascribes the salvation of the church to Jesus Christ in sharp contrast to the triune God. Always the emphasis falls on the unity of Christ's work on behalf of his people with the will and purpose of the God of salvation.

The church is to be regarded first of all as God's work. Its life roots in God's love (Rom. 1:6); it belongs to God as the company of those "that are sanctified in Christ Jesus" as the fruit of "the grace of God" (I Cor. 1:2, 4); it exists "in God our Father" as well as in "the Lord Jesus Christ" (II Thess. 1:1); it is composed of "the elect who are sojourners . . . according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, unto the obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" (I Pet. 1:1, 2). Nor is there any sharp cleavage between the church as Christ's body and as the dwellingplace of the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 3:16). Repeatedly the intimate bond between Christ and the Spirit is affirmed, as when Paul states, "Now the Lord is the Spirit" (II Cor. 3:17a), and again when he declares, "And no man can say, Jesus is Lord, but in the Holy Spirit" (I Cor. 12:3). It is the Spirit's ministry to bind all those who are Christ's to the Savior himself. Thus he empowers the church to witness to Christ (Acts 2:4, 17f; 4:8; 8:29; etc.). He opens the hearts of the hearers to the gospel message (Acts 10:44). He directs

the church in making decisions which are productive of unity and peace (Acts 15:28, 31, 32). The Spirit himself bears witness to Christ (John 15:26) as the One sent from the Father to teach the apostles all things and bring to their remembrance all that Christ has said to them (John 14:26). He is the source of all the gifts and powers which the believing church has received and which it is to use for the benefit of every member. (I Cor. 12:4-25). And it is the Spirit who enables the church to know the things that are of God (I Cor. 2:10f.) and to discern the spirits whether they are of God or not (I John 4:1f.).

4. *It is one holy, catholic, and apostolic church*

This church, which is the fruit of the saving work of the triune God in Jesus Christ, is designated by the New Testament as possessing certain qualities, characteristics or attributes: especially as *one, holy, catholic, and apostolic* church.

Repeatedly the church is referred to as *one* (Eph. 4:1-4, 13; John 10:16; 17:11, 21-23; I Cor. 10:17; 12:12-14; Hebr. 2:11). Our mandate requires that the nature of this unity shall be investigated in greater detail than some other aspects of the biblical doctrine of the church. Hence this will (be) reserved for another section (cf. C. below).

It is also called a *holy* congregation or church (I Cor. 1:2; 6:11; Eph. 5:27; Col. 3:12; I Pet. 2:5, 9). This quality, as is clear from Scripture, never derives from anything in man; it springs solely from God's grace as the imputed and imparted holiness of the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior and Head of the body through the work of the Spirit. But this holiness becomes so operative within the lives of those who are Christ's that they heed the call to separate themselves and become distinguishable from those who reject Christ.

Likewise the church is *catholic* or universal, gathered out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation in fulfillment of promises given already in the Old Testament (Gen. 12:3; 18:18; Isa. 60:3; Gal. 3:8; Rev. 5:9). Thus God's work as it comes to manifestation in the church breaks down all the barriers raised by sin between God and man and between man and fellow-man (Acts 11:12; Gal. 3:27-29; Eph. 2:14-19; Col. 1:21, 22).

Finally it has been rightly designated as an *apostolic* church, that is, a gathering of all those who have through the preaching of the gospel by the apostles been called into fellowship with God and his Son, Jesus Christ. To this end Christ appointed the twelve and gave them their mandate (Mark 3:14; Matt. 10:1, 2; Luke 6:14; 24:47, 48; John 15:16, 27; 20:21-23; Acts 1:8). Thus they laid in Christ's name the foundations of the church of all ages, of which Christ himself is the chief cornerstone (Eph. 2:20). On this basis the church is repeatedly admonished in the New Testament to continue in the apostolic teaching as the norm for its faith and practice (Acts 20:24, 27, 28, 32; 13:43; 14:22; II Cor. 11:3, 4; Gal. 1:8; Col. 1:23; I Tim. 1:3; II Tim. 1:13, 14; 2:2; I John 1:1-4; Jude vs. 3, 17).

Not simply the fact of "being sent" into the world but especially faithfulness to the teachings of the apostles is stressed in the New Testament as the apostolicity of the church. Thus Paul speaks of those who preach

"another Jesus" and a "different gospel" as "false apostles, deceitful workers, fashioning themselves into apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for even Satan fashioneth himself into an angel of light. It is no great thing therefore if his ministers also fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works" (II Cor. 11:4, 13-15). Upon them he pronounces "anathema" (Gal. 1:8, 9). And the church which departs from the apostolic doctrine, thus denying her apostolicity, is "bewitched" (Gal. 3:1), in danger of drifting away (Hebr. 2:1) and threatened with severe judgment (Hebr. 6:8; II Pet. 3:16; Rev. 2:23; etc.).

5. *It comes to clear manifestation in the world*

All these affirmations, it should be remembered, are made of groups of believers which existed in clearly recognizable communities in the present world. To be sure, the Bible makes distinction between the church as already in possession of the gift of salvation and the church as pressing on towards the full possession of this gift at the end of the ages. The church as it exists in the present age has not attained to complete perfection. Yet this lack does not forbid the designation of "imperfect" groups of believers as genuine churches of our Lord Jesus Christ, as is evident from the manner in which Paul speaks to the Corinthians and in which the glorified Christ himself addresses the seven churches of Asia Minor (Rev. 2 and 3). Any sharp differentiation between visible and invisible church which would tend to ascribe the attributes of a true church to some abstract, idealized group existing only "in the mind of God" is disallowed by the New Testament. It is the church here and now, abiding in the apostolic teaching and example even though its life is marred by some imperfection and immaturity, which receives from God himself the name and title of "church."

This name is likewise given quite indiscriminately both to local congregations of believers and to the whole company of those who name the name of Christ as a world-wide fellowship in him. From the New Testament it is plain that the term church is applied most frequently to a group of believers in a specific locality or community, sometimes as gathered for worship and fellowship and at other times without this specific reference (Acts 5:11; 11:26; I Cor. 1:1, 2; 11:18; Rom. 16:4; I Thess. 2:14; etc.). Whether the group was exceedingly large as at Jerusalem (Acts 2 and 3) or so small that all could gather within a house (Rom. 16:23; I Cor. 16:19; Col. 4:5; Philm. vs. 2), in both instances the name church was given to it. The name also designates a number of churches within a given geographical area which had some contact or fellowship with each other (Acts 9:31). In a much broader sense, found especially in Paul's epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians, it denotes all those who are joined together by faith in Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:22; 3:21; Col. 1:18, 24, etc.).

All this is of significance for the biblical understanding of the nature of the church and therefore for a consideration of the ecumenical relationships which may be regarded as proper for any denomination to pursue. According to the New Testament neither the local congregation nor the universal church may be so emphasized, that we lose sight of the

reality of the other. Nor may the rightful claims of the one to being church of Christ obscure or overshadow the valid claims of the other. Christ's church, designated as those who confess God's truth and seek to do his will, comes to visible, historical manifestation in this world both in the form of local congregations and as a world-wide fellowship.

6. *It is radically distinct from that which is not church*

One other aspect of the New Testament teaching concerning the nature of Christ's church must be mentioned. Strong as is the emphasis on the reality of Christ's church in this world, despite its infirmities and imperfections, there is a correspondingly strong emphasis on its radical distinction from that which is not church. Not everything that man may be tempted to call church of Christ is to be regarded as such, according to Scripture.

There is first of all throughout the sacred writings a clear distinction between the church and that which is called *world*. This term is, indeed, used in a variety of ways. In one of its most pregnant uses, however, it designates that which and those who live, not under the power of God's grace in Christ Jesus, but under the sway of the devil, sin and death (*kosmos*—John 12:31; 1 Cor. 11:32; Eph. 2:2; Jas. 1:27; I John 2:15; *aion*—II Cor. 4:4; Gal. 1:4; Eph. 6:12). This comes into sharp focus when men have heard but persist in rejecting the gospel of Christ. It manifests itself in the hatred which that world bears to those who are Christ's (John 15:18f.; 16:2; 17:14; Matt. 10:16-23; Acts 4:29; 8:1; 14:2; etc.). To this world, indeed, the church is called to bear witness, so that out of this world men may be brought to salvation in Jesus Christ (Matt 28:18-20); Acts 1:8; 8:4f; Rom. 1:5; etc.). But it is likewise mandatory that the believing church shall keep itself "unspotted from the world" (Jas. 1:27) even to the point of separating itself not only from sin but also from those who walk in the ways of the sinful world (II Cor. 6:14-7:1). Any doublemindedness or compromise on this score by the church and its membership is accounted as "enmity with God" (Jas. 4:4, 8).

Even more sharply is the church warned against those who sustain some outward relationship to the believing congregation but who do not continue in sound doctrine or live a godly life. They are those who "fall away from the faith" and "give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons." They are false teachers who often arise from within the congregation and lead many astray. Against all such the Bible warns incessantly (Matt. 18:15-18; Acts 20:29, 30; Rom. 16:17, 18; I Cor. 5:2, 9-13; II Cor. 2:5-10; II Thess. 3:6, 14, 15; Titus 3:10, 11). They are to be excluded from the fellowship of those who are Christ's, lest the life of the church be infected and even imperiled by their activities. We do well to remind ourselves again how sharply Scripture warns against falling away from the sound doctrine of Christ, when it says, "A man that hath set at nought Moses' law dieth without compassion on the word of two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, think ye, shall he be judged worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" (Heb. 10:28,

29). With this matter, however, we shall deal at greater length in connection with the unity and the fellowship which characterize the church according to the Scriptures (cf. section C and D below).

B. THE CALLING OF CHRIST'S CHURCH

That the church, called by Jesus Christ through his Word and Spirit, has a calling in and to the world in which it lives cannot be controverted. Of such a calling the *basis* of the WCC speaks when referring explicitly to "our common calling." To delineate it in brief and broad outline is not easily done, however, since Scripture speaks of it in so many places and from so many perspectives. The danger always threatens that we emphasize one aspect of this task or responsibility at the expense of another equally biblical emphasis.

1. *It must live and labor as God's people in the world*

The church is basically called to live and labor as God's people in the midst of the present world. This presupposes a contact with and a responsibility to its own environment, since the church's life may never be regarded as purely an end in itself. This was plainly indicated already at the time of God's choice of Abraham and his seed to be his people, at which time he announced, "And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and be thou a blessing . . . and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12: 2, 3; cf. also 18:18). In order to be a blessing to all nations, Israel was to live in the land which God gave, separated for a season from others, in order that by fulfilling his word of promise to his people God might demonstrate clearly and fully wherein that "blessing" consisted (Isa. 60:1-3; 66:22, 23; Zech. 8:13; Gal. 3:14).

That this was a very specific, a unique and God-given and spiritual blessing is clearly taught by Scripture. Paul makes this plain, "Now to Abraham were the promises spoken, and to his seed. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ" (Gal. 3:16). Thus the blessing by which the church lives and which it is to manifest to the world is God's salvation of his people from sin and all its consequences in and through his Son, Jesus Christ. The church as Christ's is called by God to declare "the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery which for ages hath been hid in God who created all things; to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in the heavenly places might be made known *through the church* the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Eph. 3:8b-11). Unless this is central and determinative in the total life and witness of the church, it fails to discharge its calling.

2. *It must be a confessing, witnessing church*

Throughout the New Testament this task of making known Christ in all his fulness is described as a *confessing* or a *witnessing*. A variety of terms is employed to designate this activity of communication, in which both individual believers and the believing community are to engage. It is frequently spoken of as "preaching" (*euaggelidzein*), a making known

to all men everywhere the "glad tidings" of what God has done to redeem and reconcile sinful man unto himself (Acts 16:10; I Pet. 1:25; 4:6; Matt. 28:19, 20). Closely associated with this is the "teaching" (*didaskhein*) by which a more detailed and systematic instruction in the works of God seems to be indicated (Acts 5:35, 42; 20:20; 28:31; I Cor. 4:17; I Tim. 4:11; 6:2; II Tim. 2:2). For the apostles it was a "bearing witness to" (*marturein*) the things which they had both seen and heard concerning God's saving work in Christ (Acts 1:8; 5:32; 26:16; I John 1:2; cf. also II Pet. 1:16f.). By this others were to be "made disciples" (*matheteuein*) or learners, pupils of Christ and his gospel (Matt. 28:19). The urgency of this calling is especially emphasized in its designation as "proclaiming" (*kerussein*) as does a herald who announces the coming of the king (Matt. 25:14; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47; Rom. 10:15; II Tim. 4:2). Nothing and no one may stand in the way of the gospel proclamation which must have its free course throughout the world (Eph. 6:19, 20; esp. II Thess. 3:1). And because of the rich dimensions of this gospel as it meets the needs of men, its announcement or proclamation serves to "comfort" (II Cor. 1:4f.; I Thess. 2:11), "to warn" (Acts 20:31; I Cor. 4:14; Col. 1:28; I Thess. 5:14), to "reprove" (I Tim. 5:20; Tit. 1:13; 2:15).

It is worthy of note that this calling of the church to speak is most carefully circumscribed, according to Scripture. It does not consist in speaking anything or everything that may come up in a man's mind or heart.

This is evident already in what Christ required of his disciples and all who responded to his message. "Everyone therefore who shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 10:32, 33). The term *confess* has a very explicit and precise connotation. It means "to say the same thing as." In his use of the term our Lord indicated that he, in his person and work as the one sent by God, is the content of the message which must be everywhere proclaimed.

To review the contents of this gospel as it centers in Jesus Christ seems hardly necessary at this point. Yet some of the central emphases must not be ignored, if we are to understand the biblical teaching on the calling of the church in the world. By various names is it designated, such as "the gospel" (Mk. 16:15; Gal. 1:11), "the gospel of God" (Rom. 1:1; I Thess. 2:2, 8, 9; I Pet. 4:17); "the gospel of Christ" (Rom. 1:16; 15:19; II Cor. 9:13; Gal. 1:7), "the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24), "the glorious gospel" (II Cor. 4:4; I Tim. 1:11), and "the everlasting gospel" (Rev. 14:6). Having God's work in Christ as its central message, it stresses the great events through which man's salvation is accomplished—the crucifixion of Christ for the sins of the world (Acts 2:23; 3:15; 4:10; I Cor. 1:23), his resurrection (Acts 2:24-32a; 3:15; 10:40; 17:31; Eph. 1:20; I Cor. 15:4), his ascension and session at God's right hand (Acts 2:33; Eph. 4:8f.; Heb. 8:1; I Pet. 3:22), the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:33; Gal. 4:6; II Cor. 5:5), and his return at the end of the ages in great glory (Acts 10:42; I Thess.

4:16f.; II Thess. 1:7f.). In such preaching attention was directed to the full benefits which Christ obtained for his people (I Cor. 1:30, 31). To such preaching the hearers were challenged to respond in repentance and faith (Acts 2:38; 3:19; 8:22; 17:30; Rev. 2:5, 16; 3:3) and those who believed received baptism as the sign of their incorporation into Christ and were recognized as "new creatures" in him (Acts 2:40; II Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15; Eph. 2:15). These, then, together with their children as heirs of the promise constituted the church of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:39; 11:14; 16:31; Eph. 6:1f.) with the calling to continue steadfastly in the word which they had believed (Acts 13:43; 14:22; Col. 1:23; II Tim. 3:14; I Pet. 2:2) and to labor for the spread of the gospel everywhere (Eph. 6:19; Phil. 1:5; I Thess. 1:7, 8; I Pet. 3:1).

3. *It must witness consistently in word and deed*

This gospel by which the church is to live and with which it is to work, called also "the gospel of the kingdom" (Matt. 24:14; Mk. 1:14) and "the pattern of sound words" (II Tim. 1:13), is to be brought consistently in word and deed. From the point of view of the New Testament there is no inherent tension between these two, but rather the one is always regarded as bound up with the other. This follows from the very work of the Holy Spirit in connection with the gospel proclamation. Of this Paul could speak to the Thessalonians, "How that our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance; . . . and ye became imitators of us, and of the Lord, . . . so that ye became an ensample to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia. For from you hath sounded forth the word of the Lord, . . ." (I Thess. 1:5-8). It was the change of heart and life, manifested among and by these believers, which constituted an essential ingredient of their witness to Christ as the power unto salvation. In much the same fashion Paul could write to the Corinthians, "Ye are our epistle, written in our hearts, known and read of all men, being made manifest that ye are an epistle of Christ. . . ." (II Cor. 3:2, 3).

That it is the calling of the church to proclaim that full gospel of God in word and deed is plain from the New Testament. This roots in the ministry of our Lord who "went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness" (Matt. 9:35). When, then, John the Baptist sent to inquire of him, "Art thou he that cometh?" our Lord answered, "Go and tell John the things which ye hear and see" (Matt. 11:3, 4). With this same mandate to preach the gospel in word and deed our Lord sent out his disciples (Matt. 10:1, 7; Luke 9:1, 2; Mark 16:16-18; Heb. 2:3, 4), so that "they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word by the signs that followed" (Mark 16:20; cf. also Acts 2:43; 3:6, 7; 4:30; 5:12; 8:6; 9:17, 18, 34, 40; 10:46; 13:11; 14:10; etc.).

It is the "called" church that by the power of Christ's Word and Spirit now "calls" men in his name. Always this took the form of declaring the gospel of God, calling men to repentance and faith, and incorporating those who believed into the Christian fellowship. Thus we

read that "the word of God grew and multiplied" (Acts 12:24). By the power of the gospel the church not only grew numerically and expanded from place to place but also was "edified," confirmed and strengthened in the faith which resulted in increasing godliness and good works. It produced the love and concern for each other which led the members of the Jerusalem congregation to have "all things common" (Acts 2:44; 4:32). It stirred up the more affluent congregations to help those which had need (Acts 11:29; II Cor. 8:1-5; I Thess. 4:9, 10). It enabled them to endure suffering, reproach and loss for Christ's sake. By becoming increasingly what God had made them to be in Christ Jesus, they witnessed to the world and put to shame those who reviled them (I Thess. 1:8; I Pet. 3:16). In this way they answered to their calling to "show forth the excellencies of him who called them [you] out of darkness into his marvellous light" (I Pet. 2:9).

4. *It must plan its program in direct response to the gospel*

Whatever plan or program the apostles and the early churches may have had for the proper discharge of their calling, this was always directly related to their response to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Thus the believers were exhorted to abide in Jesus Christ (I John 2:24), to continue steadfastly in the truth which had been preached to them (Acts 13:43; 14:22; Gal. 2:5; Col. 1:23; II Tim. 3:14), to maintain peace and unity among themselves as fellow-believers (Eph. 4:5; Phil. 2:1; 4:2; Heb. 13:1f.; etc.), and to resist all forms of false doctrine and ungodliness (I Cor. 6:18; 10:14; Gal. 5:1f., 13; Col. 2:8; 3:5; II Thess. 2:3; I Tim. 4:1, 6; 6:11; II Pet. 2:1f; I John 4:1; etc.). To be truly church meant in the apostolic age to preserve and practice and propagate the full gospel of God's grace in Christ Jesus. Those individuals and churches which strove to increase in this were regarded as walking worthy of their heavenly calling and received repeatedly the commendation not only of the apostles but even of the Lord Jesus Christ himself (Eph. 2:15, 16; Phil. 1:3f; I Thess. 1:2f; II Thess. 1:3, 4; Rev. 2:2, 3, 6; 3:8-10).

C. THE UNITY OF CHRIST'S CHURCH

That Christ's church according to Scripture is *one* needs no defense. This affirmation has belonged to the catholic confession from the very beginning of the church's witness to the world. What needs definition, however, is the nature, basis, scope and guarantee of this unity, since on these issues there is sharp difference of conviction among those who call themselves Christian.

Here we shall limit ourselves to New Testament teaching. This is not to deny that the Old Testament contains many references to the unity of God's people as a God-given, spiritual reality. There we are frequently reminded that this was experienced only in part by Israel in its struggle for true identity among the nations and then often only by "the remnant," Sin continually attacked and undermined the unity of the covenant people with God and each other. But God assured those who trusted in him that also this blessing would be completely fulfilled and manifested and enjoyed in the coming age (Isa. 43:5, 6; 66:20-23; Jer. 23:3-6;

Mic. 2:12, 13; 5:3-5a; Zech. 8:6-8, 22, 23). Many of these dimensions of the Old Testament revelation are carried over into the New Testament message concerning the unity of the church.

1. *The giver, ground, and guarantee of the church's unity*

The giver, ground, and guarantee of the church's unity is Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

This is plainly affirmed by our Lord when speaking of his coming into the world for the salvation of his people. His work of gathering presupposes the fact that individuals, families, and nations are not truly unified and united. He gathers men around him as he preaches the "gospel of the kingdom" and calls them to repentance and faith in him. Especially in those passages in which he speaks of himself as the good shepherd is this clear. These words take on richer meaning, when we see them in the light of the Old Testament prophecies which denounced the "false shepherds" among Israel who scattered and destroyed the flock and promised that God would "set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd" (Ezek. 34:33).

He speaks of himself as "not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. 15:24). As he went about preaching and healing, "he was moved with compassion for them, because they were distressed and scattered, as sheep not having a shepherd" (Matt. 9:36; Mk. 6:34). Thus he also sent out his disciples to these "lost sheep" (Matt. 10:6). His deep concern for them is declared in his lament over Jerusalem, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem . . . how often would I have gathered thee, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not" (Matt. 23:37; Luke 13:34).

This rejection of Jesus as the Messiah and true shepherd brought about Israel's rejection. Yet this unbelief did not frustrate the true unity which Christ came to give. Thus he could speak of his sheep who recognize "the shepherd of the sheep." They are the ones "who hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out . . . and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him. . . ." (John 10:2-5). In the same chapter Christ elaborates on this parable and applies it to the relation between himself and his people. He is "the good shepherd" who "came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly" (John 10:11, 10). Nor is his flock limited to Israel, for he states, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also must I bring; and they shall become one flock, one shepherd" (John 10:17). Thus the unity which Christ established involved a separation from those who refused to hear his voice and a gathering together of all who heard and followed him.

Basically the same truths are affirmed by our Lord in his highpriestly prayer (John 17). In praying for the unity of his people, he distinguishes them sharply from "the world" for which he does not pray this prayer (vs. 9). The ones for whom he prays are those "whom thou hast given me; for they are thine" (vs. 9). For his disciples he pleads "that they may be one, even as we are" (vs. 11), urging that God the Father may

preserve them amid the hatred of the world and the evil one and that they may be sanctified in the truth. To this he adds his prayer "for them also that believe on me through their world; that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us" (vss. 20, 21). And the eschatological perspectives stand out clearly, when the Savior adds, "that they may be perfected into one; that the world may know that thou didst send me, and lovedst them, even as thou lovedst me" and "that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory . . ." (vss. 23, 24).

2. *The nature of the church's unity*

In the light of these clear teachings of our Lord we can understand the biblical teaching concerning the nature of the true unity of the church.

It is first of all a *God-given* unity; never is it described in terms of human effort or achievement. This becomes increasingly evident, when we consider carefully how Christ speaks of the unity between himself and his people and the unity of his people among each other. Both are rooted in and are in some measure reflective of the profound and perfect unity of Jesus Christ with the Father (John 17:11b, 21). Paul alludes to this in summing up the unity which the church has received as gift of grace, "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye were also called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all" (Eph. 4: 4-6).

When speaking of it as a unity *in Christ*, the Scriptures unequivocally affirm that it is made possible and effectual only through the redemptive work of our Lord. The Savior himself refers to this, when instructing his disciples, "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep." In that brief pericope it is stated no less than three times (John 10:11, 15, 17). What Paul has to say about the redeeming and reconciling power of Christ's blood as the basis for the unity of the church is particularly significant. "But now in Christ Jesus ye that once were far off are made nigh in the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who made both [i.e., Jew and Gentile] one, and brake down the middle wall of partition, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; that he might create in himself of the two one new man, so making peace; and might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross, having slain the enmity thereby" (Eph. 2:13-16). Through him who is proclaimed in the gospel both Jew and Greek have "access in one Spirit unto the Father." And on this basis those who were "strangers and sojourners" have become "fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God" (Eph. 2:18, 19). This is the church which is founded upon the prophets and apostles, of which Christ himself is the chief cornerstone, and which grows together as a holy temple and a habitation of God in the Spirit.

Here the intimate relation between the gospel proclamation of what God has accomplished in Christ unto salvation and the unity of the church is strongly implied. Paul in the succeeding chapter elaborates

on this to the end that he may in Eph. 4:5 link "one faith" with all the other aspects of the church's oneness. This echoes what our Lord has plainly taught in John 10 and John 17. In the former chapter he stated unequivocally that his sheep heard his voice and followed him. In the latter he describes in his prayer the relation between the disciples and the truth which he had declared to them. "For the words which thou gavest me I have given unto them; and they received them, and knew of a truth that I came forth from thee, and they believed that thou didst send me" (John 17:8). Such personal faith in Christ, which can never be divorced from the revealed word as proclaimed and accepted, is the hall-mark of those who are one in Christ. Consistent with this emphasis the apostles in their preaching were unanimous in demanding a holding for true all that they in Christ's name declared concerning the person and work of Christ in its historical, doctrinal and practical dimensions. Apart from such acceptance of and abiding in the Word of God, there was no true church unity.

This unity of all believers in the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, however, is not in the present age a "perfected" unity. It may, perhaps, be best described at this point as a growing manifestation of this unity. All that is needed for full maturity in the faith has been given, included the abiding presence and power of the Spirit of Christ. Yet neither the individual believer nor the church has already attained. Therefore Christ prayed that his disciples together with those who would believe on him through their word might "be perfected into one" (John 17:23). Paul likewise, on the basis of the given unity of the church, describes this process by which the church, under the leadership of those appointed by Christ, may continue to grow "till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13). Individual differences of "gifts" and of "ministrations" and of "workings" within the church are specifically mentioned by Paul, but these may never become the occasion for divisions, since they all spring from the same Christ through his Spirit and are to be used for the welfare and salvation of all (I Cor. 12-14).

3. *The response to the church's unity*

On this basis it becomes increasingly clear that the church has a great responsibility to practice and preserve and promote this unity which is in Christ Jesus.

All the gifts bestowed on the church must be acknowledged as coming from God alone (I Cor. 3:1-9, 21, 22) and are to be employed "for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:12). Therefore no man should "think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but so to think as to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to each man a measure of faith" (Rom. 12:3). In all things there should be a willingness to deny oneself in the use of the liberty which is his in Christ Jesus (I Cor. 8:9f.; Rom. 14:1f.; Gal. 5:13-15). This is done by following the practical injunctions which Paul laid down for the Colossian believers who were to "let

the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to the which ye were called in one body" (Col. 3:12f., esp. vs. 15). Thus the apostle encourages the Philippians in the pursuit of true unity in these words, "Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ: that, whether I come and see you or be absent, I may hear of your state, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one soul striving for the faith of the gospel; and in nothing affrighted by the adversaries. . . ." (Phil. 1:27, 28a).

Whatever the specific reference to "adversaries" may denote, it is undeniable that the Bible frequently speaks of the pursuit of true unity in connection with warnings against all forms of dissension as that which undermines the faith and disrupts unity. This must be openly recognized and resisted and, in so far as it appears within the churches, expelled. In this connection warnings are sounded against not only ungodliness in conduct but also against unsound teaching, by which men are led astray and imperil the church and even heap destruction upon themselves. Warnings are sounded repeatedly against false teachers (Acts 20:29; Gal. 1:7; II Tim. 2:17, 18; 4:3, 4; I John 4:1) and destructive heresies (I Tim. 4:1-3, 7; II Pet. 2:1; Jude vs. 4). Unbelief may arise also within the church (Acts 20:30; I Tim. 1:6, 7; 2:19, 20; Heb. 2:1), and those who apostatize from the faith and the fellowship of believers give evidence thereby that "they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us" (I John 2:19). The church must be found "walking in the truth" (II John vs. 4) and is exhorted "to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude, vs. 3). Those "who make separations" and thus destroy the unity of the church are not the ones who remember the words spoken by the apostles and build themselves up in the faith (Jude, vss. 17, 20). Rather, they are the "false teachers, who shall privily bring in destructive heresies, denying even the Master that bought them. . . ." (II Pet. 2:2f.). They are the ones who "wrest . . . the scriptures" as ignorant and unstedfast men (II Pet. 3:16). Therefore Paul urges Timothy as a faithful minister of Christ Jesus to "hold the pattern of sound words which thou hast heard from me" (II Tim. 1:13), to "commit" this also "to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (II Tim. 2:2), and to "shun profane babblings: for they will proceed further in ungodliness, and their word will eat as doth a gangrene: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; men who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith of some" (II Tim. 2:16-18). Always and everywhere for the sake of the unity of Christ's church the truth of the gospel must be upheld, so that all may learn "how men ought to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (I Tim. 3:15).

D. THE FELLOWSHIP OF CHRIST'S CHURCH

In the light of what Scripture says about the nature of the church's unity, we now call attention to its strong affirmation of its "fellowship" which also has been received as gift of God's grace and therefore must be preserved and come to fuller expression in its life and work.

1. *The definition and description of church fellowship*

The word commonly used to designate this fellowship is *koinonia* ("that which is held in common;" hence "communion" or "fellowship"), a term which expresses a relationship of intimacy between two or more persons. Here the emphasis may be either on giving or on receiving; at times even on both. Thus it may designate participation or impartation or a mutual giving and receiving.

In the Old Testament the terms usually translated in the Septuagint by "fellowship" (such as: *tesumeth; chabar*) are not prominent. When they are used, they designate the relationships which exist among men; not between God and man, even though God's covenantal dealings with man are recorded in great detail but by means of words which strictly speaking cannot be translated as "fellowship." Throughout these writings man is depicted as completely dependent on the God of all grace and therefore called to make a trustful response which indicates his subjection to God's will.

The New Testament, while not for a moment denying or even obscuring the sovereignty and transcendence of God, does at the same time emphasize that in Christ Jesus God has come into the world to establish intimate fellowship or communion with his people. This note is already struck in the opening chapter of John's gospel, "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father) full of grace and truth. . . . For of his fullness we all received, and grace for grace" (John 1:14, 16).

It should not surprise us, therefore, that the fullest description of that fellowship which is characteristic of Christ's church is found in the first epistle of John. "That which we have seen and heard [i.e. concerning the Christ called the Word of life] declare we unto you also, that ye also may have fellowship with us; yea, and our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ: and these things we write, that our joy may be made full" (I John 1:3, 4). This is a fellowship made possible and effectual, because "the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (vs. 7). It is this which produces "fellowship one with another" (vs. 7). It is only by walking "in the light," which for John in this epistle is identified with the truth of the gospel, that this fellowship is experienced. Sharply he warns at the outset against any self-deception with respect to such "fellowship" by affirming, "If we say that we have fellowship with him [i.e. with God as revealed in Christ Jesus] and walk in darkness [which for him is not simply ignorance but sin in any form], we lie, and do not the truth" (vs. 6). In the rest of this epistle, which is a hymn extolling this fellowship, John stresses consistently both truth and love. He recognizes no inherent tension, much less any contradiction, between these basic manifestations of true saving faith.

2. *The nature of church fellowship*

In much the same fashion the other New Testament writers speak repeatedly of the nature of true Christian fellowship.

This fellowship is God's gift, "through whom ye were called into the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (I Cor. 1:9). On this basis,

then, he rebukes them for their "divisions" and urges "that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (I Cor. 1:10). All their differences, also with respect to those who labored among them, must be resolved in the light of the gospel. Therefore he will send Timothy to them "who shall put you in remembrance of my ways which are in Christ, even as I teach everywhere in every church" (I Cor. 4:17). What, therefore, binds them together in this fellowship is the apostolic word. This is the same for all the churches and to it all must submit themselves (II Thess. 2:15; Heb. 2:1-3; II Pet. 1:15, 16; 3:2). On this basis he urges that they exercise a proper discipline among themselves instead of tolerating an impenitent fornicator, to abstain from going to law courts with their differences, to flee especially the sins of fornication and idolatry, and to exercise true love and consideration towards the weaker brother. Having said all this, Paul returns again to a consideration of fellowship or "communion." Here he stresses that such communion with Christ, especially as this comes to expression and is fed by joining in partaking of the bread and cup of the Lord, demands separation from the world. Emphatically he warns, "Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of demons: ye cannot partake of the table of the Lord, and of the table of demons" (I Cor. 10:14-22). When factions and divisions are allowed to continue in the church, not only is the mutual fellowship of the saints undermined; their fellowship with Christ is so imperiled that they become "guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord" and "for this cause many among you are weak and sickly, and not a few sleep" (I Cor. 11:17-34).

The intimate connection between apostolic doctrine and church fellowship is likewise clearly taught in the New Testament. Thus we read of the Jerusalem congregation that "they continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42). This came to unique expression in using their "possessions and goods" for the welfare of others in the congregation (Acts 2:44, 45; 4:34, 35).

That this fellowship extended beyond the confines of the local congregation is also taught in the New Testament. Paul praises God for the Philippians who showed "fellowship in the furtherance of the gospel from the first day until now" (Phil. 1:5) and demonstrated this also in their continued concern for his well-being (Phil. 4:10f). He urges the Corinthians to imitate the Macedonian churches who exercised "the fellowship in the ministering of the saints" by giving liberally for the poor in Jerusalem (II Cor. 8:1f). Contacts were repeatedly laid by the apostles among the several churches to which they ministered by means of reporting what great things God was accomplishing through the preaching of the gospel. And when a dispute arose in the church at Antioch about keeping the Mosaic laws, a delegation was sent to confer with the apostles and elders at Jerusalem to settle the issue and thus preserve unity in matters of doctrine and practice (Acts 15). All these and several other passages indicate not only how strong was the sense of unity with each other in Christ but also how zealously the early churches and their mem-

bership under apostolic guidance sought to preserve and promote true fellowship.

3. *The duty to withhold fellowship from the unbelieving and unfaithful*

There is, however, in the New Testament a converse to this fellowship or communion with each other which was also mandatory upon all those who belong to Christ. It is the duty to withhold fellowship from all who do not live according to the gospel as taught by our Lord and his apostles.

This requires first of all a distinct separation between the church and the world, between the believers and the unbelievers. They are consistently regarded in Scripture as belonging to mutually exclusive groups, as has been indicated by several of the references cited earlier. In no uncertain terms James warns, "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore would be a friend of the world maketh himself an enemy of God" (Jas. 4:4). And Paul exhorts his readers to be engaged in "proving what is well-pleasing unto the Lord, and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness" (Eph. 5:10, 11).

Upon the church which seeks true fellowship with Christ and among its members, however, rests also the additional and even more difficult responsibility of keeping itself free from doctrinal error and moral turpitude. All such defections from the pure gospel of Christ must be proved and rebuked. Christ already laid down the basic rule to be applied when continued impenitence was manifested. "And if he refuse to hear the church also, let him be unto thee as the Gentile and the publican" (Matt. 17:18). By the apostles this power of excommunication was at times exercised in an unusual way as they administered the Word of God (Acts 5:1-11; I Cor. 5:3-5; I Tim. 1:20). However, the duty of the church to act in such instances is also clearly indicated. Paul exhorts the Corinthians, "I wrote unto you not to keep company, if any man that is named a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a one no, not to eat. . . . Put away the wicked man from among yourselves" (I Cor. 5:13). In the same vein the Thessalonians are exhorted to "withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which they [ye] received of us" (II Thess. 3:6).

One of the clearest commands to withhold fellowship from those who propagate false teaching is found in II Corinthians 6:14-18. Although it may be difficult to define precisely who Paul had in mind, the significance of this passage for our subject cannot be controverted. The apostle had experienced a growing rift between himself and the Corinthian congregation. This was occasioned by men who undermined his message by attacking his apostolic authority. After pleading with his readers to heal the breach between them and himself, he urges them not to be "unequally yoked with unbelievers," a designation not for worldly people in general but for those who disturbed the true fellowship in the gospel between Paul and the congregation by their attacks on him and his message. He appeals to God's promise of "fellowshipping" with his people as the basis both for restoring fellowship with him as the Lord's apostle and for sepa-

rating themselves or withholding their fellowship from those who undermined his apostolic authority.

A similar command to withhold fellowship even to the point of separating from those who reject the Christ of the Scriptures is found in Hebrews 13:13, "Let us therefore go forth unto him [i.e. Christ] without the camp, bearing his reproach." Loyalty to the gospel of the Savior demanded that the readers refuse any entangling alliances with those who rejected Jesus as the Christ of God. Grosheide comments, "It is certainly noteworthy that, while in Acts and Paul's epistles the Jewish Christians still kept the ceremonial law, here they are admonished to break with Jewry. One should remember, however, that the concern here is not with keeping the ceremonies. Against this the writer does not warn. Contact with the Jews threatened to produce apostasy from the living God. And everything must be done to prevent this. . . ."

Strong warnings are sounded especially in the later epistles against all who defect in either doctrine or conduct. John goes so far as to insist, "If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting: for he that giveth him greeting parttaketh in his evil works" (II John, vs. 10, 11). Upon those who pervert the sound doctrine, as did the Judaizers in the churches of Galatia who undermined the doctrine of justification by faith, Paul does not hesitate to pronounce his anathema (Gal. 1:7-9). And no one less than the glorified Savior himself keeps watch over his churches, having regard not only to their conduct but also to the doctrines which are taught there and rebuking the angels (messengers) of the churches of Pergamum and Thyatira for tolerating false teachings which led people astray. From all this it is apparent that according to Scripture true church fellowship always includes a denunciation of error and ungodliness and a calling to those who would be faithful to Christ and his gospel to separate themselves from all who persist in these sins.

III. AN ANALYSIS OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

In determining what our attitude toward the WCC should be, it is necessary to decide whether the WCC represents an ecumenical methodology which is similar to that contemplated in the 1944 Report. If the WCC represents a methodology that is different from the 1944 statement, the different methodology might yet be compatible with the 1944 approach and provide us with an instrument for achieving the goals our church has envisioned for more than two decades. Therefore we must investigate the nature of the WCC and ask what membership in it would involve.

A. *What is the World Council of Churches?*

In an official brochure, the World Council of Churches provides a succinct description of itself:

"The World Council of Churches is a great and varied fellowship of more than 200 churches of the Protestant, Anglican, Orthodox and Old Catholic confessions gathered for study, witness, service, and the advancement of unity. It includes in its membership churches in more than 80

countries living under all sorts of governments, and its life reflects the immense variety and richness of Christian tradition and culture.

"The World Council exists because these churches believe that despite the many differences which separate them—doctrine, nationality, language, history, and many non-theological factors—there is 'one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all.'

"They confess Jesus Christ as God and Saviour, and in the words of one World Council document, they 'find their unity in Him.' They do not have to create their unity; it is the gift of God. But they know that it is their duty 'to make common cause in the search for the expression of that unity in work and in life.'" (*What Is the World Council of Churches?* New York, n.d., p. 1).

This existing unity claimed for all the diverse member churches is expressed in terms of the official Basis of the World Council of Churches as follows:

"The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures and therefore seek to fulfil together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit" (Constitution, Art. I).

Before evaluating this Basis and the way in which it functions in the WCC, it is important to take note of the constituency of the WCC and observe how the ecumenical methodology of the WCC contrasts with the ecumenical approach of the Report of 1944.

B. *Types of Member Churches*

In general it may be noted that the WCC includes within its membership all kinds of churches or denominations. There are Protestant, Anglican, Orthodox, and Old Catholic churches. There are also congregational, presbyterian, episcopalian (hierarchical) churches and national (established) and free churches. There are evangelical, liberal, and neo-orthodox churches. Within the member churches themselves there is a mixture of theological tendencies because of the rarity of the exercise of doctrinal discipline today. Thus the wide spectrum of churches in the United States and Canada as well as throughout the world is represented within the WCC. At the same time certain distinctly evangelical churches are conspicuously absent from the WCC; for example, the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, the Southern Baptist, and many other bodies which are affiliated with the RES, the NAE, and the ICCU. In spite of these absences, the WCC is obviously an inclusive ecumenical body which seeks to bring as many churches as possible together within the same organization on the same basis.

At this point the ecumenical methodology or strategy of the WCC is significantly different from the ecumenical methodology contemplated in the synodical Report of 1944. The 1944 Report contemplated the exercise of ecumenical responsibility in various ways, depending upon the types of churches and the degree of their conformity with or deviation from biblical standards.

In addition to its inclusivism, the WCC also manifests a certain eccle-

siological ambiguity. The Basis describes the WCC as a "fellowship of churches." However, several Quaker bodies and the Salvation Army are members of the WCC. These groups do not wish to call themselves churches and, in fact, are not churches. The Quakers reject the sacraments,¹ and neither the Quakers nor the Salvation Army has a regular ministry. There are other facets of the ecclesiological ambiguity in the WCC to which attention will be directed later. For the present it is important to notice the strange, mixed membership of the WCC. Yet the WCC describes itself in its Basis as a "fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures."

C. *Doctrinal Diversity in the WCC*

It must be emphasized, furthermore, that the WCC includes churches whose official doctrinal position has been declared heretical by the ecumenical councils of the early church. These positions have also been excluded by the confessions of the Reformation. For example, the Coptic churches of Egypt and Ethiopia continue to hold a Monophysite Christology, maintaining that Jesus Christ had only one nature in which the human and divine are commingled and fused. This position has been declared heretical by the Council of Chalcedon in 451 A.D., as well as by the two councils of Constantinople, in 553 and 680. These conciliar decisions are normative for Orthodox, Roman Catholic, as well as for many Protestant churches. Yet these Monophysite churches are now regular members of the WCC, and they subscribe to the Basis.

The Ethiopian Coptic Church, in addition to its Monophysite Christology, exhibits a mixture of Christian and Jewish elements plus strange remnants of pagan animism in its customs and doctrines. Nestorian churches are also members of the WCC.

In addition to churches whose theological positions have been declared heretical by the early ecumenical councils, there are member churches of the WCC whose doctrinal positions reflect the errors which orthodox churches have declared to be in conflict with Scripture, such as Pelagianism, Semi-Pelagianism, Arminianism, and Liberalism. In many of the member churches, doctrinal indifference and latitudinarianism are present to such a degree that doctrinal diversity ranges from genuine orthodoxy or evangelicalism to liberalism, neo-orthodoxy, and neo-liberalism. The Anglican Church is a striking example of this doctrinal diversity, but such diversity is present in many of the member churches of the WCC.

Although many of the member churches of the WCC reflect a wide diversity of doctrine, there are also "churches to which the qualification 'modernist' is fully or partly applicable." This has been admitted by the Netherlands Ecumenical Council of Churches in a statement quoted by

¹"One of the reasons why the discussion of the great problems of the sacraments in Faith and Order has remained fruitless is the fact that since Lausanne any discussion between the churches ended with a statement by the Quakers, later also by the Salvation Army, in which they praised and accepted the statements reached, with the proviso that outward sacraments are not necessary." Herman Sasse in *The Reformed Theological Review*, Vol. XXIII, No. 1 (February, 1965), p. 11.

the report of the Gereformeerde Kerken entitled "Communion of Saints" (pp. 22 and 49f.). This description can be applied to the Remonstrant Brotherhood (Arminian) of the Netherlands, for this church is not only a member of the WCC but is also a member of The International Association for Liberal Christianity and Religious Freedom.

D. *Character of the Ecumenical Consensus*

The old liberalism is not as prominent today as it was prior to the rise of neo-orthodoxy. However, neo-liberalism is now making rapid gains. Today many of the member churches of the WCC are characterized generally by the neo-orthodoxy of Karl Barth or the neo-liberalism of Rudolph Bultmann. Until recently the influence of Karl Barth has been the dominant theological influence upon many of the leading representatives of the WCC.

According to James I. McCord, the ecumenical consensus in the WCC has been essentially Barthian.¹ William Hamilton, of the death-of-god school of theology, has also stated that the ecumenical consensus "may be cryptically described as Barthian theology with Anglican trappings."² Whether or not the total evaluation of the ecumenical consensus is quite so simple, is open to question, but it may be said that when the Barthian consensus is opposed, it is usually opposed in terms of neo-Bultmannianism, or the theology of the Eastern Orthodox churches. The growing influence of the Bultmann and the neo-Bultmannian theology was clearly evident at the Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order at Montreal in 1963. And recently the retiring General Secretary of the WCC, Dr. Visser 't Hooft, expressed his concern to the Central Committee in connection with the fading of the consensus (Barthian) of the thirties and the forties and the growing menace of Bultmannian theology.³

Thus we have seen that one finds just about every existing type of ecclesiastical, doctrinal, and theological variation within the WCC. Although one may still recognize in these member churches certain vestiges of the church, the measure of diversity and doctrinal error and heresy may not be underestimated or ignored. There is also a tacit recognition of this serious doctrinal diversity in the fact that those of the Gereformeerde Kerken and of our church who advocate membership in the WCC do so in terms of the necessity of bringing our witness to the council. The desire to witness within the WCC is itself an implicit recognition of the doctrinal and ecclesiastical confusion and error within the WCC. However laudable the desire to witness is—and on the need and responsibility of making a Reformed witness to the WCC there should be no disagreement—the issue is more complex than simply the need and desire to witness. The necessity of acknowledging fellowship with other members and the nature of ecumenical goals complicates the opportunity

¹*Princeton Seminary Bulletin*, LIX, 2 (March 1966), 9.

²*Radical Theology and the Death of God*. (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1966), p. 4. Cf. a similar judgment by R. L. Richard, a Roman Catholic, in *America*, Vol. 115, No. 8 (Aug. 20, 1966) p. 173.

³*The Ecumenical Review*, XVIII, No. 2 (April, 1966), 239ff.

for witnessing significantly and strongly suggests that witnessing in the ordinary sense of the word could not be accomplished.

The above analysis of the WCC establishes that, when a church joins the WCC, it joins a wide variety of churches in declaring that they are together a "fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures." Furthermore, a member church asserts that, because they are such a fellowship, they "therefore seek to fulfil together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." May a church that seeks to be faithful to the Scriptures and obedient to the yoke of Christ (Belgic Confession, Art. 29), thus join together with all the churches that are members of the WCC? The answer to this question requires a detailed evaluation of the WCC.

IV. AN EVALUATION OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

This section of our report evaluates the WCC with respect to a number of important matters. What should be our position as a Reformed church toward this ecumenical body? How one approaches this question is important. Some seem to say that since the WCC is the one large, world-wide, ecumenical body, a church should assume that joining is the natural thing to do unless significant objections can be advanced. The burden of proof is then placed upon those who argue for non-membership. This approach to the problem, we believe, is wrong. What the church does as church must always be determined in the light of the fact that the church is the church of Jesus Christ. The church must always be true to its Lord, true to itself as church, and have sound reasons based on Scripture for what it does. Therefore the burden of proof rests upon the church to judge the WCC by biblical standards; and it may join the WCC only if that organization is one which properly places itself under the yoke of Christ, under the authoritative Scripture, and acts in a truly ecclesiastical manner in the pursuit of its ecumenical responsibility. The decision whether or not a Reformed church may join the WCC must stem from an evaluation of the nature of this ecumenical council and the meaning and significance of membership in that council. Thus the following matters must be considered:

- A. The Nature of the WCC
- B. The Basis of the WCC
- C. The Maintenance and Functioning of the Basis
- D. The Activities and Declarations of the WCC
- E. The Significance of Membership in the WCC

A. *The Nature of the WCC*

The WCC claims to be, and is in fact, substantially more than a forum for the discussion of differences. It is more than a "gespreksgemeenschap." It is a "Council of Churches" which defines itself as a "fellowship of churches," and thus claims to be at least a provisional manifestation of the unity for which Christ prayed (John 17). However, the ecclesiological character of the WCC is ambiguous and is regarded differently by various member churches.

Discussions within Reformed churches, including our own, have frequently reflected divergent views respecting the nature of the WCC. Was it simply a forum (*gespreksgemeenschap*) for discussion and debate of ecclesiastical, doctrinal, and theological differences? Or was the WCC more than a forum for discussion? Attitudes with respect to joining the WCC sometimes hinged upon the way in which such questions were answered.

We believe that the discussion now must move beyond the consideration of this either/or. Today there is greater clarity regarding the nature of the WCC. It is now clear that the WCC is considerably more than a forum for discussion. The Basis of the WCC states that it is a "*fellowship* of churches which *confess* the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour" (*italics added*). The Constitution further states that the functions of the WCC shall be:

- (i) To carry on the work of the world movements for Faith and Order and for Life and Work and of the International Missionary Council.
- (ii) To facilitate common action by the churches.
- (iii) To promote co-operation in study.
- (iv) To promote the growth of ecumenical and missionary consciousness in the members of all churches.
- (v) To support the churches in their world-wide missionary and evangelistic task.
- (vi) To establish and maintain relations with national and regional councils, world confessional bodies and other ecumenical organizations.
- (vii) To call world conferences on specific subjects as occasion may require, such conferences being empowered to publish their own findings. (*Constitution, Art. III*).

To be sure, one of the functions of the WCC is the study and discussion of differences between the churches. But the Constitution makes clear that more is contemplated. The churches have formed the WCC for study, for common witness and service, and for the advancement of unity. A responsible judgment concerning our relation to the WCC must therefore reflect the fact that the WCC is much more than a forum for discussion of differences.

We may add that, if the WCC were only a forum for discussion, we would have little difficulty in defining our relation to it. If that were the case, even the present Basis would be unsatisfactory. A discussion forum with simply an expressed agreement to discuss the differences between the churches in the light of Scripture is not objectionable. A free and open discussion of ecclesiastical and doctrinal differences in the light of Scripture must always be welcomed by a Reformed church. There can be no valid objection to a discussion of differences so long as no compromise is involved. As a matter of fact, we believe that Reformed churches should vigorously and seriously seek out and pursue such discussions or conversations with other churches in a number of ways. The

CRC Report of 1944 has certainly encouraged such discussions with other churches when it described "correspondence in the broad sense" with non-sister churches.

What then is the nature of the WCC? Since it is more than a forum for discussion, what is its exact ecclesiological character? This is a difficult question to answer, and opinions vary. The ecclesiological character of the WCC is ambiguous. It claims to be *sui generis*, unique as an organization or council of churches. Though its *sui generis* character makes evaluation difficult, it remains necessary to evaluate this organization with great care.

As the Basis indicates, the WCC is "a fellowship of churches." The New Delhi Assembly approved the substance of a Report on Unity which explains this unity and fellowship (*The New Delhi Report*, [New York: Association Press, 1962], pp. 116-134). The nature of the WCC as a fellowship of churches is explained as follows:

"The word 'fellowship' (*koinonia*) has been chosen because it describes what the Church truly is. 'Fellowship' clearly implies that the Church is not merely an institution or organization. It is a fellowship of those who are called together by the Holy Spirit and in baptism confess Christ as Lord and Savior. They are thus 'fully committed' to him and to one another. Such a fellowship means for those who participate in it nothing less than a renewed mind and spirit, a full participation in common praise and prayer, the shared realities of penitence and forgiveness, mutuality in suffering and joy, listening together to the same Gospel, responding in faith, obedience and service, joining in the one mission of Christ in the world, a self-forgetting love for all for whom Christ died, and the reconciling grace which breaks down every wall of race, color, caste, tribe, sex, class and nation. Neither does this 'fellowship' imply a rigid uniformity of structure, organization or government. A lively variety marks corporate life in the one Body of one Spirit." (*Ibid.*, pp. 119ff.)

As a "fellowship of churches," the WCC claims to manifest at least provisionally the unity which member churches now possess as a gift of Jesus Christ. A four-fold distinction is made with respect to this unity (1) the given unity; (2) the unity of the road; (3) the unity of the goal; and (4) the ultimate unity. The basic starting point is the given unity in Christ; this is affirmed of all the member churches of the WCC. "The unity of the road,"¹ follows; this is the present manifestation of this given unity within the WCC. The WCC works toward "the unity of the goal," the *una sancta* on earth. The ultimate unity will be revealed when Christ returns. These matters are expressed in the Final Report of the Third World Conference on Faith and Order at Lund in 1952:

"We affirm that throughout Christendom there is, despite divisions, a unity already given by God in Christ; through whom 'the powers of the age to come' are already in our midst. Concerning the fact of this unity and of the participation in it of every Christian we have no doubt.

¹ W. Visser 't Hooft, *The Pressure of Our Common Calling*, (London: SCM Press, 1959), p. 21.

The co-operation in the Ecumenical Movement is one practical proof that this unity is here. We affirm also our faith that the crucified and risen Christ is already working through His Holy Spirit to deliver us from the divisions which obscure this unity, and our sure hope that at His return in glory He will enable the manifestation of this unity to be complete. This very hope lays upon us all the inescapable duty of working and praying for the shortening of the days of our separation, in obedience to Him in whom we affirm ourselves to be one.

"We differ, however, in our understanding of the relation of our unity in Christ to the visible holy Catholic and Apostolic Church Yet our difference in the doctrinal and sacramental content of our faith and of our hope do not prevent us from being one in the act of believing and of hoping

"In summary, the nature of the unity towards which we are striving is that of a visible fellowship in which all members acknowledging Jesus Christ as living Lord and Savior, shall recognize each other as belonging fully to His Body, to the end that the world may believe.

"In His own day Jesus Christ will gather His scattered people to live in eternal union with Him. The joy of that union is already felt in such unitedness as is now ours. With light that pierces the Christian conscience that day of our Lord illuminates the solemn responsibility of every contemporary communion to prepare itself for unity."¹

While we have no quarrel with the Council's description of the unity of the goal and the ultimate unity, we must raise serious questions regarding the claim of a given unity in Christ and the assertion that this unity is now expressed within the WCC.

In the light of Scripture may we affirm that each of the diverse member churches possesses this given unity in Christ? And further, may we affirm that these diverse member churches actually manifest the true unity of Christ's church at least provisionally in the WCC? Is not the unity of Christ's church a unity in the truth? Or is it a unity that can legitimately be claimed even when heresy is present within the member churches?

The New Delhi Assembly recognized the doctrinal diversity present within the WCC, but it declared that fellowship (*koinonia*) precedes doctrinal agreement, rather than vice versa:

"In our consideration of next steps toward an agreed doctrinal basis for the unity we seek, two useful distinctions may be made—that intellectual formulations of the faith are not to be identified with faith itself, and that *koinonia* in Christ is more nearly the precondition of 'sound doctrine' than vice versa. The primary basis of this *koinonia* is the apostolic testimony in the Holy Scriptures and 'the hearing of faith'.²

Concretely then, a Reformed church must judge whether it can in truth acknowledge that the various member churches of the WCC are each individually such manifestations of the body of Christ that it can agree

¹ L. Vischer, *A Documentary History of the Faith and Order Movement*, pp. 102-106.

² *The New Delhi Report*, p. 126.

with the claim of each that it possesses the given unity in Christ. Furthermore a Reformed church must judge whether the organization which calls itself the WCC is indeed such "a fellowship of churches" that it may claim to be a true manifestation, however provisional, of the unity of Christ. And is there an adequate conception of the church as the "pillar and ground of the truth" (I Tim. 3:15) present within the WCC, so that a Reformed church may within that body pursue the goal of the *una sancta* on earth? These are the questions concerning the nature of the WCC which are basic to a decision concerning membership.

Since it is acknowledged that there are churches within the WCC "to which the qualification 'modernist' is fully or partly applicable," we do not believe that a Reformed church may affirm that all these member churches are truly churches of Christ who possess unity in Christ. If a church may not make this affirmation of one member church, it may not make it of the WCC as a whole since it includes such churches within its "fellowship." Furthermore, since the majority of the member churches of the WCC involve a combination of faith and practice that a single doctrinal or theological qualification is difficult, an unqualified affirmation of the member churches as churches of Christ possessing a given unity of faith in Christ may not be made. To be sure, the Toronto statement indicates that "membership does not imply that each Church must regard the other member Churches as Churches in the true and full sense of the word."¹

But this important reservation does not solve our problem. For the Toronto statement adds that "the member Churches of the World Council recognize in other Churches elements of the true Church."² However, one does not join with these elements or vestiges (*vestigia ecclesiae*); it is with the entire church that a member church enters into fellowship. For the "member Churches recognize that the membership of the Church of Christ is more inclusive than the membership of their own Church body. They seek therefore, to enter into living contact with those outside their own ranks who confess the Lordship of Christ."³

No matter how imperfect a church may consider a WCC member to be, it is impossible to avoid the implication that, through membership *per se*, a church affirms that all members are churches of Christ and share that given unity in Christ and now manifest that given unity in the WCC.

¹ L. Vischer, *op. cit.*, p. 173: "4) The member Churches of the World Council consider the relationship of other Churches to the Holy Catholic Church which the Creeds profess as a subject for mutual consideration. Nevertheless, membership does not imply that each Church must regard the other member Churches as Churches in the true and full sense of the word."

² *Ibid.*, p. 174: "5) The member Churches of the World Council recognize in other Churches elements of the true Church. They consider that this mutual recognition obliges them to enter into a serious conversation with each other in the hope that these elements of truth will lead to the recognition of the full truth and to unity based on the full truth."

³ *Ibid.*, p. 172: "3) The member Churches recognize that the membership of the Church of Christ is more inclusive than the membership of their own Church body. They seek, therefore, to enter into living contact with those outside their own ranks who confess the Lordship of Christ."

The fact that membership in the WCC involves such an affirmation, certainly by implication if not explicitly, makes membership in the council impossible for a Reformed church that seeks to remain true to the Bible and the creeds while pursuing its ecumenical calling. No Reformed church may make such affirmations of admittedly liberal or modernist churches, and it may not affirm that of churches in which only vestiges or elements of the church are present.

Whatever one cares to say about the implicit affirmation regarding other churches that is involved in joining the WCC, it should be clear that the theological diversity present within the WCC creates a situation in which we cannot reasonably expect that the kind of unity which is ostensibly the goal of the WCC is likely to be achieved. We cannot help but be intrigued by the possibility of achieving the "unity of the goal" which envisions a *una sancta* here on earth. Obviously, Jesus Christ himself, in his high priestly prayer, has committed us as his people to attempt the achievement of this goal within this world. However, the wide spectrum of contradictory theological positions represented within the WCC, and the clearly heretical nature displayed by many of the churches, along with an equivocal stance with respect to Scripture, indicates that the kind of situation which confronts us in the WCC is precisely the kind of situation which cannot be expected to promote the unity which all Christians sincerely desire.

B. *The Basis of the WCC*

Although the words of the Basis are in themselves a summary of the Gospel, the Basis is inadequate for ecclesiastical fellowship in view of the doctrinal errors within the churches today. In the light of history and contemporary theology, the Basis is inadequate for excluding radically unbiblical interpretations of the Gospel. Hence the Basis admits to membership in the WCC such churches with which a Reformed church may not have ecclesiastical fellowship (koinonia).

The Basis of the WCC as amended at New Delhi in 1961 reads as follows:

"The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior according to the Scriptures and therefore seek to fulfil together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It is constituted for the functions set out below. (Constitution, Art I).

This section of our report will focus attention upon the doctrinal or theological aspects of the Basis. In a later section [section D], the words "and therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling . . ." will be examined. In examining the doctrinal facets of the Basis, we shall successively consider (1) the Christological, (2) the Trinitarian, and (3) the Scriptural elements of this Basis. However, prior to this a few historical observations must be made.

The original form of this Basis as adopted at Amsterdam at the first Assembly of the WCC in 1948 had been taken from the Faith and Order

Movement. The theological adequacy of this formula does not appear to have been a major consideration.¹

"Many speakers favored the apodtion of the Faith and Order formula, since this had proved in practice an adequate basis for the meeting of the Christian Churches. The overwhelming majority were agreed that, if a World Council of Churches was to be formed, it should be made clear from the outset that the Churches were gathered together by the divine Lord of the Church. The Chairman could, therefore, sum up by saying that it was clearly desirable to use the Faith and Order basis, but that it was necessary to keep the door open for cooperation in some form with bodies which could not accept it."²

From the outset there were objections to the Basis. Some wanted it eliminated; others desired changes; others wished for expansion.³ A review of the discussion on the Basis as recorded in *The New Delhi Report* indicates that the Eastern Orthodox Churches wished to strengthen the Basis in a Trinitarian, Christological, and Scriptural way. On the other hand, some member churches wished to avoid any expanded credal statement, some feared making the dogma of the Trinity the touchstone of admittance to the WCC, and some saw the Basis becoming divisive by further definition of the nature of Christ.⁴

The additions to the Basis made in 1961 strengthen and improve it as far as the wording itself is concerned.⁵ The Basis is a christological concentration of the Gospel (rather than an Erasmusian reduction), and as such expresses the heart of the Gospel. The confession of Jesus Christ our Lord as God and Savior, in its genuine biblical implications, characterizes true believers and genuine Christian churches. However, difficulties with the Basis arise as soon as the doctrinal diversity of the member churches and the doctrinal diversity within individual churches is noted. In the

¹ "The fact that this formula had proved reasonably acceptable in practice influenced the decision more than considerations of its theological adequacy" (D. P. Gaines, *The World Council of Churches*, p. 164).

² *A History of the Ecumenical Movement 1517-1948* Edited by R. Rouse and S. C. Neill. (London: S.P.C.K., 1954), p. 705.

³ *The New Delhi Report*, pp. 37ff, and pp. 152-159. The vote was 383 in favor, 36 against, 7 abstentions (p. 159).

Cf. also D. P. Gaines, *The World Council of Churches*, pp. 421-425.

⁴ Cf. *The New Delhi Report*, pp. 152-159.

⁵ Cf. the judgment of Herman Sasse, a Lutheran who has previously been active in WCC conferences: "A dialogue must start from certain presuppositions which are *extra controversiam* So New Delhi found the diplomatic solution This masterpiece of church politics mentions the Scriptures without saying anything about their nature and authority. It mentions the Trinity, but in a doxological formula which even the most liberal American bishop can accept. It uses the term 'confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior,' but allows at the same time all deniers of the divinity of Christ and of the Trinity to declare that they do not regard the basis as having any dogmatic significance (see the debate on the Basis in 'The New Delhi Report' pp. 151-9). Will our Catholic Brethren understand why orthodox Lutheran and Reformed churches are not able to join a council which is based on such ambiguous formulas and grants equal rights to faith and unfaith?" *Reformed Theological Review*. XXIII, 1 (Feb. 1964). pp. 11-12.

light of history, the choice of this brief Basis constitutes disregard of the historic ecumenical creeds—the Apostles', the Nicene, the Athanasian. Why does the present ecumenical movement as represented in the WCC not employ the classic ecumenical creeds as its basis? Furthermore, we must observe that current theological positions can accept the Basis (as well as some ecumenical creeds) and yet give them radically different interpretations. Thus we must examine whether the words of the Basis, however satisfactory they may seem in themselves, are phrased carefully enough to exclude doctrinal or theological positions which are not really biblical. In the light of history and current theology, the Basis' brevity and terminology render it, in effect, equivocal and ambiguous.

1. *The Christology of the Basis*

The Basis declares that the WCC is "a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour. . . ." In the light of the history of doctrine, this Basis is inadequate today as an expression of a genuine doctrinal agreement concerning Jesus Christ. It is too brief and general. Member churches represent Monophysite, Nestorian, as well as Chalcedonian Christologies. Furthermore member churches represent evangelical, liberal, and neo-orthodox theologies, which can express agreement with this Basis.

Various objections to the wording of the Basis have been expressed by members of the WCC. Some objected to the confession of Jesus Christ as *God and Saviour*. The Remonstrant Brotherhood suggested the formula of "Jesus Christ . . . our *Lord and Saviour*" (italics added). This formula, which is also the basis of the National Council of Churches in America, is usually more agreeable to liberals. On the other hand, the Quakers suggested that the phrase "Jesus is Lord" was more in accord with the New Testament. The Quakers also declared that "if our constitution goes further to define the nature of Christ it becomes divisive."¹

Leading spokesmen of the WCC have themselves criticized the Basis for being docetic or monophysite since it failed to mention the true humanity of our Lord as the incarnate Son of God. William Adams Brown saw a docetic element in the Basis and stated that the "phrase 'God and Saviour' has an heretical flavor which would have led to its rejection by any one of the Ecumenical Councils. . . . Had the phrase 'God incarnate' been used, it would have raised no difficulty and avoided many misunderstandings."² Dr. Douglas Horton, chairman of the subcommittee on the Basis, also gave a "personal statement" to the Central Committee in 1953 in which he declared that the Basis expressed "not, I think bad theology: it is simply one-sided theology. It is designed to be Christocentric, but the difficulty with it is that it is all centre and no circumference. It illustrates the nature of heresy: it is a choosing of part of the faith at the expense of that indispensable part not chosen."³ The Netherlands Reformed Church also addressed the New Delhi Assembly stating that the present Basis has "a too strong accent on the confession of Jesus Christ

¹ *The New Delhi Report*, p. 156.

² *Toward a United Church*, p. 146; cf. Gaines, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

³ Gaines, *op. cit.*, p. 424.

as God, without adding a sentence about the importance of his also being human, and the lack of reference to Jesus as the Messiah of Israel."⁴ And Dr. Hendrikus Berkhof spoke at New Delhi "for those who do not like the one-sided monophysite character of the original Basis," and who regarded the acceptance of the New Delhi expansion as inevitably blocking the way to any re-writing of the whole Basis at some future date.⁵

An evaluation of the present Basis of the WCC may also be made by comparing it with the historical ecumenical creeds such as the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed. Although the words of the Basis may be given a biblical meaning by the orthodox Christian church, by choosing this Basis the WCC has bypassed the ecumenical creeds as a basis for the Council. Were these historic creeds too detailed, unambiguous, and exclusive to serve as an expression of the existing unity in the diverse churches of the world today? Even these creeds, it is true, would not be able to exclude heterodoxy, since historic formulations have been radically re-interpreted by modern theology. However, the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds would certainly exclude some forms of heresy now present among the members of the WCC, and to that extent these creeds would be more adequate than is the present Basis.⁶

That there are admittedly liberal churches in the WCC is only indicative of the problem. This problem cannot to be overcome by ignoring it. Nor is it to be bypassed by making a tally of the number of such liberal churches and stating their percentage of the membership. Admittedly, an all-embracing label for a given church is often very difficult to apply. The problem we face in evaluating the WCC is complicated today by the multifariousness of doctrinal opinion present within the various churches

⁴ *The New Delhi Report*, p. 152.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 158; cf. also Nels F. Ferre, "Is the Basis of the World Council Heretical?" *The Expository Times*, LXXIV, 2 Dec. 1962), 66-8.

⁶ With respect to the Christological concentration of the Basis, a statement submitted by the delegates of the Eastern Orthodox Churches at Evanston in 1954 is instructive. In a six-point statement these delegates indicated why the "whole approach to the problem of re-union" was "entirely unacceptable from the standpoint of the Orthodox Church." Among these six points the second is significant at this stage in our report. It stated that:

The whole of the Christian Faith should be regarded as one indivisible unity. It is not enough to accept just certain particular doctrines, basic as they may be in themselves, e.g., that Christ is God and Savior. It is compelling that all doctrines as formulated by the Ecumenical Councils, as well as the totality of the teachings of the early, undivided Church, should be accepted. One cannot be satisfied with formulas which are isolated from the life and experience of the Church. They must be assessed and understood within the context of the Church's life. From the Orthodox view-point reunion of Christendom with which the World Council of Churches is concerned can be achieved solely on the basis of the total, dogmatic Faith of the early, undivided Church without subtraction or alteration. We cannot accept a rigid distinction between essential and non-essential doctrines, and there is no room for comprehensiveness in the Faith. (Quoted from D. P. Gaines, *op. cit.*, p. 626.)

Unfortunately the statement continues with reference to the rejection of the sole authority of Scripture and the affirmation of Tradition as a mode of the Holy Spirit's revelation. Other features of this statement reflect other equally objectionable features of the Orthodox position, but the above quotation is highly instructive in any evaluation of the Christological concentration of the Basis.

themselves. The ecclesiastical problem of distinguishing the true from the false church (cf. *Belgic Confession*, Art. 29) is certainly more complex than it was at the time of the Reformation. But who would say that we face a better or healthier situation today? It is more difficult to distinguish the true from the false church today than it was during the nineteenth century in the heyday of liberalism. But dare we say that the need for distinguishing is any less necessary today? The basic problem is the variety of interpretations given to the Gospel and the possibility of all these varieties expressing their agreement with the Basis of the WCC. Within the various Protestant, Orthodox, and Catholic churches, evangelicalism, liberalism, and neo-orthodoxy, each in several varieties, co-exist. Does the Basis express the common biblical faith and genuine unity in Christ present in all the ecclesiastical diversity of our day? It does not.¹ No convincing case to the contrary has been presented—nor can one be presented!

2. *The Trinitarian Character of the Basis.*

The addition of the words “. . . to the glory of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit” may also be regarded as an improvement over the original form of the Basis. Yet much of what has been said above is relevant also to an evaluation of the trinitarian character of the Basis. The Basis does not specifically mention the Trinity as such although the references to “the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit” ought certainly to suggest a trinitarian meaning. The words of the Apostles’ Creed, it is true, are not specifically trinitarian either, but their intention and meaning are generally regarded as trinitarian. However, the Nicene and Athanasian ecumenical creeds are explicitly trinitarian, and the avoiding of these creeds as the basis for the WCC suggests that the vagueness and ambiguity of the present Basis is intentional in the light of the history of dogma and contemporary theology. The choice of those historic ecumenical creeds, or a statement asserting their normativity, would have given a clearly trinitarian basis to the WCC.

Some of the member churches opposed the “trinitarian” addition to the Basis at New Delhi. One of the more outspoken churches was the Remonstrant Brotherhood of the Netherlands which indicated its appreciation of the more positive emphasis throughout the Basis “provided that it does not imply submission to an authoritative credal statement. . . . We are able to agree to the final words of the proposed Basis if they are to be regarded as doxology, but we trust that the dogma of the Trinity may never become the touchstone of the admittance of churches into the World Council.”²

One must also observe that modalistic views of the trinity are very common in contemporary theology, and such views are thus common also

¹ Dr. Westphal told the New Delhi Assembly that the Synod National de l’Eglise Réformée de France “would accept the new Basis as an attempt to express the mystery of the divine revelation which does not intend to impose upon the member churches any particular theology.” On the other hand Prof. Konidaris of the Church of Greece observed “that his church would interpret it in the light of the Nicaean-Constantinopolitan Creed.” (*The New Delhi Report*, p. 154.)

² *The New Delhi Report*, p. 153.

within the member churches. Although modalism is excluded by the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds, the present Basis of the WCC is unable to exclude such modalistic views of the Trinity.

It is clear from the above that the doctrine of the Trinity is not confessed by all member churches of the WCC nor by leading spokesmen of some of the member churches. Yet the doctrine of the Trinity is foundational to a biblical Christology as well as to a biblical ecumenism.

3. *The Scriptural Doctrine of the Basis*

The phrase "according to the Scriptures" which was added at New Delhi is also an improvement which strengthens the original Basis. There is now a reference to a source or norm for the confession of Jesus Christ as God and Saviour. However, we must point out that the WCC plainly does not operate with an acceptable doctrine of Scripture. Our objections do not arise against making Scripture a norm: they concern the functioning and non-functioning of that norm. Furthermore, the phrase "according to the Scriptures" should be understood against the background of the general view of Scripture present within the WCC.

Many factors have contributed to the rise and development of the ecumenical movement of the twentieth century. Among these factors the influence of modern biblical criticism (negative higher criticism) has been significant. Robert L. Richard, a Roman Catholic writer, has shown that this influence has been present in both Protestant and Roman Catholic ecumenicity:

"In the two decades since the war, Christian theology (including, as the last to join, Roman Catholic theology) has welcomed this final rise of biblical criticism to an undisputed leading role. It is precisely this victory that has given form and substance to the ecumenical dialogue—and that has received in return from the ecumenical dialogue a constantly renewed encouragement and fresh direction. It is precisely the same victory that gave the ultimately distinctive thrust to every major utterance of Vatican II."¹

Similarly, David P. Gaines, in his exhaustive study of the background and history of the World Council of Churches, reflects upon the new understanding of Scripture resulting from historical criticism. He sees the growth of the WCC as at least in part the result "of the slow softening of dogma under the influence of scientific thought, which, to a degree greater than most of the faithful realized or would admit, left hardly any article of belief as it had been and made necessary a reorientation of all religions and their institutions."² As a striking example of this fact he refers to

"the new understanding of the origin and nature of the Old and New Testament Scriptures and of the principles of their interpretation, for which modern research in the field of historical criticism was to be credited.

¹ "The Challenge of 'God Is Dead,'" *America*, Vol. 115, No. 8 (Aug. 20, 1966), p. 173.

² *The World Council of Churches*, p. 1097.

"Although the Bible remained the Word of God, it was that in a different sense. Sectarian readings of it slowly lost their authority. Many doctrinal distinctions and denominational demarcations, whatever the occasion for the continued emphasis on them, ceased to be supported by supposedly scriptural sanctions once stoutly maintained. Gradually the spirit triumphed over the letter, and the experience of God through faith and love, however explained theologically, was recognized as the deepest common bond between believers.

"From this inner well of shared spiritual being in the eternal life of God in the soul flowed new revelations of truth, as in the luminous earlier days of the Church. Without dismissing ancient insights, these were unmistakably of the Word and equally disclosures of the will of God."³

In this vein, he goes on to say, "Whether the churches should keep on in their separate ways or join fortunes became more a practical than a theological question."⁴

What had been expressed as far back as 1937 at the Oxford Conference on Church, Community and State is still true of the WCC today. Its action is "confused and halting because, chiefly, there was no agreement on the fundamental nature of the Christian revelation. . . ." John R. Mott at that time expressed the idea that "the crucial problem besetting all ecumenical gatherings" concerned the question of revelation. In the same conversation William Temple confirmed the viewpoint "that the nature of the Christian revelation was the rock on which the ecumenical movement stood always in danger of foundering."⁵

While the rise of higher criticism and the new freedom with respect to the Bible has thus been credited with giving impetus to the ecumenical movement, there is widespread uncertainty and diversity of views on revelation within the Council. This constitutes one of the key problems of the WCC and the ecumenical movement.

The uncertainty and diversity with respect to the norm of Christian faith and practice is evident also in a growing tendency of the WCC to give greater prominence to tradition. One section of the Faith and Order Conference in Montreal in 1963 recommended the adoption of the phrase *sola traditione* which, of course, created a stir among Protestants accustomed to the Reformation slogan of *sola scriptura*. Although this phrase, *sola traditione*, was not adopted, the conference did adopt a statement in which were set forth four senses of tradition so comprehensive in scope as to include in various forms of the word,⁶ all that is usually meant by Jesus Christ, Scripture, and church tradition.⁷ The new terminology involved little that was new to the Eastern Orthodox Churches, but it required some radically new thinking, especially for many Protestants. In this report, it was also stated that "modern biblical scholarship has

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ As reported by D. P. Gaines, *op. cit.*, p. 490.

⁶ Capital versus lower case; singular versus plural—"Tradition," "tradition," and "traditions" in two senses.

⁷ *The Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order*, eds. P. C. Rodger and Lukas Vischer, pp. 50ff.

already done much to bring the different churches together by conducting them towards the Tradition."¹ With reference to the rejected phrase *sola traditione*, the editors, who were both secretaries of the Faith and Order Commission at the time, state that the "phrase is perhaps difficult only because it is premature." They add that the phrase "is likely, when used as a summary of a whole understanding of Tradition in this sense, to be of real value in ecumenical work. . . . The final version of the Report abandoned the dangerous phrase; but it will probably live on, not less powerful for being unofficial."²

It is evident that "the rise of historical and scientific criticism has wrought a revolution in the concept of the authority of the Bible, and of the relationship between Scripture and tradition."³ And, as the same study report issued by the WCC adds, "Even those who maintain in words the traditional positions very rarely maintain them completely in their own deepest thinking."⁴

More recently the retiring General Secretary of the WCC, Dr. W. Visser 't Hooft, has spoken of the growing menace of Bultmannian views of Scripture for the ecumenical movement. In his report to the Central Committee in February of 1966, Dr. Visser 't Hooft spoke of the success of the ecumenical movement in the thirties and forties because of the "renaissance of biblical theology" which produced "a remarkable consensus on many essential points."⁵ It is well known that this "biblical theology" of which Dr. Visser 't Hooft spoke was largely Barthian, as were his own basic sympathies, but he warned of threatening influences at present.

"For we have entered into a period in which what seemed to be the abiding results of biblical scholarship are radically questioned and in which there is deep division of opinion among biblical scholars, very often of scholars belonging to one and the same confession. One of the basic issues has again become whether there is any really substantial unity in the biblical message. . . . Much is at stake. To deny the unity of the Bible is to deny the necessity of the unity of the Church. A Bible interpreted as a collection of miscellaneous christologies and ecclesiologies can hardly be the foundation of our calling to unity. Our movement can only be a

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

² *Ibid.*, p. 25.

³ *The Bible and the Church's Message*, quoted in D. P. Gaines, *op. cit.*, p. 596, n.

⁴ *Ibid.* A striking illustration of this crucial problem is evident at our very doorstep in the attempt to adopt the new Presbyterian Confession of 1967. While the Westminster Confession remain official and a number of historic Reformed confessions are added to the so-called "Book of Confessions," the Confession of 1967 clearly involves an attempt to downgrade the historic Reformed and Westminster view of Scripture. Although the original draft submitted by the Drafting Committee was clearly neo-orthodox in its conception, the amended version approved by the General Assembly in 1966 was an ambiguous combination of orthodox and neo-orthodox elements totally satisfying to neither of these groups. (Cf. G. Hendry, "The Bible in the Confession of 1967," *Princeton Seminary Bulletin*, October 1966, pp. 22ff.)

⁵ *The Ecumenical Review*, XVIII, No. 2 (April, 1966), 239ff.

dynamic movement toward greater unity, if we listen together to the one voice which gives us our marching orders."¹

Although we can appreciate this strong warning from the retiring General Secretary, we must remember that it arises out of a Barthian view of Scripture. While some may appeal to the growing influence of neo-Bultmannian theology as an increased reason for witnessing, our concern here is to point to the fact that "according to the Scriptures" in the Basis does not indicate that a satisfactory view of Scripture is involved. A Reformed church must face this important question when it seeks to define its position with respect to the WCC.

We believe that it is clear that the WCC does not operate with an acceptable doctrine of Scripture. With the rise of higher criticism and its adoption by both liberalism and neo-orthodoxy, the prevailing views of Scripture within the WCC are such that the historic view taught by Scripture itself and expressed in our creeds is usually rejected, frequently caricatured, and seldom, if ever, defended. This situation with respect to the authority of the Bible constitutes a major obstacle for a Reformed church with respect to membership in the WCC, since fruitful ecumenical contact presupposes a recognition of the Bible as the written Word of God.

As Professor Berkouwer stated in The Calvin Foundation Lectures for 1952, "the religious and pious arguments" against the real authority of the written Word so common in our time "are always the most dangerous in the church." He sees the process of two centuries continuing in the present crisis concerning obedience to the Word. "The crisis is a flight from the nearness of God and the responsibility that it implies. This is a tragic situation, the consequence of all devaluation of the written Word . . ." Then he adds these striking words:

"When we lose the Word, we lose sight of the image of Christ Himself. This is the spiritual law of history. It is the law of the always threatening apostasy in the church in every century: the world without the Word, the world in her own freedom, hearing no real voice of the Lord, but only her own voice."²

And later he adds: "If holy Scripture becomes a problem in the Church of Christ, then Christ inevitably becomes a problem too. If the Bible is devaluated, the kingdom of Christ is at stake. Let this be a warning to the Church."³ We believe these words of theological insight and pastoral admonition are applicable to the Basis of the WCC in the light of the history of the church and in the face of the present theological climate within the churches of the WCC.

C. The Maintenance and Functioning of the Basis.

The WCC does not maintain the Basis in a meaningful way since it does not consider it within its jurisdiction to judge whether member churches are really faithful to the Basis. The WCC declares that

¹ *Ibid.*

² G. C. Berkouwer, *Modern Uncertainty and Christian Faith* (1953), pp. 23ff.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

if it were to judge whether an applicant or a member church was actually living in harmony with the Basis, the WCC would become a "super-church." That the Basis does not function meaningfully is evident from the admission that there are churches within the WCC "to which the qualification 'modernist' is fully or partly applicable."

Even if the Basis were acceptable, the question of its proper functioning in and maintenance by the WCC would still remain.

The decision as to whether a church agrees with the Basis is to be made solely by that church. An applicant church must present a written statement of its agreement with the Basis, and, by its continued membership, it implicitly declares its desire to live in harmony with the Basis. But the WCC does not itself judge whether the church's confession and life are actually in accordance with the Basis. The Declaratory Statement of the Evanston Assembly on the Purpose and Function of the Basis says:

"The acceptance of the Basis is the fundamental criterion which must be met by a church which desires to join the Council. . . . Each church which joins the WCC must therefore seriously consider whether it desires to participate in a fellowship with this particular Basis. On the other hand the WCC would overstep the limits it has set for itself if it should seek to pronounce judgment as to whether any particular church is in fact taking the Basis seriously. It remains the responsibility of each church to decide itself whether it can sincerely accept the Basis of the Council."¹

Thus one repeatedly reads that if the WCC were to "pronounce judgment as to whether any particular church is in fact taking the Basis seriously," the WCC would become a "super-church." At the same time the WCC does set up certain criteria for membership in addition to the acceptance of the Basis: The Constitution states:

"Those churches shall be eligible for membership in the World Council of Churches which express their agreement with the Basis upon which the Council is founded and satisfy such criteria as the Assembly or the Central Committee may prescribe. Election to membership shall be by a two-thirds vote of the member churches represented in the Assembly, each member church having one vote. . . ." (Constitution, Art. II.)

Under the criteria for membership the Constitution stipulates matters relating to autonomy, stability, size, and relationship with other churches (Rules, I, 3). Furthermore, with respect to churches seeking membership who are members of confessional or denominational world alliances with which the Council cooperates, "the advice of these world alliances shall be sought" (Rules I, 4 & 5). Apparently judgments are made with respect to these matters without the WCC becoming a "super-church." And the fact that a two-thirds vote is required, at least indicates that the Council only admits to membership. Hence the matter of an applicant's genuine agreement with the Basis could easily be indicated in the vote of the Assembly.

The argument that if the Council were to judge the genuineness of a church's agreement with the Basis, the Council would become a "super-

¹ *The Evanston Report*, p. 307.

church" is fallacious. Here we see another ambiguous aspect of World Council methodology and strategy. The Council seeks to avoid embarrassing questions when confronted by them and yet functions as a council of churches admitting to membership on the grounds of certain criteria. If the Basis were fully meaningful and really functioned, the WCC could simply function *as a council* without thereby becoming a "super-church." Would such a judgment concerning an applicant or a member church make the WCC any more a "super-church" than its speaking in the name of the member churches makes her a "super-church"? If the Basis were to function meaningfully and truly, the Council, in admitting to membership, would judge whether the applicant church meets all the criteria for membership, including a meaningful subscription to the Basis. If the Basis is taken in a biblical sense, it excludes any interpretation of Scripture which would involve "another gospel" (cf. Galatians 1:7, 8).

The fact that there are admittedly members in the WCC to whom the application modernist wholly or partly applies, indicates that the Basis functions in a way that will not wholly exclude such churches. The fact that most churches do not administer discipline and that the doctrinal character of a majority of churches is quite mixed indicates further the complexity of the problem and perhaps the impossibility of this Basis really functioning. On the other hand, it is claimed that the Basis functions because it has excluded such churches as the Unitarian and the Universalist churches. But have these churches sought membership?¹ Suppose they were to interpret the Basis in such a way that they felt they could seek membership. Would the WCC then decide to exclude them? If so, would that make the WCC a "super-church"?

It appears then that the Basis functions only to the extent that exclusion from membership occurs through the voluntary non-application of churches that clearly do not agree with the Basis. But it does not function to the extent that an applicant would be turned down because the Council decided that this church's statement of agreement with the Basis was not true to fact. Nor does it function to the extent that the WCC would expel a member-church judged to be in conflict with the Basis. The WCC fails to exercise the discipline which a council with a Basis and a Constitution could exercise as a council without its becoming a "super-church." This unwillingness to maintain the Basis meaningfully is a self-imposed limitation of the WCC.

¹ This question may not be answered in the negative too readily. However, an affirmative answer complicates the problem since it is evident that some Liberal (Unitarian) churches are members. Cf. the following resolution sent to the New Delhi Assembly: The General Assembly of the International Association for Liberal Christianity and Religious Freedom, meeting in Davos, August 11, 1961, and including in its membership churches and groups who are members of the World Council of Churches and others who are not, on account of objections against the present formulation of its basis of membership, places on record its considered regret that the proposed further change in the basis of membership will create problems for a still greater number of churches and groups who would otherwise wholeheartedly support the work of the Council. The Assembly deplors this action of the WCC which retards the advancement of religious co-operation throughout the world." (*The New Delhi Report*, p. 154.)

On the other hand representatives of the WCC contend that the Council has always maintained the Basis through its own activities and pronouncements. The claim is made that all of its documents, all of its statements, and all of its actions are in harmony with the Basis. This is meant to apply to varied activities and pronouncements—those of a social, political, or economic nature as well as those of a theological nature. This is said to apply to statements on the church, the sacraments, the hydrogen bomb, Vietnam, poverty, and capitalism. If this claim is true, then it is difficult to think of anything that would be in conflict with the Basis except an open denial of Jesus Christ as God and Savior. Again we see that the problem of the meaningful functioning of the Basis is involved in the insufficiency and inadequacy of the Basis itself to function in a biblically meaningful ecumenical context.

Thus we have seen that the WCC declares that it "would overstep the limits it has set for itself if it should seek to pronounce judgment as to whether any particular church is in fact taking the Basis seriously." At this point the WCC itself clearly does not maintain the Basis. Furthermore, the presence of admittedly liberal churches within the WCC as well as the doctrinally mixed churches clearly raises the question as to the meaningful functioning of the Basis. Fundamentally it is the inadequacy of the Basis itself, when judged in terms of biblical standards of ecumenicity, and when seen in the light of history, that precludes the possibility of the Basis functioning in a meaningful way today.

D. *The Socio-Political Activities and Declarations of the WCC.*

The activities of the WCC in the social, economic, and political areas involve it in pronouncements and programs which are not the immediate responsibility of the church. The type of action taken in these areas is frequently an embarrassment to a Reformed church.

When we turn to the social and political activities of the WCC, we enter an area that has been the occasion for much controversy within and without the WCC. The Basis states that the WCC is a fellowship of churches which "seek to fulfil together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." While the WCC regards its chief task to maintain and develop the fellowship between the churches, it regards as an equally important second task its social and political activities on the national and international levels.¹ These dual functions can be viewed as the combination of Faith and Order and Life and Work. The pioneers of the Life and Work movement often stated that "doctrines divide, action unites." More recently, however, the existing unity, even in the face of significant doctrinal disagreement, is appealed to as the basis for common action. In a modified form it is now said that without the deed, doctrine divides.²

¹ Cf. the statement of the Executive Committee in 1951 after the Central Committee had issued its controversial Resolution on Korea. (*Ecumenical Review*, III [April, 1951], 267.) The Eastern Orthodox Churches persistently view the WCC as primarily a collective effort in the area of social and moral action. Cf. E. Duff, *The Social Thought of the World Council of Churches* (New York: Association Press, 1956), pp. 77ff.

² Cf. D. P. Gaines, *op. cit.*, p. 869.

We can be grateful that the WCC does not directly engage in the usual type of missionary and evangelistic activities. Although one of its functions is "to support the churches in their world-wide missionary and evangelistic task" (Constitution, Art. III, v), the WCC does not sponsor evangelistic campaigns or missionary programs. On the other hand there is certainly the tendency in the WCC, as is evident in the National Council also, to conceive of its social programs as a form of evangelism. The social services of the WCC relating to health, welfare, poverty, etc., reflect somewhat the "social gospel" thinking of older liberalism. Although "word and deed" legitimately go together in evangelism, the deed without the word may become mere humanitarianism. In this respect the "social evangelism" so prominent in the WCC reflects the impoverished gospel in the thinking of so many of the member churches.¹

The WCC's activity in political matters has been varied and extremely controversial. Frequently pronouncements have been issued on political matters of the greatest complexity stemming from East-West tensions. Since Evanston, for example, statements have been put out dealing with the crises of Hungary, Cyprus, South Africa, Egypt, China, Cuba, and Vietnam. The Commission of the Churches on International Affairs of the WCC (CCIA) has worked with and through governmental and inter-governmental agencies, but has centered its efforts in the United Nations and its various organizations. Although churchmen from the established churches regarded such pronouncements and activities of the WCC in social and political matters as normal, representatives of free churches often raised serious objections. Many friends of the WCC agreed with the view expressed by John Foster Dulles at the First Assembly in 1948 that "the churches ought not to make authoritative pronouncements in respect to detailed action in political, economic and social fields."² However, the WCC has not lessened its activity in non-ecclesiastical areas. The recent World Conference on Church and Society held in Geneva under WCC auspices July 12-26, 1966 has declared that the church's participation in political life is a valid form of its ministry.³

It is not only the WCC's activity in the social, economic, and political areas of life that is to be challenged. The type of program which the WCC generally fosters in these activities and pronouncements is also open to question. The most recent comprehensive study of the WCC states that ecumenical study reports and pronouncements urge more and more "the application of 'welfare state' principles to international life."⁴ In a summary way Gaines states:

"Sociological indoctrination could proceed with comparatively few hindrances because the economic and political philosophies within the World Council of Churches followed, in their main lines, the principles of state socialism of one kind or another, which was prevalent in most

¹ Cf. John Coventry Smith, "The Missionary Movement in the World Council of Churches," *The Princeton Seminary Bulletin*, LV (April, 1962), 4-15. Cf. also D. P. Gaines, *op. cit.*, pp. 512ff., 751, 849ff., 869, 898, 1102ff.

² D. P. Gaines, *op. cit.*, p. 941.

³ *The Ecumenical Review*, XVIII, 4 (October, 1966).

⁴ D. P. Gaines, *op. cit.*, p. 978.

of the countries with denominational representation in its membership. On the subject of theology there was much confusion; but the consensus was that the pattern of the welfare society, extended to international affairs, had sufficient sanction in the spirit of the Christian Gospel."¹

As we review the social and political involvements of the WCC, it is well to remember that it was such involvement on the part of the Federal Council that led our church to withdraw from that Council in 1924, stating as one of its reasons that

"the Council stands committed to elaborate programs pertaining to industrial, national, and international affairs which our churches have never endorsed and should not endorse, even if we could fully agree with them since they do not belong to the province of the church as an organization." (Acts 1924, p. 112)

That the National Council of Churches (formerly the Federal Council) engages prominently in such activities today is well known—so much so that some who favor membership in the WCC are not in favor of joining the NCC largely because of its non-ecclesiastical involvements, as well as the type of pronouncements it makes in these non-ecclesiastical areas. The general pattern of the WCC activities and pronouncements is very similar, however, to those of the NCC, although the former are directed mainly to international issues.

It is sometimes claimed that a member church is not responsible for the activities and pronouncements of the WCC unless such a church specifically adopts or endorses them. This is, of course, true to a certain extent. However, in making such statements the WCC usually gives the impression of speaking for so many churches and so many million Christians. Although we must recognize the right to dissent from some activities and pronouncements of a body or council of which one is a member, corporate responsibility is also inherent in membership in such a body. Member churches must certainly bear corporate responsibility for what the WCC says and does in the name of the member churches.² A non-member church that seeks to define her position with respect to the WCC, must certainly recognize the pattern of activity and pronouncements which are part of the ecumenical strategy of the WCC. It would hardly be responsible to consider joining this organization with the intention of divorcing oneself from that activity which constitutes the second main purpose of the WCC program.

Thus we have seen that the WCC repeatedly fails to recognize and honor the God-assigned tasks and limits of the church. In issuing detailed statements on specific social, economic, or political problems, the Council engages in affairs that properly belong to non-churchly zones of life. In these areas a council of churches has neither the necessary author-

¹ D. P. Gaines, *op. cit.*, p. 961.

² " . . . It ought to be self-evident that a church which does not express an opinion declares itself tacitly in agreement with the reports which have been submitted to it" (L. Vischer, *A Documentary History of the Faith & Order Movement*, 1963, p. 22).

ity nor the requisite competence. Of course, the church has the responsibility to proclaim and teach the lordship of Jesus Christ for all of life. It is the church's duty to set forth the principles of Scripture concerning the task of Christians communally in the societal relationships such as the state and the economic and social institutions. But it is not the task nor the right of the church to engage in the economic, social, and political activities with which the WCC largely concerns itself.

E. *The Implications of Membership in the WCC*

The general character of the WCC is ambiguous. Its membership is diverse ecclesiastically and doctrinally. In this light the Basis is equivocal and its functioning inadequate. By joining this organization a genuinely Reformed church endorses this ecumenical methodology and gives a measure of recognition to churches with a radically different interpretation of the Gospel and thereby a Reformed church beclouds or relativizes its own witness.

When a church joins the WCC, it in effect declares that it is thereby manifesting the given unity of the church together with all the other member churches. In joining the WCC a member church declares that all the member churches constitute a "fellowship of churches confessing Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures." Is that declaration in fact true? If this declaration is not true to fact, a Reformed church thereby relativizes and confuses its message and its witness. If a truly Reformed church were to join the WCC in its present heterogeneity, it would thereby compromise its own confessional witness. As a matter of fact the ecumenical methodology of the WCC tends to render provisional the doctrinal and confessional foundation of any member church.¹

The WCC does make various reservations as to what one church must say of another member church. The Toronto Statement is devoted in part to this problem. However significant these reservations may be, it does not appear possible or legitimate to avoid what is implied by the very act of joining. It appears that the act of joining the WCC involves an expressed judgment concerning the other member churches which goes contrary to the CRC Report of 1944. The various areas of correspondence contemplated in that Report would not involve the church in compromise which the ecumenical methodology of the WCC entails. The measure of recognition given to so-called "delinquent, decayed, or deformed churches" by way of several types of correspondence is entirely different from the type of recognition given such churches by way of joining with them as "a fellowship of churches confessing Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures" and therefore a seek-

¹ "But can a church, after being in fellowship with other churches, still confess in exactly the same way the truth which has been entrusted to it? Is not its confession called in question by this fellowship? Does it not confess the truth in the awareness and hope that one day a common confession will be granted to a Christianity which is at present divided? At all events, the confession of each individual church also has a provisional character—even if this is so in a different way and to a different extent for each church." L. Vischer, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

ing "to fulfil together their common calling. . . ." A certain type of correspondence as contemplated in the Report of 1944 is possible with churches that are clearly liberal, but then one does not engage in "fellowship," however provisional that may be regarded, nor in affirming a given unity with them in Christ, nor in seeking together to fulfil a common calling.

To be concrete, the ecumenical methodology of the WCC implies, for example, that a member church, by joining, declares that the Quakers and the Salvation Army are also *churches* of Jesus Christ. One would be saying that the Remonstrant Brotherhood which is acknowledged to be predominantly modernistic is a church of Jesus Christ. One would have to say that of the Monophysite and Nestorian churches, which were declared heretical by the early ecumenical councils, and of the Eastern Orthodox churches in all their various national forms. One would say the same of the Methodist and Congregational and Presbyterian churches as we know them so well in this country and in our own vicinity. May a Reformed church say all that by joining the WCC without relativizing its own witness with respect to the Gospel of the Scripture? Does not such action which gives this measure of recognition to churches with a radically different interpretation of the Gospel becloud or relativize the witness of a Reformed church? We believe such membership is not permissible for it does becloud and relativize our Reformed witness.

According to Scripture, unity is always a unity in the truth. Yet such unity is affirmed and claimed for the variety and diversity of churches which constitute the WCC. While one may recognize vestiges of the church in the member churches of the WCC, a Reformed church in joining the WCC does not join with the vestiges of the church and declare its unity in Christ with these vestiges, but with the existing churches in their totality and with all their doctrinal deviations.

It is therefore evident that the ecumenical methodology of the WCC is different from the ecumenical methodology delineated in the Report of 1944. It is instructive that the Report of 1944 already spoke of "the mistaken methodology of modern ecumenicalism" (p. 350). If the methodology of the Report of 1944 is biblical, the methodology of the WCC cannot be endorsed. Even after the qualifications of the Toronto statement have been observed, the methodology of the WCC requires a recognition of the member churches that goes beyond that which a Reformed church may make according to biblical standards.

In this connection it is worthwhile to recall an earlier consideration made by a synodical committee. The view was expressed that "non-membership when expressed in a Christian spirit and with sound Christian concern, that is with a clear conscience, is itself a witness which is apt to become more vocal than membership in a large organization" (*Acts* 1959, p. 272). Although this argument might in some instances reflect an isolationist mentality, we believe that in view of our evaluation of the WCC, the possibility of a clear witness via non-membership must be chosen in preference to membership in this Council. Membership in the WCC would relativize our witness because of the measure of recognition

given to all the member churches as well as our corporate responsibility for the activities and declarations of the WCC.

We do not question the well-meant intentions expressed by brethren who favor joining the WCC for the sake of giving a clear witness within the organization. We are here calling attention to the relativization of that witness which results from the fact of joining and the corporate responsibility for the activities and pronouncements of the WCC. We believe that this relativization would itself undermine the possibility of the kind of clear witness which a Reformed church ought to make within the organization. We shall, however, point out ways by which we believe a witness can be made to the WCC members without the compromise that would result from joining it.

CONCLUSION:

After examining the nature of the WCC, the basis of the WCC, the maintenance and functioning of the basis, the activities and declarations of the WCC, and finally the significance of membership in the WCC, it has become apparent to this committee that membership in the WCC cannot be considered a permissible course of action for a Reformed church as it seeks to discharge its ecumenical responsibilities. There are serious questions to be raised in connection with each one of these items, of varying importance to be sure, but collectively of such weight and significance that it becomes necessary for a Reformed church to pursue its ecumenical calling without membership in the WCC. Your committee therefore cannot concur with the generally positive evaluation of the WCC described in the booklet, *The Communion of Saints*.

V. OTHER PROBLEMS RELATED TO MEMBERSHIP IN THE WCC.

In this section of our report we wish to add a number of considerations which must also be taken seriously in connection with determining our relation to the WCC.

A. *The Relation of Membership in the WCC and Our Mission Work*

Joining the WCC may have the effect of inhibiting or stifling a Reformed church's mission work and evangelism on the foreign field as well as on the home front in such areas as are occupied by or represented by other churches which are members of the WCC.

In joining the WCC a church recognizes the other member churches as churches which "confess Jesus Christ as God and Savior according to the Scriptures." Hence there would possibly be objection from such member churches to the Christian Reformed Church engaging in home missions in areas that are already occupied by such member churches. There is probably no home mission project that is not carried on within sight of a church holding membership in the WCC. While proselytizing in the sense of "sheep stealing" must be rejected our concern for *Reformed* evangelism may be labeled proselytism by other WCC members. A major motivation for locating a home mission project here or there has often been the concern that in such areas there is no evangelical or Reformed

church faithfully preaching the whole counsel of God revealed in holy Scripture.

A similar situation obtains with respect to foreign missions. The Eastern Orthodox Churches have been especially sensitive to what they invariably call proselytizing by Protestant missionaries. The WCC has set up guidelines with respect to proselytizing.¹ Although some overlapping of missions is not ruled out, membership in the WCC would place us in an awkward position with respect to some phases of our mission and evangelistic work. The implications of such membership and the objections of member churches might inhibit or hamper the freedom of a Reformed church to establish Reformed churches in the midst of the doctrinal confusion and decay at home and abroad. We believe that even if other impediments to membership did not exist, and the danger here signalized were to become real, this would be too great a price to pay in view of the need for a biblically Reformed witness everywhere in our day.

B. *Syncretistic Tendencies in the WCC*

The direction of present developments within the WCC is uncertain and some expressions of a syncretistic nature by WCC spokesmen give reason for concern.

We recognize that this issue is difficult to assess. However, it is significant that leaders within the WCC have spoken of their concern on this matter. Dr. Visser 't Hooft's book *No Other Name*² opposes the growing syncretism in Christian circles and the failure of some to recognize the uniqueness of Christianity.

Although the observers from the Gereformeerde Kerken at New Delhi stated that they "did not notice any influence of syncretistic ideas contrary to the absoluteness of God's revelation in Christ,"³ some leading WCC representatives and others have spoken of syncretistic tendencies at New Delhi. Dr. John Coventry Smith, General Secretary of the Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations of the United Presbyterian Church and a member of the Central Committee of the WCC, writes of one of the obstacles in the WCC with respect to missions stemming from this evidence of syncretism. He writes:

"First of all, there is the obstacle in the present confusion in the Churches as to the nature of the uniqueness of Jesus Christ. This was evident at New Delhi. There were a considerable number of statements that could be quoted as supporting this uniqueness, such as the statement in the message, where Jesus Christ is singled out as the one way to the Father, the way on which we meet every man. But there were also statements that supported a different approach to the nature of Christ and the so-called non-Christian religions. There were one or two statements that could well be interpreted as being almost syncretistic in nature,

¹ Cf. St. Andrews statement from Central Committee in 1960 (L. Vischer, *A Documentary History etc.*, pp. 183-196).

² (London: SCM Press, 1963). Cf. also H. Kramer in *The Theology of Christian Mission*. (New York: McCraw-Hill, 1961), pp. 179-182.

³ *Communion of Saints*, p. 37.

though these came from the platform and not from the consideration of committees with Assembly approval.

“Dr. McCord has described the situation as being one of ‘theological co-existence.’ And lest you assume that this is particularly applicable to the WCC, let me quickly ask you whether this is not true of the average congregation in our own country. . . . There is no question in my mind but our confusion and our lack of clarity at this point is symbolic of the life of the Churches in our time, and if the missionary movement that is now within the WCC is to represent these Churches in mission and evangelism, it must speak from a base that understands the meaning and uniqueness of the Gospel.”¹

One of the statements to which objection was made because of its syncretistic tendencies was found in the Report of the Section on Witness presented at New Delhi. This report states:

“The Church is sent, knowing that God has not left himself without witness even among men who do not yet know Christ, and knowing also that the reconciliation wrought through Christ embraces all creation and the whole of mankind. We are aware that this great truth has deep implications when we go out to meet men of other faiths. But there are differences of opinion amongst us when we attempt to define the relation and response of such men to the activity of God amongst them. We are glad to note that the study of this question will be a main concern in the continuing study on ‘The Word of God and the Living Faiths of Men.’ We would stress the urgency of this study. In the churches, we have but little understanding of the wisdom, love and power which God has given to men of other faiths and of no faith, or of the changes wrought in other faiths by their long encounter with Christianity. We must take up the conversations about Christ with them, knowing that Christ addresses them through us and us through them.”²

Other illustrations could be given, but these many suffice to indicate the presence of differences of opinion with respect to the uniqueness of the gospel, the urgency of the study referred to, and thus the uncertainty as to the resolution of these differences. This uncertainty on so central an issue as the uniqueness of Christianity, on which the Scriptures speak so clearly (Acts 4:12), gives reason for deep concern.

C. *The Prospect of Ecumenical Achievement in the WCC*

The present functioning of the WCC seems to be mainly a growing together in tolerance and in the pursuit of certain social and political activities, but not in the real unity of conviction concerning the central issues of the Christian faith.

The question arises as to the prospect of the success of a Reformed witness within the WCC and thus the prospect of genuine ecumenical

¹ “The Missionary Movement in the World Council of Churches,” *Princeton Seminary Bulletin*, LV, No. 3 (April, 1962), 8ff.

² *The New Delhi Report*, pp. 81ff.

achievements. This is admittedly a difficult question to answer. Pessimism may never characterize our attitude as members of the church of Jesus Christ when we engage in the battle of the Lord. Jesus Christ has won the decisive victory over Satan, sin, and the evil world. We believe that the gates of hell shall not prevail against the Church of Jesus Christ. When we are convinced that we are in the right and are on the right road, then we must be willing to fight for the truth even when there is little or no prospect of success. For Christ is victor! For this reason a Reformed church must confidently pursue its ecumenical responsibility.

However, the point we wish to make here is that this particular vehicle of ecumenical action, namely the WCC, in addition to the obstacles mentioned in the previous section of this report, gives little promise of achievement for true ecumenical responsibility. The present functioning of the WCC seems to be mainly a growing together in tolerance and in the pursuit of certain social and political activities, but not in the reality of conviction concerning the central issues of the Christian faith.

We believe that the witness of non-membership could be a strong and clear testimony to the doctrinally confused ecclesiastical world of our day. However, that witness must then be stated with greater clarity and Christian charity than has thus far been done. Furthermore, the ecumenical approach, suggested in the CRC Report of 1944, of correspondence in various areas offers a sound biblical approach to our ecumenical responsibilities. An approach which involves no compromise and which is pursued in a truly biblical and churchly way will certainly receive the blessing of God. The methodology of the Report of 1944 may in some respects be more difficult and to some it may appear less glamorous, but one may not turn to a second-best when the alternative procedure avoids the built-in compromise or relativizing of precisely that message which proponents of joining wish to make within the WCC.

D. The Prospect of Harming or Curtailing Ecumenical Relations with Other Reformed Churches

There is great possibility that a Reformed church by joining the WCC may seriously harm the measure of ecumenical fellowship which presently exists among Reformed churches, especially within the Reformed Ecumenical Synod.

Even if there were no serious objections to joining the WCC, no Reformed church ought to take steps toward broader ecumenical fellowship which would seriously hamper or curtail her present ecumenical fellowship with sister Reformed churches. It is a known fact that many of the Reformed churches throughout the world have seriously objected to membership in the WCC. Some of these churches have themselves been members at one time in the WCC or its agencies.¹ Furthermore the Reformed Ecumenical Synod itself has repeatedly taken a stand against the WCC and warned its members against membership in this organization.

¹ Three Indonesian churches are members both of the RES and the WCC. These churches have not participated in the RES since 1953. However efforts are now in process to regain contact with them.

Ecumenical association which damages existing ecumenical fellowship of the deepest kind is too great a price to pay for that which one may hope to gain by the new association. To say the least, every possible effort should be made to understand one another and mutually to consider each other's viewpoints and to do everything possible to avoid a breach where there is real unity in Christ in the Gospel. Only if the truth itself were at stake and one's witness made impossible should a Reformed church be willing to harm the existing fellowship within the Reformed Ecumenical Synod. Since we are convinced that the WCC ecumenical methodology is not the avenue for a Reformed church to follow, and the opportunity to witness through non-compromising and non-relativizing avenues is open, nothing should be done to harm the fellowship with sister churches in the RES.

VI. OTHER AVENUES OF ECUMENICAL ACTION (Suggestions)

Although this report indicates that our attitude toward the WCC should not be one of endorsement and membership, we do not believe that this necessarily implies a wholly negative attitude toward the WCC or the churches which are members of it. We have indicated from the outset that we endorse the approach taken by the Synod of 1944. We do have a responsibility to the world and to the churches of the world. This responsibility includes the churches that are members of the WCC as well as those that are not. True ecumenicity does not end with our relation to our sister churches. Therefore we shall make certain positive suggestions as to the pursuit of our ecumenical responsibility in the future.

We recommend that the CRC actively pursue its ecumenical responsibility along the lines of the Report of 1944. Various areas of ecumenical contact should be pursued simultaneously. Contact and rich fellowship with our sister churches must continue and increase. Fellowship and action within the RES must be vigorously pursued. But in addition, contact with other Reformed churches must be made through every legitimate means, difficult though that may be at times. Ecumenical contact must also be sought with other Protestant churches. Since there are great differences among such churches—some are evangelical, others mixed with many non-evangelical and even liberal elements—we recommend that a beginning be made with such evangelical Protestant churches as the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and the Southern Baptist denomination. Perhaps through mutual contact and effort, ways may be found of working together to reach other, less evangelical, Protestant churches of our day.

Furthermore, we do share a responsibility for those churches which have rejected the Protestant Reformation. We may even recognize that the official Roman Catholic doctrine on the Trinity, Jesus Christ, and Scripture, for example, may actually be closer to our own today than is that of many contemporary Protestant churches. The changes that have occurred within Protestantism during the course of history, as well as recent changes in Romanism, must be carefully assessed as we pursue this ecumenical task. We shall sometimes be surprised at the areas of agreement that a Reformed church may discover with the Eastern Orthodox

churches as well as recognizing the significant gulf of difference between us. Just how such contacts can be legitimately and judiciously pursued we dare not say. But we are convinced that we may not be idle. Special committees should be constituted for study of the many challenging facets of this great ecumenical responsibility.

Furthermore, recognizing the existence of the WCC as a new entity since the Report of 1944 was presented, we believe there is also a type of contact possible which could not have been contemplated in 1944. Although we have demonstrated that membership in the WCC is not a legitimate avenue of ecumenical travel for a Reformed church, it may be possible for the RES to hold joint consultations with the WCC in order to present our difficulties with membership in that organization and to present the Reformed witness jointly without the compromise of membership. A united witness via the RES appears to us to provide promise of fruitful contact which individual voices within the WCC assemblies would never be able to achieve.

In addition, the possibility of meetings of the RES with other evangelical non-members of the WCC provides another avenue that may have exciting and rewarding possibilities. The RES should also hold consultations with the NAE, the ICC, and the WARC. We believe that in ecumenical contacts as in mission work, the principle of beginning at Jerusalem and then moving on to Judea and Samaria and the uttermost parts of the world is the right procedure.

We have suggested only a few positive lines of approach. These will have to be considered carefully and others weighed as well. We wish to reiterate that non-membership in the WCC, clearly expressed, may be a stronger and clearer witness than membership today would be. But in addition we wish to emphasize that non-membership in the WCC does not mean an abrogation of our ecumenical responsibility. On the contrary, we believe there is a sounder and more biblical approach to the ecumenical task, and this we have attempted to suggest in this brief section. This approach was basically approved by the Synod of 1944. The further implementation of that program is now urgent!

VII. REPLY TO THE RESOLUTION OF THE GEREFORMEERDE KERKEN

Synod has charged this committee to "prepare a statement which could serve as our reply to the resolution of the Gereformeerde Kerken." Such a statement must obviously reflect the decision concerning the first part of our mandate, namely, to "define our position with respect to the World Council of Churches." For this reason your committee has structured this report in its present form.

Although this report does not follow the order of argumentation presented in the resolutions of the Gereformeerde Kerken, it does contain substantially all of the elements which can serve as a reply to the Gereformeerde Kerken. Therefore we recommend that Synod respond to the request of the Gereformeerde Kerken for advice by sending them a copy of this report. It will also be well to send our sister-church a transcript

of Synod's decisions on this subject. This report and the synodical decisions should be accompanied by an appropriate cover letter.

Your committee plans to prepare a draft of such a cover letter. The draft of this cover letter will be presented to Synod in a supplementary report, possibly prior to the meeting of Synod. With the eventual submission of that material, the committee judges that it has fulfilled its present mandate, and herewith presents its recommendations to Synod.

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. In fulfillment of the first part of the mandate ("to define our position with respect to the World Council of Churches"), we recommend that Synod adopt the following resolutions:

1. Although fully aware of the ecumenical calling of Christ's church as expressed in the synodical Report of 1944 (*Acts* 1944, pp. 330-367), and therefore of the responsibility to contact all those churches in which some traces of the catholic Church of Jesus Christ are still to be found, Synod declare with regret that major objections to joining the fellowship of the World Council of Churches must be registered because of the *nature, the basis, the maintenance and functioning of that basis, the socio-political activities and declarations, and the implications of membership* in this Council.

Grounds:

a. Concerning the *Nature* of the WCC:

The WCC claims to be, and is in fact, substantially more than a forum for the discussion of differences. It is a "Council of Churches" which defines itself as a "fellowship of churches," and thus claims to be at least a provisional manifestation of the unity for which Christ prayed (John 17). Furthermore, the ecclesiological character of the WCC is ambiguous and is regarded differently by various member churches.

b. Concerning the *Basis* of the WCC:

Although the words of the Basis are in themselves a summary of the Gospel, the Basis is inadequate for ecclesiastical fellowship in view of the doctrinal errors within the churches today. In the light of history and contemporary theology, the Basis is inadequate for excluding radically unbiblical interpretations of the Gospel. Hence the basis admits to membership in the WCC such churches with which a Reformed church may not have ecclesiastical fellowship (*koinonia*).

c. Concerning the *Maintenance and Functioning* of the Basis:

The WCC does not maintain the Basis in a meaningful way since it does not consider it within its jurisdiction to judge whether member churches are really faithful to the Basis. The WCC declares that, if it were to judge whether an applicant or a member church was actually living in harmony with the Basis, the WCC would become a "super-church." That the Basis does not function meaningfully is evident from the admission that there are churches within the WCC "to which the qualification 'modernist' is fully or partly applicable."

d. Concerning the *Socio-Political Activities and Declarations* of the WCC:

The activities of the WCC in the social, economic, and political areas involve it in pronouncements and programs which are not the immediate responsibility of the church. The type of action taken in these areas is frequently an embarrassment to a Reformed church.

e. Concerning the *Implications of Membership* in the WCC:

The general character of the WCC is ambiguous. Its membership is diverse ecclesiastically and doctrinally. In this light the Basis is equivocal and its functioning inadequate. By joining this organization a genuinely Reformed church endorses the ecumenical methodology of the WCC, gives a measure of recognition to churches with a radically different interpretation of the Gospel, and thereby beclouds or relativizes its own witness. "Scripture forbids such association with unbelievers and with those who preach another Gospel. Cf. II Cor. 6:14-18 and Gal. 1:8-9." (*Acts* 1958, p. 92)

2. Although cognizant of the specific problems present in any form of ecumenical cooperation, Synod express its deep concern about the practical consequences of joining the WCC with respect to *missionary activities, syncretistic tendencies, prospects of ecumenical achievement and relations with other Reformed churches.*

Grounds:

a. Concerning *Missionary Activities:*

Joining the WCC may have the effect of inhibiting or stifling a Reformed church's mission work and evangelism on the foreign field as well as on the home front in such areas as are occupied by or represented by other churches which are members of the WCC.

b. Concerning *Syncretistic Tendencies* in the WCC:

The direction of present developments within the WCC is uncertain and some expressions of a syncretistic nature by WCC spokesmen give reason for concern.

c. Concerning the *Prospect of Ecumenical Achievement* in the WCC:

The present functioning of the WCC seems to be mainly a growing together in tolerance and in the pursuit of certain social and political activities, but not in the real unity of conviction concerning the central issues of the Christian faith.

d. Concerning *Relations with Other Reformed Churches:*

There is great possibility that a Reformed church by joining the WCC may seriously harm the measure of ecumenical fellowship which presently exists among Reformed churches, especially within the Reformed Ecumenical Synod.

B. In fulfillment of the second part of the mandate ("to prepare a statement which could serve as our reply to the resolution of the Gere-

formeerde Kerken”), we recommend that Synod adopt the following resolution:

That Synod respond to the request of the Gereformeerde Kerken for advice by sending them a copy of this report, a transcript of these decisions, and an appropriate cover letter.

Ground: Although the report in its structure does not follow the order of argumentation of the Dutch resolutions, it contains substantially all the elements which can serve as a reply to the Gereformeerde Kerken.

C. In order that the Christian Reformed Church may pursue its ecumenical responsibility, we further recommend:

1. That a copy of this report, a transcript of these decisions, and an appropriate cover letter be sent to the secretariat and all the member churches of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod.

Ground: “The problems around the ecumenical question are causing serious concern to many of the affiliated churches.” (RES Acts 1963, p. 43)

2. That a copy of this report, a transcript of these decisions, and an appropriate cover letter be sent to the secretariat of the World Council of Churches.

Grounds:

a. We should acquit ourselves of our ecumenical responsibility as expressed in the synodical report of 1944.

b. The sending of the report with a cover letter to the WCC might open the way to a mutual correspondence.

Respectfully submitted,

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REPORT 39-B

THE COMMITTEE ON THE WORLD COUNCIL
OF CHURCHES

Minority Report

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

The assignment given to the Committee on the World Council of Churches is an extremely difficult one. Advice to the Gereformeerde Kerken cannot be undertaken without at least beginning to define our own position. Although the World Council of Churches is a relatively young organization, there is a vast body of literature on the subject, produced by the council itself, its study groups, its friends, and its critics. The proper evaluation of the council, moreover, must be based not only on its statements, but on its activities, which are much harder to evaluate. To mention but one more difficulty, the World Council of Churches is a new venture, creating a new type of inter-church organization. It is resistive to the kind of doctrinal and ecclesiastical categorization which would make evaluation easier.

The committee has worked long and hard to cope with these difficulties and meet the deadline established by the Synod of 1966. Cooperation within the committee has been excellent and the discussions have been friendly and illuminating. Broad agreements were reached on the data and on the complexity of the problem. But the committee has found it necessary to disagree, at some crucial points, on the evaluation of the data and the outcome of the report. The crucial point of difference concerns the question whether membership in the World Council by an orthodox Reformed church is or is not absolutely prohibited. The minority report which follows is submitted in the effort to place clearly before Synod the issues involved in this question.

Section I of our report sets down, in summary fashion, the data on the basis of which the questions will be evaluated. These data include the Biblical basis for ecumenicity, the ecumenical attitudes of the Christian Reformed Church, and relevant official statements of the World Council of Churches. Section II addresses itself to the question whether, on principle, membership in the World Council is permissible. Section III seeks to determine whether such membership, if permissible, is advisable. Section IV contains the recommendations which we submit to Synod for adoption.

I. OUR ECUMENICAL CALLING

A. *The Testimony of Scripture*

1. Our ecumenical calling and concern arise from the unity of the church. We confess one holy catholic church. Its unity is a fundamental

attribute of its existence, as fundamental as its holiness and catholicity. The church throughout the ages has recognized this unity and confessed it in the ecumenical creeds. The Nicene Creed confesses: "I believe one holy catholic and apostolic Church." Our confessional standards likewise assert the unity of the church. The Heidelberg Catechism in Lord's Day XXI affirms: "That the Son of God, out of the whole human race, from the beginning to the end of the world, gathers, defends, and preserves for Himself, by His Spirit and Word, in the unity of the true faith, a Church chosen to everlasting life; and that I am, and forever shall remain a living member thereof." The Confession of Faith in article 27 reads: "We believe and profess one catholic or universal Church, which is a holy congregation of true Christian believers . . ."

These confessions are unquestionably based on the testimony of Holy Scripture. In the New Testament we learn that Jesus from the beginning emphasizes the unity of his church. He speaks of his disciples as sheep of whom He is the shepherd and stresses that there shall be one flock having one shepherd (John 10:16). In his high-priestly prayer of John 17 he prays that his disciples may all be one. The Apostle Paul writes repeatedly of the unity of the church stressing both its given reality in Jesus Christ and the urgent call to realize it. The church is in fact one in Christ. "There is one body and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all" (Ephesians 4: 4-6). But Paul's readers are also called to be one. In the verse preceding he writes: "giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," and in the verses following he again calls for "the perfecting of the saints unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ; till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God . . ." (vss. 12, 13). It need not be argued because it is abundantly clear from Scripture that on the one hand the church possesses a given unity in Christ and on the other hand is commanded to realize this unity.

2. It is important to understand the nature of the unity which is both given and demanded of the church.

It is first of all a unity in Christ—a unity that arises out of the redeeming work of Jesus Christ. By his crucifixion and resurrection believers are united with him. "For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection . . . if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him" (Romans 6:5, 8). And being united in Christ through his work of redemption believers are united with one another. In Ephesians 2 Paul speaks of the alienation of Jews and Gentiles and then goes on to say that "in Christ Jesus ye that once were far off are made nigh in the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who made both one, and brake down the middle wall of partition . . . that he might create in himself of the two one new man, so making peace; and might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross . . . So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the house-

hold of God" (vss. 14-16, 19). Thus the unity is because of Christ: he creates it, he gives it, it is in him. The unity of the body of Christ does not mean uniformity. It may be added, there may be and will be diversity in the church but the diversities must never result in a breach and so produce divisions in the body of Christ, which is Paul's great concern in I Corinthians 12.

The unity of the church must also be understood as a unity in the truth. Jesus prays "Sanctify them in the truth; thy word is truth" (John 17:17). Truth in the New Testament is more than doctrinal or propositional statement about Christ. In fact it is primarily a personal knowledge of God and the living Christ. "This is life eternal, that they should know thee the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ" (John 17:3). But this personal relationship with God and Christ is not apart from truth as teaching, as doctrine. Jesus says in verse 8 "for the words which thou gavest me I have given unto them; and they received them, and knew of a truth that I came forth from thee, and they believed that thou didst send me." In Acts 2 it is evident that the early Christians devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching. The unity of the church is in Christ, and therefore in "the unity of the true faith."

The unity in Christ, however, is also a unity in Love. This is true first of all because it arises from the love of God for his people. Jesus prays: "that they may be perfected into one, that the world may know that thou didst send me and lovedst them, even as thou lovedst me" (John 17:23). And secondly the love that exists in the church is a love that comes into being because of Christ's love for his own. "Even as the Father hath loved me, I also have loved you: abide ye in my love" (John 15:9). Therefore, love is characteristic of Jesus' disciples and is demanded of them. "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, even as I have loved you" (John 15:12). Again it may be said: to be one in Christ is to be one in his love.

The unity of the Church in Christ creates fellowship (*koinonia*). Having confessed the holy Catholic Church the apostles' creed immediately professes: "the communion of the saints," i.e. the fellowship of believers. This fellowship is grounded in the believer's fellowship with God in Christ: "our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (I John 1:3). It is a fellowship in the truth: "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also, that ye also may have fellowship with us" (I John 1:3). In Acts the teaching of the apostles is linked with the fellowship of the apostles (Acts 2:42). As a fellowship in the truth it is concerned for the dissemination of the truth. Paul gives thanks for the Philippian's "fellowship in furtherance of the gospel" (1:5). The fellowship in the Church is moreover a fellowship of love and concern for one another. The Heidelberg Catechism understands "the communion of saints" to mean: "First, that believers, all and every one, as members of Christ, are partakers of Him and of all His treasures and gifts; second, that every one must know himself bound to employ his gifts readily and cheerfully for the advantage and salvation of other members" (Question 55). In the early church such fellowship led to the Church being "to-

gether and having all things in common" (Acts 2:44). Paul commends the churches of Macedonia for their liberality and "fellowship in the ministering to the saints" (II Cor. 8:4). Fellowship is an essential element in the life of a Christian and in the life of the church.

While it must be recognized that the unity and fellowship of believers is primarily and basically a spiritual unity with Christ and with one another, and so is essentially invisible, it is nonetheless impossible to separate it from its visible aspects. The one church is both invisible and visible. Professor Louis Berkhof speaking of the unity of the mystical body of Christ writes: "This unity implies that all those who belong to the Church share in the same faith, are cemented together by the common bond of love, and have the same glorious outlook upon the future. This inner unity seeks and also acquires, relatively speaking, outward expression in the profession and Christian conduct of believers, in their public worship of the same God in Christ, and in their participation in the same sacraments. There can be no doubt about the fact that the Bible asserts the unity, not only of the invisible, but also of the visible Church" (Reformed Dogmatics, p. 572). In whatever ways it must come to expression it is clear that the unity and fellowship of the Church must be visible in the actual life of the world: visible as Christ prayed: "so that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (John 17:21, 23).

3. The New Testament is not unaware of the constant threat to the unity of the Church.

Therefore believers must always strive for unity and its manifestation in the world. It is the burden of Christ's prayer in John 17: "And I am no more in the world, and these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep them in thy name which thou hast given me, that they may be one, even as we are" (vs. 11). "Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us: that the world may believe that thou didst send me" (vss. 20, 21). ". . . that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be perfected into one; that the world may know that thou didst send me, and lovedst them, even as thou lovedst me" (vss. 22, 23). This duty to maintain the unity and fellowship of the Church is also the teaching of I Corinthians. With anguish Paul asks: "Is Christ divided?" (1:13) implying both how wrong to deem it possible and how senseless to suppose it. He writes: "Now I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1:10). Again addressing the Philippians the apostle says: "make full my joy, that ye be of the same mind, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind" (2:2).

Throughout the New Testament, however, there is constant stress on the danger to the unity of the church and the tension in which it is held. It is ever threatened by divisive factors: on the one hand, error and heresy that would undermine and deny the truth and therefore destroy

the unity in the faith; and on the other hand, sin and failure in love that would destroy the fellowship. Thus the Scriptures make plain that there are limitations to the unity, limitations beyond which true unity and fellowship are lost.

When the truth of the gospel which is the foundation of the church is rejected, denied or perverted by heresy then there is no unity any more. When the fundamentals of Christ's person and work are denied believers are called to separate themselves from such teaching and false leaders. Unity maintained at the cost of truth is not unity in Christ. In II John 10 we read: "If any one comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into the house or give him any greeting; for he who greeteth him shares his wicked work." Here the false teachers were denying that "Jesus Christ cometh in the flesh" (vs. 7), i.e. denying the incarnation of Christ. In Galatians 1:8 Paul, deeply alarmed by the perversion of the gospel, writes: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema." The heresy in the Galatian Church was basically a denial of the redemptive work of Christ. Obviously teaching which brings another gospel, another Jesus, another Name, another Spirit, another salvation demands opposition and separation. For such is unbelief. "Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers: for what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity? or what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what portion hath a believer with an unbeliever?" (II Cor. 6: 14, 15).

But unity and fellowship is also broken by sin and a lack of love. Believers cannot maintain fellowship with those who thus destroy the unity of the body of Christ. In Romans 16:17, 18 it is said: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned: and turn away from them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Christ, but their own belly; and by their smooth and fair speech they beguile the hearts of the innocent." This may refer to teachers of heresy, but may well have reference to the libertines and their antinomianism. In Ephesians 5 speaking in the context of wickedness and evildoers Paul admonishes: "Be not ye therefore partakers with them; for ye were once darkness, but are now light in the Lord; walk as children of light . . . and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (vs. 7, 8, 11). And in a specific case of gross sin Paul demands: "Put away the wicked man from among yourselves" (I Cor. 5:13). In this connection he recalls what he had written earlier to the Corinthians and says: "I wrote unto you not to keep company, if any man that is named a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a one no, not to eat" (I Cor. 5:11). When writing to the Thessalonians the apostle says: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which they received of us" (II Thess. 3:6).

When the existence of the Church is threatened by unbelief and

wickedness in its fellowship, the Church may not be indifferent in order to preserve unity. A unity which is not in Christ, not in the truth, not in love, is a false unity, which in fact destroys the true unity. Therefore to preserve and maintain the true unity of the Church it is necessary for the Church to separate from unbelief and evil.

However it is important to add that it is also evident from the New Testament that such separation is also limited, provisional, and hopefully unto the restoration of true fellowship. Not all those who are guilty of error in truth and wickedness in life are to be forthwith removed from the Church, but rather every effort must be made to correct and restore. James says: "My brethren, if any among you err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know that he who converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall cover a multitude of sins" (5:19, 20). Paul calls for separation from disorderly members of the church in II Thessalonians, as seen above, but he goes on to say: "And if any man obeyeth not our word by this epistle, note that man, that ye have no company with him, to the end that he may be ashamed. And yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother" (3:14, 15). In I Thessalonians 5:14 the apostle urges: "And we exhort you, brethren, admonish the disorderly, encourage the faint-hearted, support the weak, be longsuffering toward all." Again in Galatians 6:1 he writes: "Brethren, even if a man be overtaken in any trespass, ye who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; looking to thyself, lest you also be tempted." To the Romans he says: "But him that is weak in faith receive ye, yet not for decision of scruples" (14:1), and warns them against undue judgment of others: "But thou, why dost thou judge thy brother? or thou again, why dost thou set at nought thy brother?" (14:10). He goes on to say: "Now we that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak" (15:1), urging patience and deep concern for each other to the end that they "be of the same mind one with another according to Jesus Christ" (15:5). When writing to the Philipians from prison Paul shows great tolerance and forbearance with those who "preach Christ even of envy and strife . . . not sincerely, thinking to raise up affliction for me in my bonds" (1:15, 17). Even in the extreme instance of immorality recorded in I Corinthians 5 the wicked man is not beyond the concern of Paul and the Church for it is hoped "that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (vs. 5). While the church must separate from false teaching and wickedness, it must make every effort to preserve and manifest the unity and fellowship of the brethren, seeking to embrace all by correction, by discipline, with patience and forbearance. Fellowship can be broken by heresy and sin in extreme instances when the very life of the Church is threatened, but otherwise the Church must seek to preserve and promote fellowship with erring and weak members who in some sense are brethren and must not be considered enemies.

4. The question we now face is what guidance this teaching of the New Testament may give us in seeking to fulfill our ecumenical calling when the visible unity of the church has been badly divided into a multiplicity of churches.

It must be pointed out that the Scriptures do not envision a situation of many denominations all calling themselves churches. The New Testament knows only the Church of Jesus Christ. Thus, we find no direct biblical references to the problem of many churches. Our task is to understand and apply the principles of unity and fellowship as taught in the New Testament to our situation. In summary we have seen that the church has been given unity in Christ which constitutes it a fellowship of faith and love. Every effort must be made to preserve this unity and manifest it in the world. A denial of the faith or failure in love in fact breaks the unity and therefore the church must separate from such as would destroy her unity in Christ. Yet it must ever labor to bring into one fellowship all those who are in some sense brethren, for the New Testament does not allow for many churches differing in faith and lacking in love for each other.

Since the time of the Reformation the problem created by a divided church and the New Testament teaching of the unity of the church has been with us. The Confession of Faith is significant here because it reflects the problem. Article 27 confesses: "We believe and profess one catholic or universal Church, which is a holy congregation of true Christian believers, all expecting their salvation in Jesus Christ, being washed by His blood, sanctified and sealed by the Holy Spirit." This teaches the invisible, spiritual unity of all true Christian believers in the one body of Christ, a truth that is known only by faith. To confess the only holy catholic Church is an act of faith. The Confession then proceeds in Article 29 to distinguish this church from its opposite and to speak of two churches: the true church and the false church, both of which can be known and distinguished. The true church can be recognized and distinguished from the false church by its marks: the preaching of the pure gospel, the pure administration of the sacraments, and the exercise of discipline. The false church on the other hand is known by its unfaithfulness to the word of God, its abuse of the sacraments, and its man-centered concern which is in opposition to the true church.

The question that follows is where are the true and the false churches to be found? The answer is: in every existing church. No church would dare to say to itself what Article 29 of the Confession says of the true church: ". . . if all things are managed according to the pure Word of God, all things contrary thereto rejected, and Jesus Christ acknowledged as the only Head of His Church. Hereby the true Church may certainly be known, from which no man has a right to separate himself." The true and the false churches are abstractions that cannot be identified with any one church, but can be distinguished in all churches. Every denomination that may be called a church has both the true and the false church in it. Herman Bavinck in his *Dogmatiek*, Vol. IV, p. 300 writes: "On the one hand it must be admitted, that a true church in the absolute sense is impossible here on earth; there is no single church that is completely, in all its aspects, in teaching and life, in the ministry of the Word and sacrament, obedient to the command of God. And on the other hand it is plain that there also cannot exist a false church in the absolute sense, for then she would no longer be a church; although Rome was a false church,

in so far as it was popish, there were yet many remnants of the true church present.”*

The fact that the true and false churches exist in every church does not equate all denominations. There are churches so dominated by the false church that they can hardly be recognized as churches, although the elements of the true church in such a church cannot be ignored. The Reformers did not hesitate to call the Roman Church a false church from this perspective. It is also true that some denominations have so clearly the distinguishing marks of the true church that they may be called true churches in spite of the elements of the false church within them. Bavinck says: “True church was the name, not of one church to the exclusion of all others, but of many kinds of churches, that maintained the principal truths of Christianity, the fundamental articles of faith, although removed very far from each other in degrees of purity” (Dogmatiek IV, p. 300).**

What then is our ecumenical task in the face of the divided churches and in the light of the teaching of the New Testament regarding the unity of the church as outlined above? It would appear that every church that may be called a church, because the elements of the true church are to some degree within it, is therefore a church with which we must seek unity. Yet insofar as this same church exhibits the false church in its teaching and life we must oppose and separate ourselves from it. We are obligated to our Lord both to seek unity and fellowship with those who are in Christ and with whom Christ through His Spirit is working by Word and sacrament, yet on the other hand in faithfulness to Him separate ourselves from the false teaching and evil practices within them. A church deformed in its teaching of the truth and corrupt in its practice is not a church with which we can manifest the unity in Christ, lest we be guilty of denying the true unity which is in Christ. Our ecumenical calling is to seek unity with all manifestations of the body of Christ, but to seek that unity in the truth and in love.

It cannot be too strongly emphasized that we have an ecumenical calling and task in the light of the Scriptural teaching on the unity of the Church which is both given and demanded. No Christian or church can be indifferent to the schisms and divisions in the body of Christ. To quote Professor Bavinck again: “It is not to be denied, that the endless divisions among the confessors of Christ is occasion of joy and mockery for the world, and gives reason for its unbelief in the One sent of the Father when it does not see the unity of believers in Christ (John 17:21). As Christians we cannot humiliate ourselves deeply enough for the schisms and

*Aan de eene zijde moest men toegeven, dat eene ware kerk in absoluten zin hier op aarde onmogelijk is; er is geene enkele kerk, die volstrekt en in alle deelen, in leer en leven, in bediening van woord en sacrament aan den eisch Gods beantwoordt. En aan den anderen kant werd het duidelijk, dat er ook eene valsche kerk in absoluten zin niet bestaan kan, wijl zij dan geen kerk meer ware; al was Rome eene valsche kerk, in zoover ze pauselijk was, er waren toch nog vele overblijfselen der ware kerk in.

**Ware kerk werd de naam, niet voor eene kerk met uitsluiting van alle andere, maar voor velerlei kerken, die de hoofdwaarheden des Christendoms, de fundamenteele artikelen nog vasthielden, doch overigens in graden van zuiverheid zeer verre van elkander afweken.

discord that have existed through all the eras of the church of Christ; it is a sin against God, in conflict with the prayer of Christ, and brought about through the darkness of our understanding and the lovelessness of our heart" (Dogmatiek IV, p. 300, 301).^{*} To be indifferent to the broken unity of the body of Christ is to continue in sin, to make the prayer of Christ of none effect, persist in wilful blindness and be disobedient to Christ's command to love.

While, as has been stated, there is no direct reference in the Bible to the problem of divided churches, it is instructive to note how churches who manifest varying degrees of faithfulness to the truth and love of Christ are dealt with. The churches of Galatia harbored a serious heresy that denied the sufficiency of the atoning work of Christ. So Paul addresses them with stern admonition, accusing them of turning to a "different gospel" which is no gospel and which in fact suggests that "Christ died for nought" (2:21). "O foolish Galatians, who did bewitch you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was openly set forth crucified?" (3:1) he asks, and proceeds to say: "I am afraid of you, lest by any means I have bestowed labor upon you in vain" (4:11). But Paul does not hesitate to call them brethren and churches, nor does he suggest breaking off fellowship with them. Rather he urgently seeks their loyalty to the gospel and their commitment to Christ. Or again, observe how Paul must chide and rebuke the church at Corinth for its divisions, its pride, its immorality, its abuse of liberty, its dishonoring of the Lord's Supper, its lack of love, and doctrinal deviations tolerated among them on such basic teachings as the resurrection of the dead. Yet he addresses them as the church of God, calling them saints and brethren. In the letters to the seven churches of Revelation Jesus rebukes the church of Thyatira for tolerating "the woman, Jezebel, who calleth herself a prophetess, and she teacheth and seduceth my servants" (2:20) but the Lord does not disown the church. He continues to labor on its behalf. But it is particularly instructive to hear what Christ says to the church in Sardis which has become so unfaithful that he must say: "I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and thou art dead" (3:1). It would be hard to imagine a more severe criticism of any church even today, but Christ continues to recognize the church in Sardis and the believers that are yet within it: "But thou hast a few names in Sardis that did not defile their garments; and they shall walk with me in white; for they are worthy" (3:4). Both Thyatira and Sardis are churches whom Christ continues to love and to whom He brings His Word. Does not Christ among His churches and the apostle Paul in his letters to his churches set an example for us in our dealings with other churches, even churches that are defective in their understanding of the truth and failing in their practices? Can we any

^{*}Ook is het niet te ontkennen, dat de eindeloze gedeeldheid van de belijders van Christus aan de wereld eene oorzaak biedt van vreugde en spot, en haar een reden geeft voor haar ongeloof aan de Gezondene des Vaders, wijl zij de eenheid der geloovigen in Christus niet ziet, Johannes 17:21. Wij kunnen ons als Christenen niet diep genoeg verootmoedigen over de scheuring en tweedracht, die alle eeuwen door in de kerk van Christus heeft bestaan; zij is eene zonde tegen God, in strijd met de bede van Christus, en veroorzaakt door de duisternis van ons verstand en de liefdeloosheid van ons hart.

less urgently seek to overcome the forces that seek to destroy the churches and their unity? We cannot deny those whom Christ recognizes, and we may not ignore those with whom Christ is working his work of salvation, nor may we refuse all fellowship with those with whom Christ still has a measure of fellowship.

We have a responsibility to all churches of Christ in order that we may all be one in Christ, in truth, and in love, and that our fellowship with Christ and with His body may be perfect.

B. *The Ecumenical Stance of the Christian Reformed Church.*

1. *Miscellaneous Decisions*

When Ground "a" of the committee's mandate states that "Synod has never explicitly defined its position," this is true of the precise matter under consideration, the relation of the Christian Reformed Church to the World Council of Churches. This is not to say, however, that there have never been any ecumenical discussions and decisions within the Christian Reformed Church. A number of *ad hoc* decisions have been made with respect to ecumenical organizations. Membership in the Federal Council of Churches was undertaken in 1918 and discontinued in 1924. Membership was held in the National Association of Evangelicals from 1943 to 1951. The church has held membership in the Reformed Ecumenical Synod since its inception in 1946. Other memberships, such as that in the Reformed Alliance, were declined. The church has also been involved, to some degree, in discussions of union or cooperation with various other denominations. Relations with sister and correspondence churches have been maintained, and fraternal delegates have been sent to and received from the assemblies of various other denominations. This record indicates, on the one hand, that the church is not without interest in ecumenical matters, but on the other hand that its interest is not uncritical or indiscriminate.

2. *The 1944 Report*

By far the most extensive and formal statement of this concern is found in the report on this subject adopted by the Synod of 1944 (cf. *Acts of Synod, 1944*, pp. 330-367). This report rejects (pp. 341 f.) the extremist position which holds that other churches are not worthy to call themselves churches. This extremist position, say the authors,

"... without doing so explicitly, really maintains that the church it sponsors is perfect as a church, institutionally speaking, and that the other churches lack every qualification entering into the predicate church. But such an estimate is far indeed from being true to fact. Where is the church that is not imperfect ecclesiastically? And which church, historically speaking, is wholly devoid of the elements constituting the church."

Although this report does not undertake an exegetical analysis of the ecumenical responsibility of the church, it consistently adopts the position that such responsibility clearly exists even with respect to churches which differ widely from ours. It recognizes that correspondence is uncalled for and union out of the question with "unreformed" churches. But to consider that nothing should be done about them is "altogether out of the

question" (p. 348). The attitude of this report is well represented in the following citation:

"The question we face is this: should the Christian Reformed Church be at all concerned in a practical way about non-Reformed churches with whom it is thrown together in America and Canada? Or should it pattern after the fathers and virtually ostracize them? The question is inseparable from the question of 'correspondence with other churches' Has our church a duty toward them or not? But one answer can properly be returned. It is not the answer which our practice constitutes and which is negative. If we believe that all Christians should be Reformed—and this we profess to believe—then we should at least try, ecclesiastically as well as otherwise, to win them for the Reformed faith, and so pave the way for our eventual union with them, please God. Worldly wisdom may say that it is impossible; and it is true that it is impossible with men. But it is not for that reason impossible with God. And certainly when Jesus said 'that they may all be one,' He did not have only Calvinists in mind, but others as well" (p. 349 f.).

The report concludes with a summary statement in twelve points. Although these are of varying applicability to the present question, they are, by and large, so relevant that we quote them here in full.

"1. On the assumption that other churches than our own are Christian churches indeed, those churches and our own are closely related as being all and severally manifestations of the one and indivisible Body of Christ.

"2. The term sister-churches is applicable to particular churches that are affiliated denominationally. In these cases the parallelism implied in the term is perfectly legitimate. They simply cannot consolidate and form one congregation. But the parallelism of denominations is not legitimate, barring exceptions to be specified below. It may be unavoidable, but it is not by that token warranted, just as the imperfection of believers is unavoidable in this life but is not therefore justified or even excusable.

"3. Though denominational consolidation is not, as some would have us believe, the paramount interest of the church, it is not on that account negligible. It goes without saying that the spiritual unity of all true churches of Christ should come to expression, as much as is physically possible, in ecclesiastical unity and uniformity on the score of doctrine, polity, and liturgy.

"4. An exception should be made, as was already intimated sub 2, for those churches that are separated by barriers of great geographical distances and differences of language: denominational separateness cannot be avoided in their case. But they can be associated, if not ecclesiastically consolidated, provided they are in agreement with respect to doctrine, polity, and liturgy. They should engage in so-called correspondence in the spirit of Art. 48 (sic) of our Church Order.

"5. The churches of Christ can be roughly divided into four groups. They are:

- "a) The Oriental churches;
- "b. The Roman Catholic Church;

- "c) The Reformed churches, including those called Presbyterian;
- "d) The non-Reformed Protestant churches.

"6. The Reformed churches, to which group the Christian Reformed Church belongs, can be classified agreeably to our present purpose as follows:

"a) Reformed churches that are Reformed in respect alike of doctrine (not necessarily creedal formulation), polity (with non-essential differences) and liturgy (by and large), both officially and actually as is evident from their regular ecclesiastical practice;

"b) Reformed churches which are Reformed officially but not *de facto*.

"7. As observed above (sub 3) there is no scriptural warrant for the ecclesiastical diversification noted under 6 above. Pluriformity in the current sense of the term is *contraband*. Hence our Church cannot properly acquiesce in it but must in deference to the dictates of Scripture put forth every effort of which it is capable to nullify it as much as possible, though, of course, under no circumstances at the expense of the truth. If the Christian Reformed Church is the nearest historical approach to the ecclesiastical ideal of Scripture, as it modestly but confidently affirms, then it cannot consistently assume such an attitude toward the other churches of Christ in the face of their doctrinal, canonical, and liturgical delinquencies as is expressed in the notorious question: Am I my brother's keeper? Nor can it forget the pronouncement of the Holy Spirit in Ps. 133:1: 'Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell in unity,' as it thinks of its fellow Reformed churches, or even more particularly of those Reformed churches which are truly Reformed both in word and deed.

"8. It is a mistake to think, as has been done, that Reformed churches, our own for instance, should concern themselves only with members of their own, that is, Reformed, family. If, as is generally assumed, the non-Reformed churches, whether Protestant or non-Protestant, are Christian churches indeed, even though they are defective enough, then surely the Christian Reformed Church, for one, should make it its business to labor with them in love in order to help them, by the blessing of God, to attain a more scriptural character. It cannot properly be adjudged presumptuous to do so. It would be clear evidence of the influence of the Spirit of Christ to undertake the task spoken of. The ideal may seem incapable of realization, and the program involved may be deemed highly ambitious. Let us suppose that the plan is idealistic and that the task envisaged is arduous; the determining factor is the consideration that it is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God to gain and to keep our ecclesiastical brethren in the measure in which it is possible for us to do so. The prospect of success or of failure has nothing to do with the duty of the Christian Reformed Church to 'gain its erring brethren.'"

"9. But it does not follow with the duty just signalized that the Christian Reformed Church should undertake to deal with all non-Christian Reformed churches at once. It is doubtless the part of sound wisdom to *begin* from Jerusalem and to work out toward the circumference of the

ecclesiastical circle progressively, as time and strength and opportunity permit.

"10. The first concern of the Christian Reformed Church may well be considered to be to enter into a close and active and constant association as at all possible with those faithful Reformed churches which cannot confederate with it on account of forbidding distances and the barrier of language. The manner in which this so-called correspondence with associated Reformed churches is to be conducted is not our present concern. The general principles governing the relation of the Christian Reformed Church to churches less pure than itself engages our attention at this stage.

"11. Correspondence as spoken of above sub 10 is out of order in regard to faithful Reformed churches from which we are not separated by prohibitive distances and difference of language. All truly Reformed churches on our North American continent should, as a matter of scriptural, i.e., divine requirement, be confederated. Accordingly, steps should be taken, in due order, to bring this imperative confederation about. These churches have no right in the sight of God to remain ecclesiastically divided. To prevail upon them to unite may be a stupendous task, but it should not be evaded and shirked by the Christian Reformed Church, since God in His grace has given it the conviction that this labor of love is its bounden duty. The least that can be done is to do what our hand now and here finds to do and to do it with all our might, in reliance upon God's grace and the operation of the Holy Spirit and in love to our brethren in Christ.

"12. A general principle involved in this urgent business of bringing together and uniting what truly belongs together, is the distinction between what, for want of better terms, may conveniently be called the essentials and the non-essentials of Reformed doctrine, polity, and liturgy. It need hardly be said, that if the Christian Reformed Church should make agreement with itself in essentials and non-essentials an inexorable condition of ecclesiastical confederation, the hopeless abortion of the plan would be a foregone conclusion. But it would be unwarrantable to neglect this traditional and acceptable distinction and thus to sow the seed of failure from the start." (*Acts of Synod, 1944*, pp. 357-361)

Synod adopted these twelve propositions in substance, on the grounds that they present the Biblical position on inter-church relationship; they can serve as a basis for further study and action; and present world conditions make early progress in these matters imperative (p. 85).

It must be noted that this report, while speaking in passing of the "mistaken methodology" of modern ecumenicity, makes no direct mention of the World Council of Churches. Had it done so, the judgment that the Christian Reformed Church had never explicitly defined its position might not be true. Even in its historical review, in fact, the 1944 report makes no mention of affiliation of the Christian Reformed Church with existing ecumenical organizations. But it must also be noted that, while the World Council of Churches was well on the way to formation by 1944, its first assembly had not yet been held.

Assuming that the 1944 stance of the Christian Reformed Church is

still its position today, and assuming that the church does not wish in 1967 to retreat from the high ground occupied in 1944, the question must be asked whether the World Council of Churches fits into the responsibility once recognized. Is this council a valid and permissible avenue through which the responsibility may in part be discharged? Preparation for the answer to this question necessitates now a brief description of the World Council of Churches.

C. *The World Council of Churches*

1. *Growth of the Ecumenical Movement*

The concern of the Christian Church for the maintenance or restoration of its unity dates from New Testament times. It has never been absent from the history of the Church, and has at times reached high peaks of discussion and action. Nevertheless, the ecumenical movement of our time, of which the World Council of Churches is a part, is in many respects a new development. Its dimensions, its forms, and its seriousness of purpose have become such that it is a fact for all churches to reckon with. It poses to all churches a question to which they are forced, explicitly or implicitly, to give an answer.

Many factors have combined to bring about this new situation. Important among them are the following. First, the scandal of the divisions of Christianity has never been so great or so clearly recognized as in our time. Second, modern transportation and communication have opened up the technical possibility of consultation and cooperation to an extent never before realized. Third, the Christian religion has emerged as a world-wide religion. Finally, the position of this Christianity is deteriorating in the world. Its proportion of the world's population is declining, it is seriously challenged by rival religions and hostile governments, and rampant secularism is threatening its most basic positions.

The twentieth century development of the ecumenical movement has been marked especially by the conviction that the unity of the Church should come to visible expression. Direct attention is given to the cooperation which the churches can give to each other in their present state of division. The joint address to problems faced by the church as a whole and the joint performance of the work which they share with each other are stressed. Of particular importance is the conviction that in the present conditions the world sorely needs a common *witness* of the churches to the Gospel. All of these convictions have been developed in the context of a growing church-consciousness. It is no longer considered sufficient that like-minded Christian individuals should cooperate with each other. The corporate entities of the churches are taken more seriously today; it is they, rather than the individuals, who should be in confrontation with each other.

A broad distinction can be made between three streams in the contemporary ecumenical movement. The first, chronologically, was the concern for joint study and action in missionary affairs. This gave rise to the Edinburgh Missionary Conference in 1910 and the subsequent International Missionary Council. The second was concern for study of cooperation in the practical work of the churches, which gave rise to the

Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work. The third was the concern for the open and honest facing of the differences in doctrine and polity which divide the churches. This gave rise to the World Conference on Faith and Order. All of these emphases are now subsumed under the World Council of Churches. "Life and Work" and "Faith and Order" combined to form the World Council. The International Missionary Council was merged with the World Council in 1961. All of these emphases retain their distinct roles in the broader movement, but none of them is independent from the World Council of Churches. The first function of the World Council as described in its *Constitution* is "To carry on the work of the world movements for Faith and Order and Life and Work and of the International Missionary Council."

2. *Official Statements of the Council*

While there are many criteria for judging the World Council, it ought in the first instance to be evaluated in terms of its official positions. The following important declarations and statements are presented here with a minimum of comment, for information and for later reference in this report.

a) The Basis

The Basis of the World Council, as adopted in 1948 and amended in 1961, reads as follows:

"The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Scriptures and therefore seek to fulfill together their common calling to the glory of the one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

"In view of the many questions surrounding the functioning of this basis, it is important to cite the Declaratory Statement adopted by the Evanston Assembly in 1954. The basis performs three functions:

"(1) It indicates the *nature* of the fellowship which the churches in the Council seek to establish among themselves. For that fellowship, as a fellowship of churches, has its own unique character. It has a specific source and a specific dynamic. The churches enter into relation with each other, because there is a unity given once for all in the person and work of their common Lord and because the Living Lord gathers His people together.

"(2) It provides the *orientation point* for the work which the WCC itself undertakes. The ecumenical conversations which take place in the WCC must have a point of reference. Similarly the activities of the Council must be submitted to an ultimate norm and standard. The Basis provides that standard.

"(3) It indicates the *range* of the fellowship which the churches in the Council seek to establish.

"The acceptance of the Basis is the fundamental criterion which must be met by a church which desires to join the Council. The limits of each society are dependent upon its nature. By joining together the churches seek to respond to the call and action of their Divine Lord. The WCC must therefore consist of churches which acknowledge that Lord as the second person of the Trinity.

“While the Basis is therefore less than a confession, it is much more than a mere formula of agreement. It is truly a basis in that the life and activity of the WCC are based upon it. And the WCC must constantly ask itself whether it is faithful to its Basis.

“Each church which joins the WCC must therefore seriously consider whether it desires to participate in a fellowship with this particular Basis. On the other hand the WCC would overstep the limits it has set for itself if it should seek to pronounce judgment as to whether any particular church is in fact taking the Basis seriously. It remains the responsibility of each church to decide itself whether it can sincerely accept the Basis of the Council.

b) Functions of the Council

The character of the World Council of Churches is further indicated in the statement of its functions. These are set forth in the *Constitution* as follows:

- (i) To carry on the work of the world movements for Faith and Order and Life and Work and of the International Missionary Council.
- (ii) To facilitate common action by the churches.
- (iii) To promote cooperation in study.
- (iv) To promote the growth of ecumenical and missionary consciousness in the members of all churches.
- (v) To support the churches in their world-wide missionary and evangelistic task.
- (vi) To establish and maintain relations with national and regional councils, world confessional bodies and other ecumenical organizations.
- (vii) To call world conferences on specific subjects as occasion may require, such conferences being empowered to publish their own findings.

c) The Toronto Statement

Members of the World Council as well as observers from the outside have been troubled by ambiguities with respect to the Council's functioning. Important elements in this area of uncertainty have been clarified by the statement on 'The Church, the Churches, and the World Council of Churches' (the so-called Toronto Statement).

Each of the statements is accompanied by an elaboration which clarifies its meaning. For purposes of brevity we list only the basic statements themselves. First, there is a list of negations, as follows:

“1) The World Council of Churches is not and must never become a Super-Church.

“2) The purpose of the World Council of Churches is not to negotiate unions between Churches, which can only be done by the Churches themselves acting on their own initiative, but to bring the Churches into living contact with each other and to promote the study and discussion of the issues of Church unity.

“3) The World Council cannot and should not be based on any one

particular conception of the Church. It does not prejudice the ecclesiastical problem.

"4) Membership in the World Council does not imply that a Church treats its own conception of the Church as merely relative.

"5) Membership in the World Council does not imply the acceptance of a specific doctrine concerning the nature of Church unity.

"The statement then follows with a list of affirmations, as follows:

"1) The member Churches of the Council believe that conversation, co-operation, and common witness of the Churches must be based on the common recognition that Christ is the Divine Head of the Body.

"2) The member Churches of the World Council believe on the basis of the New Testament that the Church of Christ is one.

"3) The member Churches recognize that the membership of the Church of Christ is more inclusive than the membership of their own Church body. They seek, therefore, to enter into living contact with those outside their own ranks who confess the Lordship of Christ.

"4) The member Churches of the World Council consider the relationship of other Churches to the Holy Catholic Church which the Creeds profess as a subject for mutual consideration. Nevertheless, membership does not imply that each Church must regard the other member Churches as Churches in the true and full sense of the word.

"5) The member Churches of the World Council recognize in other Churches elements of the true Church. They consider that this mutual recognition obliges them to enter into serious conversation with each other in the hope that these elements of truth will lead to the full truth and to unity based on the full truth.

"6) The member Churches of the Council are willing to consult together in seeking to learn of the Lord Jesus Christ what witness He would have them bear to the world in His Name.

"7) A further practical implication of common membership in the World Council is that the member Churches should recognize their Solidarity with each other, render assistance to each other in case of need, and refrain from such actions as are incompatible with brotherly relationships.

"8) The member Churches enter into spiritual relationship through which they seek to learn from each other and to give help to each other in order that the Body of Christ may be built up and that the life of the Churches may be renewed.

d) Public Statements

Finally, concern is frequently expressed over public statements by the World Council. The *Rules* of the Council include the following two which indicate the limitations set on the publication and weight of such statements:

"(2) While such statements may have great significance and influence as the expression of the judgment or concern of so widely representative a Christian body, yet their authority will consist only in the weight which they carry by their own truth and wisdom and the publishing of such statements shall not be held to imply that the World Council as such has,

or can have, any constitutional authority over the constituent churches or right to speak for them.

“(4) No committee or commission of the Council other than the Central Committee shall publish any statement until it has been approved by the Assembly, except that in circumstances of immediate urgency statements may be published by any commission of the Council on matters within its own field of concern and action, if approved by the Chairman of the Central Committee and the General Secretary, and in these cases the committee or commission shall make it clear that the World Council of Churches is not committed by any statement set forth in this manner.”

Against the background of the data presented above, we shall now undertake a discussion of the problems involved in membership in the World Council of Churches.

II. IS WORLD COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP PERMISSIBLE?

There is an inescapable ecumenical calling given to the Church by Christ. The Christian Reformed Church has recognized that calling, but has left itself without a concrete avenue of approach to a large portion of it. Now the World Council of Churches offers itself as such an avenue. Can the Christian Reformed Church (or the Gereformeerde Kerken) adopt this means as a partial fulfillment of its ecumenical calling?

This question falls into two parts. Is membership permissible and is it advisable? The former question is logically prior; a negative answer to it would make the second question irrelevant. It is with the question of permissibility that we concern ourselves in this section.

We may say that we are dealing here with questions of the first order, with arguments from principle. Would a Reformed Church be guilty of a denial of the faith if it undertook membership in the World Council? Would such membership involve an abandonment of loyalty to the Scriptures and to the Reformed Confessions? In answering this question we shall take up the objections which thoughtful students have raised, and which have figured prominently also in the committee's discussions.

A. The Sufficiency of the Basis

The first objection to be considered is that the Basis of the World Council is inadequate or insufficient. In considering this objection it is of the utmost importance to ask, “For what should the Basis be sufficient?”

1. Fourfold Concept of Unity

The sufficiency of the Basis must be evaluated against the background of a fourfold unity of the Church. The four parts of this unity may be described as follows: (a) The given unity in Christ; this is basic; (b) the present manifestation of unity and its growth toward more unity—the “unity of the road”; (c) the fuller expression of unity toward which we work—the “unity of the goal”; and (d) the ultimate unity in Christ, which will be revealed when Christ returns. This basis is to be seen first as a reflection, however limited, of the first kind of unity, that which is given to the church by Jesus Christ. Second, and most centrally, the basis

is the platform on which the growth toward greater unity is to be pursued. The basis is certainly not sufficient for the "unity of the goal," that toward which the churches strive. Nor is it intended to be so. Something much more will be necessary before the ideal unity of the Church comes to full visible expression. This is acknowledged. The Basis is accepted "in the hope that these elements of truth will lead to the recognition of the full truth and to unity based on the full truth" (Toronto Statement, cf. I, C, 2, c above).

The Synod is reminded of the Declaratory Statement in which the World Council describes the intended functions of the Basis (cf. I, C, 2, a above). The basis indicates the nature of the fellowship, the orientation point for the work of the Council, and the range of the fellowship.

2. Is a Restricted Basis Acceptable?

The World Council acknowledges its basis to be less than a confession. Is this satisfactory to a Reformed Church? The Gereformeerde Kerken have declared, "That in fulfilling this ecumenical mission no difficulties need be presented by the fact that the basis of an ecumenical fellowship is not identical with our own reformed confession, so long as this basis is not at variance with Holy Scripture and has a clearly christological character" (*Communion of Saints*, p. 31). The argumentation supporting this declaration, found on pp. 7 f. of the same document, includes these statements: "The opinion of your deputies that such a basic formula (christological) must be considered acceptable, does not imply that as such it would guarantee a pure and loving confession of Christ as Lord of His Church. The guarantee can never lie in the words themselves; this is not the case even with our own reformed confession." Our own Report of 1944, while not addressing itself to the basis of an ecumenical *organization*, indicated a willingness to accept something far less than our own confessions as a basis for ecumenical *action*. It should be understood, as it is within the World Council, that no church is asked to abandon its own confession by adopting this basis.

3. Should the Basis be Expanded?

Although the Basis is very limited in scope, it does touch on crucial points in a church's confession. We can best summarize this matter by quoting the analysis given by Prof. Runia in a report to be submitted to the Reformed Ecumenical Synod. He says (p. 10):

"The present Basis, as extended at New Delhi, contains three main statements. (a) A *christological* statement: Jesus Christ is God and Saviour. This is the original and fundamental statement as accepted at Amsterdam, 1948. (b) A *Trinitarian* statement: 'the one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.' This was already implicit in the original Basis (cf. Evanston Declaration), but now it has been made explicit by the extension. It is more than a mere precise statement of the christological theme. It is a confession of the Triune God Himself. (c) A statement about the *Bible*: 'according to the Scriptures.' It does not deal with the nature, revelatory character or inspiration of the Bible, but only wants to emphasize the authority which these Scriptures possess for all Christians (cf. Report of Central Committee, *Ecumenical Review*, Vol. XIII,

60). At the same time, however, it indicates how the christological statement must be understood, viz., as speaking of the Christ of the Scriptures."

Now there are undoubtedly many important elements which a Reformed Church would like to see added to this Basis. But the question is not only whether such an expansion is possible—it probably is not—but also whether any large-scale expansion would be in keeping with the nature and purpose of the World Council of Churches. The Basis is indeed less than a confession. It is more restricted than even the Apostolic Confession. But to make additions to it might well run the danger of turning the council away from its avowed character and intent. The Basis would not be acceptable for a merger with another church; or for the kind of joint witness and action contemplated in the Reformed Ecumenical Synod; or even for the kind of expression of solidarity that we might wish to make with other evangelical churches. But since the council seeks to bring together, in a tentative way, all Christians, the Basis is adequate to its purpose. To elaborate on the basis would tend to make the World Council a church, which it avowedly is not and does not seek to be.

Apart from the question of expansion, the Basis as it stands is acceptable to an orthodox church. The form of words is one to which such a church can subscribe without qualification and without apology, giving to these words the classic meaning which has been attached to them in the long creedal tradition of the Church. In fact, to give them any other meaning is to be somewhat less than honest and attempts to do so have been the cause of some embarrassment to more liberal elements in the churches.

On the question of the sufficiency of the Basis, our conclusion is, therefore: *that the Basis is indeed sufficient for the purpose which it is intended to serve.*

B. A Fellowship of Churches

The second objection to be considered is that the World Council of Churches claims too much for itself when it calls itself a "fellowship of Churches." This, it is said, implies too much of a present, visible manifestation of the "given unity" in Christ, and it involves a witness concerning the other churches which an orthodox church is not free to give.

1. The Recognition of Other Churches.

Our response to this objection centers first in the fact that Reformed Churches should, and do in fact, give a measure of recognition to other churches. This includes churches concerning which they have severe criticisms.

Each of the major documents with which we are dealing touches on such recognition. The Gereformeerde Kerken have dealt with this question in two of their resolutions.

"(3) That from the angle of the confession and the history of our churches no objections can be raised to an ecumenical fellowship with churches which, though they cannot be recognized as churches in the full sense of the word, nevertheless take the accepted basis for their account which they accept as the decisive authority to resort to.

“(7) That, if one bears in mind the special character of the World Council as an attempt to make the decayed and divided church throughout the world answer its nature and mission better, the basis of the World Council, especially in its modified form of New Delhi 1961 can serve as a basis of this particular ecumenical fellowship. . . .” (*Communion of Saints*, pp. 31 f.)

In addition, *Communion of Saints* argues the point of such recognition at some length in pages 10-16.

That the Christian Reformed Church is on record as recognizing other churches as churches is plain from the sections already cited from the Report of 1944. In additions to the citations given under I, B, 2 above, the following statements are to the point:

“If the constituency of a given church be indeed a company of believers, they are a church in the fundamental sense of the term. Organizationally they may be defective and in error on the score of some of their beliefs—not of all, of course—of their canonical structure, and ecclesiastical operation, and of their public worship; but the group is a part of the body of Christ and, as such, belongs to the *ecclesia* of which the N.T. speaks. . . .

“. . . . Churches less close to the pattern of Scripture are not for that reason to be deemed no church at all. All that can be maintained in fairness is that they are less scriptural, though they should be at least as scriptural. When this ground is taken, two extremes are wisely avoided. Churches not as sound as our church are not therefore disowned. At the same time, their deficiency on the score of ecclesiastical soundness is not condoned or adjudged negligible.

“The Christian Reformed Church actually takes the position just delineated by the token of its recognition of the baptism administered by all the historical churches of Christendom, whilst declining to enter into organic union with any of them. But said church is not so consistent as one could wish, for while in actual fact recognizing all other churches as churches, as just demonstrated, it virtually turns its back upon all churches not Reformed, and fails to do its duty by those Reformed churches that are in its estimation less Reformed than itself.” (*Acts of Synod*, 1944, pp. 342-3)

There can be little question about the scope of this report. Even the Oriental and Roman Catholic Churches were recognized as Churches of Christ in the conclusions adopted by the Synod. Nor can there be any question of the fact that this report emphasizes the responsibility of the Christian Reformed Church for these other churches. The term “fellowship,” indeed, is not used. But that some kind of communion, or point of contact, or shared character exists was realized clearly and readily acknowledged in 1944.

It is highly instructive to note that the same kind of question is taken up in official World Council documents, and that the same kinds of difficulties are visualized. The Toronto Statement has already been quoted to the effect that “The member Churches recognize that the membership of the Church of Christ is more inclusive than the membership of their own Church body.” In elaboration of this statement, the document goes on to state:

"All the Christian Churches, including the Church of Rome, hold that there is no complete identity between the membership of the Church Universal and the membership of their own Church. They recognize that there are Church members *extra muros*, that these belong *aliquo modo* to the Church, or even that there is an *ecclesia extra ecclesiam*. This recognition finds expression in the fact that with very few exceptions the Christian Churches accept the baptism administered by other Churches as valid.

"But the question arises what consequences are to be drawn from this teaching. Most often in Church history the Churches have only drawn the negative consequence that they should have no dealings with those outside their membership. The underlying assumption of the ecumenical movement is that each Church has a positive task to fulfill in this realm. That task is to seek fellowship with all those who, while not members of the same visible body, belong together as members of the mystical body. And the ecumenical movement is the place where this search and discovery take place."

Again, the Toronto Statement has been quoted in Section I as stating: "Nevertheless, membership does not imply that each Church must regard the other member Churches as Churches in the true and full sense of the word." This statement is elaborated as follows:

"There is a place in the World Council both for those Churches which recognize other Churches as Churches in the full and true sense, and for those who do not. But these divided Churches, even if they cannot yet accept each other as true and pure Churches, believe that they should not remain in isolation from each other, and consequently they have associated themselves in the World Council of Churches.

"They know that differences of faith and order exist, but they recognize one another as serving the One Lord, and they wish to explore their differences in mutual respect, trusting that they may thus be led by the Holy Spirit to manifest their unity in Christ."

There is a remarkable agreement between the Christian Reformed Church's 1944 Report and the Toronto Statement. They agree on many points, such as the conviction that the churches have in the past tended too much to ignore each other. There are obvious differences, of course. The one statement looks at the matter from the standpoint of a particular denomination, while the other speaks objectively about all denominations. They are speaking, furthermore, about different ways of approaching other churches. But the idea that such approach is to be based on the recognition of the other churches as churches indeed is shared by both. Both are agreed also that this need not imply full and complete recognition of any other church. And even the evidence of such recognition—the acceptance of baptism administered in other churches—is the same in each.

Some of the terminology, to be sure, is different. The Christian Reformed report does not apply the term "fellowship" to this recognition. There is, in fact, some groping for a term which is suitable, and although no one term stands out as the ideal one the report settles on the use of "correspondence." But the substance of the 1944 report is nearly identical

with what the Toronto Statement is speaking of when, as noted above, it says, "That task is to seek fellowship . . ." Both reports stand on high ground when they recognize the vestiges of the Church in other groups as the work of Christ and the Spirit. Perhaps the term "fellowship" is not above criticism. But we cannot deny all fellowship. To deny the given unity in Christ is to deny the work of Christ.

2. The Term "Fellowship"

The implications of this term ought to be carefully weighed. "Fellowships" of churches are variously defined. The Christian Reformed denomination is itself a fellowship of churches, closely defined by its doctrinal standards, polity, liturgy, and activities. The Reformed Ecumenical Synod is a fellowship of churches, more loosely defined, yet much more closely than broader ecumenical bodies. The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches even more loosely defined. The broader the fellowship, the looser the definition. If a wide outreach is to be achieved, this is the price that has to be paid, no matter what term is used. It is hardly proper to read into the term "fellowship" as used in this basis any of the following: (a) the implications of New Testament *koinonia*, which do not come to perfect expression even within a single denomination or congregation; (b) the full implications of a denominational or a confessional fellowship; or (c) the implications of a body which pretends to be or intends to become permanent, as a "church" would intend to become.

This matter receives further illumination in the letter of Visser 't Hooft to the Gereformeerde Kerken. He writes:

"As to the further study of the ecumenical problem, I would like to express the hope that the question concerning the special character of the World Council may be given particular attention. For the World Council is a phenomenon *sui generis*. When thinking about the relationship to the World Council no solution will therefore be reached if traditional categories are used. For the traditional categories have been worked out with a view to a full communion of churches, and the World Council does not offer such a full communion, but a much more preliminary form of communion. That is what is new in its design and this places every church before a new decision. Is it possible or is it not, to enter into a fellowship with other churches, which leads to joint discussion, action and *Deo Volente* witness, but which does not bring with it full communion? And if so what conditions must be fulfilled for this? These are questions which should be answered especially today." (*Communion of Saints*, pp. 46-7)

When evaluating the "fellowship of churches" one simply must reckon with this special character of the World Council. The problem is clearly recognized within the Council itself. The Toronto Statement speaks at some length about the difficulty of finding terms to describe the Council "without using the categories or language of one particular conception of the Church." This was the very reason for the issuance of that statement; whatever the fellowship is, the proper procedure is to assess it in the light of what the Toronto Statement says about it. What that statement says about the limitations of the "fellowship" is plain from the citations already given. That the Gereformeerde Kerken have reckoned

with this special character is plain from the resolutions cited earlier in this section. We remind the Synod that these resolutions speak of churches "which . . . cannot be recognized as churches in the full sense of the word," of "the special character of the World Council as an attempt to make the decayed and divided church throughout the world answer its nature and mission better," and of "this particular ecumenical fellowship."

It is clear that the fellowship described in the World Council documents is a very limited and special fellowship. It builds on a given unity even while admitting that this unity cannot as yet be very sharply defined. It is consciously and deliberately temporary, looking toward a fuller manifestation of that unity under some other structure or structures. The consequences of denying even so limited a fellowship as this are disastrous for the recognition of the work of Christ in the churches.

On the question of the fellowship of churches, our conclusion is, therefore: *that the limited fellowship claimed in the Basis of the World Council is one which the Christian Reformed Church has in essence recognized, and does not constitute a barrier to the acceptance of the Basis.*

C. The Functioning of the Basis

Closely connected with the former consideration is a third objection which concerns the functioning of the Basis. The objection may be put this way: The Basis does not function in such a way as to guarantee that the World Council of Churches is an organization in which a Reformed Church can freely participate.

This phrasing of the question is deliberately general because it is intended to cover several subsidiary questions which can all be grouped under this head.

1. The Nature and Function of the Basis

The existence of a potential problem in this area is recognized by the Gereformeerde Kerken in the fourth resolution adopted by their Synod:

"(4) That the way in which a good basis functions in an ecumenical fellowship for the organization itself, may become a decisive impediment to join such a fellowship or to remain a member of it, e.g. if a deviation from this basis should be tolerated." (*Communion of Saints*, p. 31)

But on the information given to the Synod, satisfaction was expressed as to the present functioning of the basis:

"(7) and that in the way in which its basis functions, there is according to the information given to the synod no decisive impediment for the Reformed Churches to join the World Council. (*Communion of Saints*, p. 32)

By way of background for our own discussion of this objection we wish to remind Synod of certain elements in the information given in Section I of our report. The World Council of Churches is not a church but a fellowship of churches. It is not and does not wish to become a super-church. It exists in the hope that when churches are brought into living contact with each other, the elements of truth found in them will lead to the recognition of the full truth and to unity based on the full truth. The

basis is admittedly less than a confession, and is intended to indicate the nature of the fellowship, the orientation point for the work of the Council, and the range of the fellowship. The questions raised below must be considered against the background of such an understanding of the nature and function of the basis.

2. Does the World Council take its own Basis Seriously?

Among critics of the World Council it is commonly supposed that this basis, broad as it is, is not actually applied in the admission of churches to membership. This, however, is not the case. One of the criteria for membership is that each church shall supply a written statement of its agreement with the basis. Furthermore, before they are recommended for admission, their official standards are scrutinized by way of confirmation of such a statement.

As evidence contrary to this, it is pointed out that certain communions, e.g. the Remonstrant Brotherhood of the Netherlands, are allowed to be members although their official position is contrary to the basis. Such cases are exceptions to the rule, which came about in this way. Before the basis was adopted, this church and a few others were participants in the preliminary discussions. When the basis was presented for adoption, they objected that they could not subscribe to it. They were then permitted to be members by way of exception; but all subsequent applicants must conform to the rules described above.

A kind of informal discipline involved in the very wording of the basis continues to be in force to the present day. When the expansion of the basis was adopted at New Delhi (by a vote of 383 to 36, with 7 abstentions), a degree of discomfort was expressed by certain groups. The Remonstrant Brotherhood stated, "We are able to agree to the final words of the proposed Basis if they are to be regarded as a doxology, but we trust that the dogma of the Trinity may never become the touchstone of the admittance of churches into the World Council." They renewed their objections to the phrase "God and Saviour." The International Association for Liberal Christianity and Religious Freedom recorded its "regret that the proposed further change in the basis of membership will create problems for a still greater number of churches and groups who would otherwise wholeheartedly support the work of the Council" (*The New Delhi Report*, pp. 38, 153, 154). The adoption of the expanded basis speaks well for the seriousness with which it is taken, since a compromising response to such objections as those cited would have led the Council to leave well enough alone.

A further question which touches both on admission to membership and retention of membership is whether the basis should be further interpreted, in an official way, by the World Council. Basically, the interpretation of the basis is presently left to each member church. The World Council has consistently refused to interpret its basis further, holding that it is adequate to the present purposes of the Council. For some observers it is taken as a cause for alarm and rejection that there can be differences of interpretation on even so restricted a basis as this.

In answer to this question it must be admitted that such diversity of

interpretation on this basis does not speak well for the present state of Christian theology or church unity. But this very fact has important implications for the need and possibility of discussions of Christian doctrine. The very fact that full unity cannot be expected while such diversity of interpretation exists calls for a realistic wrestling with those very diversities. And the wrestling is realistic. Not every Council-sponsored discussion produces a compromise formula. The failure of the Faith and Order Conference at Montreal to achieve a consensus is one of many evidences on this score. The basis seeks to bring together these various interpretations not in order to overlook them, but precisely in order that they may confront each other. If ever any approach is to be made to the resolution of existing problems in faith and order, such a confrontation has to take place somewhere. The World Council is concerned to be an arena for such confrontation.

As to the possibility of discussions of Christian doctrine, the report submitted to the Gereformeerde Kerken has some wise words. Having discussed the fact that the World Council is in fact very much interested in the interpretation which the basis shall receive, the committee says:

"It is of course true that this has not solved all problems. But if one wants to reach complete agreement and unanimity in the difficult question of interpretation before expressing oneself willing to enter into ecumenical relationship, then such a meeting is made impossible in advance And though there can be no question of church unity as yet, not even of a full recognition as a church, there can nevertheless be ecumenical communion, discussion, and help, preliminary and restricted as they may be, with this formula as basis." (*Communion of Saints*, p. 23).

In addition to the above, it may be said that there is a degree of futility about interpretations of the basis. Any interpretation would probably give rise to a request for further interpretations. In a letter to the Gereformeerde Kerken, the Ecumenical Council of the Churches in the Netherlands says: "No definition of the Christian faith ever excluded all differences of interpretation nor will ever be able to do so" (*Communion of Saints*, p. 51). The truth of this observation is evidenced in the internal history of the Christian Reformed Church. Even if the interpretations reached the detail embodied in the Reformed Confessional Standards, and subscription were in terms of our own formula, some freedom of interpretation would still be necessary.

The freedom of interpretation necessary in a World Council of Churches is greater than that which is required in a denomination. The question remains, however, whether this freedom should be absolute. Should a member church be allowed to make absolutely anything it wishes out of the words of the basis, even to the extent of flatly contradicting their meaning? This raises another aspect of the present question, namely whether the World Council should in some way exercise discipline over its members.

3. Should the World Council Exercise Discipline?

The question of discipline to be exercised by the World Council must be handled cautiously. The Reformed Churches recognize ecclesiastical

discipline as one of the marks of the church. Not only do they exercise discipline within their own churches, but they look for its exercise in any other church with which they wish to exercise full ecclesiastical fellowship. But precisely because this is considered a mark of the church, the application of the requirement of discipline to the World Council of Churches requires careful qualification. For the World Council is not a church, should not become one, and does not intend to do so. In this context the various subsidiary questions which follow are discussed.

The first form of this question is whether the World Council should insist that discipline be exercised within its member churches. Such an insistence would be contrary to the character of the Council. It is no more to be required of the Council than that the Council should insist on the pure preaching of the Word and the right administration of the Sacraments. The Council is not in a position to do this, and is not to be criticized for that fact. Such an insistence would be appropriate to a fuller ecclesiastical fellowship, such as a merger of churches or a confessionally-oriented union, but it is inappropriate to the World Council.

The second form of the question concerns the responsibility of the World Council for statements made outside of the Council context by spokesmen for member churches. Resolution V of the Gereformeerde Kerken calls attention to this matter in the following words:

“That such an ecumenical organization cannot be held responsible for declarations of non-delegate members of the churches associated in the ecumenical fellowship who deviate from what is pronounced in the basis, and who unfortunately are not or not sufficiently called to account in their own churches.” (*Communion of Saints*, p. 31)

With this judgment we agree, for the simple reason that the World Council is *not* a super-church with power to exercise discipline within member churches.

But what of our own attitude toward these churches? Does their default bar us from joining with them in the kind of fellowship implied in the World Council? The answer is not to be sought in a depreciation of the problem. The problem of defects in the position and operations of a church is present everywhere, and in some churches it is of very serious proportions. But the responses of the World Council and of the Christian Reformed Church to this unavoidable fact are basically similar. The World Council acknowledges that member churches need not accept each other as churches in the true and full sense of the term; but they have an obligation to enter into serious conversation with each other in the interests of truth and unity based on the truth. And the Christian Reformed Church has said:

“If, as is generally assumed, the non-Reformed churches, whether Protestant or non-Protestant, are Christian churches indeed, even though they are defective enough, then surely the Christian Reformed Church, for one, should make it its business to labor with them in love in order to help them, by the blessing of God, to attain a more scriptural character.” (*Acts of Synod*, 1944, p. 359)

Surely with such deformed churches we cannot have ecclesiastical union. But on the basis of the given unity in Christ, which we acknowledge by

recognizing them as churches, we can counsel with them in the hope of bringing this given unity to better and purer expression.

There is one more aspect of the question of discipline, to which a different answer must be given. May it be expected of the World Council that it exercise a discipline in keeping with its own character? Such a discipline would be internal, covering utterances of the Council itself, of its official spokesmen, and of delegates speaking within the Council context. We believe that discipline of this sort should properly be expected of the Council. It would be, of course, a discipline of a restricted sort. It could hardly involve the removal of anyone from office unless the office were one of those held in the Council itself. Usually it would have to be the discipline of correction, persuasion, or perhaps reproof.

The intention to exercise such self-discipline is present within the Council. It is the Council's intention that its own utterances and those of its spokesmen shall conform to the standards set down in the Basis and Constitution. We are not prepared to say whether this sort of discipline operates with full effectiveness. Such a judgment would require a intimate acquaintance with the inner workings of the Council which the outsider cannot have. But if the intention to abide by the norms is present, the existence of shortcomings in the actual operation of the Council does not constitute a definitive objection to membership in it.

4. Should the World Council Warn Against Heresy?

The presence of heresy within member churches of the World Council is a matter of considerable concern. We have argued that the World Council ought not to be required to exercise discipline within those member churches, but could be expected to exercise a sort of self-discipline within itself. In that connection the further question arises whether the Council ought to utter warnings against heresy. This is an important element in the criticism of the World Council. Misgivings in this area are among the principal reasons why orthodox churches have not joined the Council in greater numbers. The council has thus far not sounded warnings against Modernism, Liberalism, and the various other doctrinal departures from the truth. Accusations of doctrinal latitudinarianism, of preferring unity to truth, of relativizing the witness of the Gospel, and the like are made in this connection. What is to be said about this?

Our observations in response to this question are made in the realization that this is a serious problem. Perhaps, in view of its nature and purpose, the World Council will be under a permanent temptation to speak softly, if at all, on the subject of heresy. This is understandable in view of the council's purpose. But what does it say about the participation of orthodox churches? Can they accept co-responsibility for the failure of the council to speak with a clear voice about doctrinal defections?

The answer to this question is twofold. In the first place, if they were to be members, the orthodox churches would be co-responsible for what the council would say, although it must immediately be added that no church is bound by any statement which the council may make, if it finds such statement to be in conflict with its confessional position. The council may never presume to speak for the constituent churches as is clearly

indicated in its constitution. The right to dissent is the privilege of every church and has been repeatedly exercised. But if the orthodox churches decline membership which is open to them, are they not in a measure co-responsible for what the council does *not* say? The basis on which the World Council might speak against heresy is, indeed, not an elaborate one. Heresy cannot be judged by the council, for instance, on the basis of the full text of the Reformed Confessions. But it is possible for the council to warn against deviations from its own basis. The deity of Christ and the normativity of Scripture may be defended on that basis. There is some desire within the council to do this. There is nothing in its constitutional provisions which prevents it from doing so. But if that desire is to be realized to any substantial degree, what is needed is the voice of just such churches as the Christian Reformed Church and the Gereformeerde Kerken. A World Council testimony against heresy is a possibility. Whether the council will speak thus, and what it will say when it does speak, depend in part on adding to the council the further dimension of those churches which are very much concerned for this kind of testimony.

In the second place, a formal council statement against heresy is not the only way in which heresy may be combatted through the council. Even if the World Council itself should not warn against heresy, it provides a meeting point at which heresy can be confronted and combatted in the meeting of church with church. Such direct confrontation, which is possible within the World Council, has proved almost impossible for the Christian Reformed Church to achieve outside of the council context. In this connection it is instructive to note that the Eastern Orthodox Churches have consistently expressed their viewpoint on doctrinal matters, sometimes taking public exception to actions or trends within the council. In this way their distinctive witness is heard, as it would not be otherwise. Such opportunities are also open to other member churches. Frank testimony by member churches, far from being constitutionally prohibited, is encouraged within the council. This is evident from the report on proselytism adopted by the Central Committee:

“. . . . a church which in the light of its own confession must regard certain teachings of another member church as errors and heresies and certain of its practices as abuses cannot be compelled to withdraw or hold back its views because of the churches' common membership in the World Council, but can and indeed should continue in the future to hold and express its views in their full scope. The more frankly a church states its views in the Council or within the ecumenical fellowship, the less will be the need to state them in a round-about and undesirable way” (Vischer, *A Documentary History of the Faith and Order Movement*, p. 192).

The exercise of this privilege of speaking to one another within the council context will depend on participation of those churches which are interested in doing this. That the doctrinal consciousness of the World Council of Churches has not been greater than it has been is not wholly the fault of the Council, but partly the default of the evangelical churches. If the evangelical churches have, by and large, left the World Council to

its own devices, they can hardly blame the council for not being what their own presence might have made it to be.

How the Council will express itself is determined partly by its constitutional limitations (it is a fellowship of churches, but not a super-church); partly by its constitutional provisions (it is committed by its basis to the normativity of the Scriptures); and partly by the consensus among its members. Evangelical churches can hardly expect to change the first of these parts by becoming members; this is a permanent limitation on the Council. But they may do other things, if they have the desire to do so. They may help shape the consensus of the Council, and in so doing they may appeal to the normativity of the Scriptures which is recognized. Both of these together, if exploited to the utmost, are not likely to accomplish either a quick or a major transformation within the Council. They will work slowly and moderately at best. But at least, the net result of such activities within the Council would be an influence for good.

How much of a doctrinal consciousness and concern is present within the Council? The situation here also is better than some critics would make it appear. Some attention must be given to the accusation that the World Council is interested in unity at the expense of doctrine or truth. It is to be admitted first that the World Council is not interested exclusively in doctrine. It comprises churches whose focus of attention is on liturgy, order, or activity instead of on doctrine. It is also to be acknowledged that the Council is vitally interested in unity. This interest looms largest in its functions. But this is not a ground for condemnation; the Council exists for the sake of unity. This is a legitimate interest, for which it is not to be criticized. The question is whether this interest obscures or obliterates interest in doctrine.

In answer to this question let it be said that there is a great deal of interest in doctrine in the World Council. The Council has sponsored and continues to sponsor many doctrinal discussions. If this is not always apparent, it is partially because this is not the kind of thing which the secular press, or even the religious press, easily picks up and highlights. The question of Scripture and its interpretation is presently under study, and will come up for World Council discussions in the near future. The same is true of the very important question of the finality of Jesus Christ, as over against the ethnic religions and the secularism of our day. We are not saying that everything which is said on doctrinal questions under World Council auspices is pleasing or acceptable to the Reformed Christian. This would be far from the truth. But the interest in doctrine is present and continuing. There are many evidences that doctrinal and confessional awareness has been increased within a good many churches because of their involvement in the World Council. There are also ample evidences that the various member churches are not ready simply to surrender their own convictions in the interests of unity. The failure of the Montreal Conference on Faith and Order to reach a greater consensus shows plainly that the participants were not ready to surrender convictions in the interests of unity.

As far as World Council spokesmen are concerned, the orthodox and

evangelical churches are fully welcome to lend their voices to such discussions through membership. In fact, as Dr. Eugene Smith has said: "The more one has real communication with the irenic leaders of the conservative evangelicals the more one realizes that at certain significant points they have much to teach most of us who are called 'ecumenicals' about some elements of the Gospel" (*Christianity Today*, August 30, 1963, p. 57).

The presence of heresy in member churches of the World Council is a problem. In fact, it may be said to be *the* problem confronting orthodox churches in considering council membership. But it is not a problem which has been created or accentuated by the World Council of Churches. The World Council has recognized the existence of this problem and some members within it are seeking to combat it. But in virtue of its character, the World Council cannot give a definitive answer to the problem. The accentuation of the problem for member churches arises out of the increased measure of contact with other churches within the council. But this is a contact which may well be sought for witness' sake. Other ecumenical organizations are more free to speak out against heresy precisely because of their narrower scope. The broader scope which limits the World Council utterances is at the same time the index to the greater breadth of contact available within this organization. Thus we do not consider such contact in the World Council of Churches an insuperable obstacle to membership in this organization.

* * *

On the score of the functioning of the basis our conclusion is, therefore: *that the problems arising from the way in which the basis functions are not sufficient to constitute a decisive consideration against joining the World Council.*

In conclusion of this section of our report we revert to the question with which the section opened. Is membership in the World Council of Churches permissible? The summation of our answer as given in detail on the foregoing pages may be put as follows: *that membership in the World Council of Churches does not constitute a denial of the faith nor involve a failure in obedience to the Word or loyalty to the Reformed Confessions, and therefore must be judged permissible to a Reformed Church.*

III. IS WORLD COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP ADVISABLE?

Having asked and answered the question whether membership in the World Council of Churches is permissible we turn to the question of its advisability. In this section we shall be dealing with questions of the second order. This should not be taken to mean that they are necessarily less important than the former questions. The distinction is based rather on the fact that these are questions of a different type. Previously we asked whether a Reformed Church *may* join the World Council. Now we are asking whether the Christian Reformed Church (or the Gereformeerde Kerken) *should* affiliate with this organization.

The subject under discussion here is concerned with the strategy or the

tactics of a church in fulfilling its ecumenical calling. Basically it involves two classes of questions. Is the organization under consideration a good practical means for carrying out that calling? And are the churches under consideration ready to seize the opportunities and accept the difficulties involved in membership? These are not unimportant questions. We trust that their weight and complexity will be duly reflected in the material which follows:

A. The Ecumenical Appeal

We are constrained to begin our discussion with a few reflections on the powerful appeal of the World Council of Churches. The ecumenical calling of the Church has been recognized by the Christian Reformed Church in its 1944 report. Now, subsequent to 1944, the World Council of Churches comes before our gaze for our judgment. It offers to us a new and unique opportunity to pursue the objectives which we have long had in mind, but which we have been unable to effectuate.

The World Council of Churches is indeed a unique organization. This constitutes both its appeal and its difficulty. It is an organization without precedent in the history of the Christian Church. It arose out of the frustrations experienced by the churches in exercising cooperation with each other and confronting mutual differences. It reflects an approach to interchurch relations which does not fall into the usual church categories—a fact which raises many problems. But the fact which had to be faced was that the usual categories provided no viable solution to the problems in inter-church relations. Every other inter-church organization operates with a more limited scope than this one. Some of the other organizations are nationally limited, while others are confessionally oriented. The breakthrough of the World Council is best seen in the fact that it is the only organization which advocates and wishes to promote the ecumenical meeting of churches with a view to the oneness of the sole church of Christ.

In achieving this breakthrough, the World Council has made some very wise moves. It has adopted a basis which recognizes the deity of Christ, the normativity of the Scriptures, and the doctrine of the Trinity. It has provided and publicly stated safeguards as to the implications of membership for the recognition of other churches. While working toward the visible unity of the Church, it has kept itself free from involvement in union negotiations themselves. The second of the points in the Toronto Statement, quoted earlier, is elaborated as follows:

“By its very existence and activities, the Council bears witness to the necessity of a clear manifestation of the oneness of the Church of Christ. But it remains the right and duty of each Church to draw from its ecumenical experience such consequences as it feels bound to do on the basis of its own convictions. No Church, therefore, need fear that the Council will press it into decisions concerning union with other Churches.”

The Council has adopted a high goal, but is willing to work slowly and painstakingly in achieving that goal. It has disavowed any right or intention to interfere in the internal affairs of the member churches. It has adopted constitutional limitations on its own right to make state-

ments and decisions which will be binding on others. In so doing it has reflected the wisdom and experience of many churchmen who realized clearly the complexities of the matter with which they were dealing.

But at the same time, the World Council has left some difficulties unresolved. There are some ambiguities and uncertainties which persist within the Council. It is a reflection of a movement toward a goal, rather than an achieved objective. The organization finds itself unable to predict in every instance what steps are to be taken toward its goal. It faces this difficulty because it is dependent on what the churches do when they have come together. The Council cannot answer all the questions for them in advance. It is a tentative and temporary organization, and therefore there is something tentative and temporary about its actions.

The ecumenical appeal of this organization constrains a church to face the question what good reasons there are for refusing to seize the opportunities it presents. The undecided questions, as well as some of the answers already given, raise real problems which may have a bearing on the answer to that question. It is to these that we turn in the sections which follow.

B. The Doctrinal Position of the World Council

If the question of the doctrinal position of the World Council of Churches refers to an official position, the answer is simple. The World Council has not officially adopted or endorsed any of the theological options open to it. Its official doctrinal position does not go farther than its basis and the limited interpretation given to that basis. There is some liberalism within the Council, but it is not officially liberal. There is some Protestant orthodoxy in it, but it is not officially orthodox. There is some neo-orthodoxy in it, but it is not officially neo-orthodox.

There is another way of understanding the question which may produce a different result. Is there a prevailing doctrinal or theological position reflected in the actual work of the Council? This question is harder to answer. There are some indications that neo-orthodox thinking has been more prominent in the Council than any other one type. But this has not been true to such an extent that those who hold to old-line liberalism, or are followers of Bultmann, or Eastern Orthodox traditionalists, or for that matter confessionally orthodox have been unable to let their voices be heard.

Such a lack of definite theological orientation makes the Council, indeed, a less comfortable berth for a Reformed Church than, for instance, the Reformed Ecumenical Synod. The Council is not a comfortable berth at all; it is rather an arena. But it is an arena which reflects, rather accurately, the theological situation of the present day. One may argue from this that a Reformed Church has no business being involved in such a movement. On the other hand, one may argue that a Council so constituted provides a forum where the orthodox witness can be heard and where it can be demonstrated that the Reformed Churches are vitally interested not only in the unity of the Church, but in the spiritual welfare and doctrinal soundness of their fellow Christians.

Very similar comments pertain to the concept of Scripture with which

the World Council works. The Basis commits the council to accept the normativity of the Scriptures, but does not commit it to any given interpretation of them. Furthermore, as with doctrine in general, there is no unanimity within the council as to the manner in which Scripture is used. To the credit of the council it is to be said that the magnitude and urgency of this problem are recognized, and studies of the interpretation of Scripture are presently under way. But in another sense, this is as ominous as it is promising. If a council presently uncommitted to any one method of interpretation should in the course of time commit itself to an unsound method, participation in its work and studies would be more difficult than they are now, if not completely impossible. This would be regrettable for the whole future of the council, its member churches, and their membership. The situation with respect to Scripture and its interpretation is an urgent challenge to all who seek to live by the Bible to influence discussions of this subject as effectively and as speedily as possible.

It will be readily recognized that there are difficulties in working within a doctrinal context such as that described above. These difficulties are not to be minimized. But it is also to be recognized that positions adopted by the council are going to affect many millions of Christians for good or bad. An opportunity to turn this effect for the better is not to be lightly dismissed. The question of membership must ultimately depend on another question; whether the yearning after fellowship and witness is sufficient to warrant the effort to cope with these difficulties.

C. Ecumenical Activities and Trends

Most of our discussion of the World Council of Churches has been in terms of the doctrinal consultation of churches with each other. This is only one phase of World Council activities. The interests of the Life and Work movement have been absorbed into the council's work. Various public statements are made from time to time. It is stated, further, that membership implies a willingness to lend mutual help where necessary.

It should be noted that the public utterances of the council are subject to constitutional restrictions as noted in section I, C, 2, d of this report. In defense of joint activities it is said that these are in perfect harmony with the purpose of the World Council to seek a future unity. One of the ways of coming to understanding with one another is to engage in joint activities. Cooperation, it is sometimes said, precedes understanding. This, let it be noted, is something other than saying that doctrine divides and service unites. Such an idea was propagated early in the ecumenical movement, but it was repudiated before the World Council itself came into existence. There is some cogency to this argument, perhaps more than we have acknowledged, even though we have experienced something of this ourselves.

On the other hand, such cooperation raises the question whether the World Council is claiming for itself a present ecclesiastical character to which it has no right. It will be remembered that one of the principal problems of the Christian Reformed Church with the National Association of Evangelicals was the fear that the Association itself would begin

to do the work of the church. Is this what the World Council is doing? We must confess that we cannot finally evaluate this question on the basis of our present information. The question calls for further study and careful evaluation. Our concern with the matter may also dictate that a word of caution be addressed to the Gereformeerde Kerken in this connection. If this consideration should prove to be a real obstacle it might prompt participation only in the Faith and Order activities without full membership in the Council. To this we may add one further remark, that the study of this and other questions, ought to include the sending of observers to meetings of the council, so that this dimension may be added to our information on the subject of participation in general and of this question in particular.

The above question concerns something already present in World Council activities. The further question concerns the direction in which the council is tending. Pleas are occasionally raised for the greater recognition of an ecclesiastical character of some sort by the council itself. If this should occur, the difficulties visualized in this area would be multiplied. It is impossible for us to predict what the future may bring by way of such trends. To the best of our knowledge, World Council spokesmen themselves are not ready to answer that question. But to date such a development has been successfully resisted, as constituting a diversion of the council from its aim to serve merely the unity "of the road," between the given unity in Christ and the greater visible unity which is hoped for in the future.

One other foreboding which is sometimes expressed is that the World Council is moving in the direction of syncretism. Concretely, it is said that the absolute distinction between Christianity and the non-Christian religions is being relativized. Considering some trends in contemporary theology, it would not be wholly surprising if this should occur. And if it should occur, it would constitute a serious betrayal of the witness of the churches to Christ. But the issue is not yet settled. Vigorous expressions of dissent have been heard against any such tendencies. Dr. Visser 't Hooft's *No Other Name* is an outstanding example. The matter is still under discussion, and the discussion promises to be a lively one. The fact that such a discussion is going on does not settle the question of membership. For some it raises fears. For others it is simply an urgent admonition to get into the discussion without delay.

D. *Relations to Other Churches*

1. Relations to other member churches of the council

What would a Reformed Church be saying about other churches in the World Council if it undertook membership in the Council? Essentially what is said by such membership is that traces of the church are to be found in these other church bodies. This is something which in theory we are willing to admit. But such a recognition has implications. According to the Toronto Statement, such recognition implies "the hope that these elements of truth will lead to the recognition of the full truth and to unity based on the full truth." Whatever problems this may raise for some, let it be noted that it is not said that such recognition implies en-

dorsement of everything said and done by the other churches, or a commitment to merge with them into one church. There is a tentative hope of such an outcome, but it is admitted that much has to happen through ecclesiastical contact before such a hope can be realized; and it may be that it will never be realized with all parties. Whatever misgivings these implications may raise, the recognition of traces of the Church in other churches is quite in keeping with what the Christian Reformed Church stated:

“If, as is generally assumed, the non-Reformed churches, whether Protestant or non-Protestant, are Christian churches indeed, even though they are defective enough, then surely the Christian Reformed Church, for one, should make it its business to labor with them in love in order to help them, by the blessing of God, to attain a more scriptural character.”

(*Acts of Synod*, 1944, p. 359)

A further implication of membership, according to the Toronto Statement, is the admission that we may learn from others as well as teach them. This may appear to be in conflict with what our Synod said:

“If the Christian Reformed Church is the nearest historical approach to the ecclesiastical ideal of Scripture, as it modestly but confidently affirms, then it cannot consistently assume such an attitude toward the other churches of Christ in the face of their doctrinal, canonical, and liturgical delinquencies as is expressed in the notorious question, ‘Am I my brother’s keeper?’” (*Acts of Synod*, 1944, p. 359)

But such a conflict does not necessarily exist. If our affirmation cited above is indeed modest, it cannot include the assertion that we have achieved perfection, or even that we have not ourselves fallen into any “delinquencies.” We have not produced every good thing ourselves. We have learned from others, we are learning from them, and we can continue to do so in the future. The central purpose of a Reformed Church in undertaking membership would undoubtedly be to influence others. But if the very idea of learning from others is repugnant or preposterous to us, we had better take a second look, not only at membership in the World Council, but at our own self-evaluation.

One other implication of membership is that member churches will render assistance to each other in case of need, and refrain from such actions as are incompatible with brotherly relationships. The latter part of the above implication seems to refer to such actions as proselytism. Would this tie the hands of a Reformed church in its biblical witness? If so, it would constitute a strong argument against membership. But this need not be the case. Proselytism is a word with negative connotations, which we already recognize. It is something different from a positive witness to the true faith and the lending of assistance to interested individuals in practising that faith. That this distinction is recognized and honored in the World Council is plain from the following excerpts from a report on proselytism adopted by the Central Committee:

“Proselytism is not something absolutely different from witness: it is the corruption of witness. Witness is corrupted when cajolery, bribery,

undue pressure, or intimidation are used—subtly or openly—to bring about seeming conversion; when we put the success of our church before the honour of Christ; when we commit the dishonesty of comparing the ideal of our own church with the actual achievement of another; when we seek to advance our own cause by bearing false witness against another church; when personal or corporate self-seeking replaces love for every individual soul with whom we are concerned.” (Vischer, *A Documentary History of the Faith and Order Movement*, p. 187)

“Every Christian Church is not only permitted but required freely and openly to bear its witness in the world, seeking to bring persons into fellowship with God as revealed in Jesus Christ. Witnessing is part of the church’s ministry of love, of its service to mankind.

“Should errors or abuses within a church result in the distorting or obscuring of the central truths of the Gospel and thereby jeopardize men’s salvation, other churches may feel bound to come to the rescue with a faithful witness to the truth thus lost to view. Their liberty to do so must be maintained. But before they undertake to establish another church, they must humbly ask themselves whether there are not still to be found in the existing church such signs of the presence of the Holy Spirit that frank fraternal contact and cooperation with it must be sought.” (Vischer, *A Documentary History of the Faith and Order Movement*, p. 191)

Principles such as these should be, as we believe they are, acceptable to the Christian Reformed Church. They leave the way open for unimpaired witness of the church to the truth.

An important by-product of membership in the World Council is that the knowledge churches have of each other is made more accurate. By no means all of the differences between churches and theologies disappear with conversations. The experience of the Faith and Order movement is witness to this. But the overwhelming testimony of those who participate in face-to-face confrontation with others is that understanding improves. Our own positions are caricatured by those who know us only from a distance. We may be sure that we do the same injustice to others. One of the principal objectives to be achieved through ecumenical contact is to be understood by others and understand them. A polemic task remains when that has been done. But the polemic can be carried on intelligently and profitably only when the information with which it deals is accurate and true.

2. Relations with other Reformed Churches

Our own church, and the Gereformeerde Kerken as well, live in close relations with certain other churches. These relationships exist in concentric circles, of which the innermost circle is constituted by our sister-churches, and the next by the churches of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod. Perhaps the churches known as Evangelical are next in order. What would be the effect of World Council membership on relations with them?

It is conceivable that World Council membership would seriously ham-

per or even disrupt such existing fellowship. This would be a very serious consequence, and one which ought to weigh heavily on any church considering membership. A church ought to weigh very carefully whether membership would improve or impede the performance of its ecumenical task. It is a good thing, therefore, that the Gereformeerde Kerken have sought the advice of their sister churches, and they ought to listen very carefully to what is said.

But on the other hand, the responsibility is twofold. The churches whose advice is sought ought to be careful to lay on their sister-church no burden which is not required by obedience to the Holy Scriptures and loyalty to the Reformed Creeds.

3. Relation with Younger Churches

There is one other aspect of inter-church relations which overlaps the two already mentioned, but which has unique characteristics of its own. The well-established churches of the world bear a peculiar responsibility to the younger churches which have come into existence through missions. The number of these churches and their prominence in inter-church concerns has increased rapidly in our century. These younger churches are still in the process of forming their traditions and establishing their practices.

Almost without exception the younger churches are very much concerned with the visible expression of Christian unity. Many of them have looked to the World Council of Churches as a prime agency of response to this concern. The confessionally orthodox churches cannot absolve themselves of responsibility for them. A World Council in which the voice of confessional orthodoxy is weak or absent would be a poor teacher for the younger churches. If such a situation prevailed because the orthodox churches refused a participation which was open to them would bear a direct responsibility for the inadequacy of the witness.

But this, like the other questions, is not a simple matter. There are younger churches which look to confessionally orthodox churches for truly Scriptural fellowship, and who identify this with an anti-World Council attitude. The responsibility we bear to them is even more direct. What would be the effect on them of participation by an orthodox Reformed Church in the World Council? If we should undertake membership in the World Council in order, in part, to demonstrate to some younger churches that orthodoxy is not dead and that it is not intellectually indefensible or socially irresponsible, would we be able to make these other younger churches understand our action? Or would they lose faith in our leadership? This is a question to which we do not have a ready answer. But it certainly deserves careful consideration before any action is taken.

E. Prospects of Success

If an orthodox Reformed Church were to join the World Council of Churches, it would be wisest not to expect too much too soon. It would be expecting too much to suppose that the whole world would quickly come to our way of thinking. To look for an easy task would likewise be a false expectation. The best that could be hoped for would be to become

a heaven, modifying a decision here and influencing a trend there. Even under the most ideal conditions—a vigorous witness, a fair hearing, a position of influence—the results would likely be modest. The witness to be carried on would be performed under peculiar circumstances. The objective could hardly be to win individuals out of one church into another, but rather to strengthen and correct the churches themselves. The errors of churches which have departed from the faith are sophisticated, and harder to combat than many heathen notions. Your committee does not write in a spirit of great optimism about the present state or future prospects of the Christian church. The witness will be difficult and probably often disappointing. But that does not make it any less important.

If a calling exists, however, the prospects of success or failure are not the determinate considerations. We have a calling to utter a Reformed witness in the world; a calling which remains even if the world will not hear us. We have a calling to preach the Gospel to all nations; the fact that we cannot discharge this task completely need not and does not deter us from doing what we can. Even if the influence is small, it ought to be exercised. Otherwise we cannot wash our hands of blame when matters take a wrong turn, or share in the credit when something good results. We profess, but do not always seem to believe, that the Reformed faith need not fear involvement in theological discussion. Our position is a strong one, buttressed not only by a solid theological tradition and a high level of theological interest, but by the very Word of God which lives and abides. It is simply not true that membership can be considered only out of a sense of impoverishment or weakness of the church.

The very love of the truth summons us to membership, unless there are compelling considerations which close such membership to us.

F. The Situation of the Christian Reformed Church

The one matter still calling for consideration is the measure of preparedness in the Christian Reformed Church for undertaking the responsibilities of membership in the World Council. The 1944 report did not advocate this ecumenical approach. But it must be recognized that nearly a quarter of a century has passed since that report was written. That report advocated "beginning at Jerusalem." This we have done, through sister-church relationships, correspondence, union discussions, and the Reformed Ecumenical Synod. But we have done very little with Samaria and the uttermost parts of the earth. It is difficult indeed to imagine how contact is to be established with the wider circle of churches which that report recognized as part of our responsibility, as long as World Council membership is thought to be closed to us. In the twenty-three years since the earlier report was adopted the Christian Reformed Church has doubled in size, has passed its centennial, and has added to its maturity. The World Council of Churches, meanwhile, has emerged out of the shadows into the public gaze. It can now be evaluated, not in terms of vague references to the ecumenical methodology of our day, but in terms of a methodology which has been outlined with some clarity. Is the Christian Reformed Church ready for membership now?

The same question is raised for the Gereformeerde Kerken by their observers to the World Council Assembly. "Are our churches spiritually ready for and capable of a membership in the World Council . . . ?" (Cf. *Communion of Saints*, p. 43). Is the Christian Reformed Church ready? We are inclined to say that it is not, at this moment, ready. This is by reason of two things; the lack of sufficient information on certain important points mentioned above, and the lack of experience in ecumenical activities. To emerge from relative ecumenical inactivity and plunge immediately into the thick of things might prove to be very unwise. Our own experience should teach us that hasty ecumenical action often leads to regrets.

To this it must be added that the unity of the church is an internal as well as an external concern. Our closest circle of fellowship is that which exists within our denomination itself. This intimate fellowship ought not to be disrupted, or even jeopardized, by undertaking a wider exercise of unity. If membership in the World Council is to be undertaken, it ought to be done with enthusiasm and unity of conviction by the entire denomination.

But if the step is legitimate, though not timely, the proper course of action is not simply to say no and forget about the matter. What is called for is observation, study, discussion, and the gradual formation of a consensus. Neither the Gereformeerde Kerken nor the Christian Reformed Church ought to proceed more rapidly than the unity of the denomination will allow. While the final decision they reach may differ, both ought to follow a cautious procedure. But as far as the principles of the matter are concerned, both are free to add this participation to the other avenues of ecumenical activity which they are already pursuing.

* * * * *

In this section we have sought to assess the opportunities and problems involved in World Council membership. Our conclusion is that while the opportunities are attractive, the difficulties presented by the World Council, our relationship to other churches, and the present state of affairs in the Christian Reformed Church call for a postponement of the definitive question of membership. A careful and cautious advance should be made toward a fuller understanding of the issues and a greater readiness to consider intelligently and wisely the question of participation in this movement.

* * * * *

We may summarize and conclude our argument as follows. In the foregoing pages we have first called the attention of Synod to our ecumenical calling. We have found the principles for this to be clearly laid down in Scripture and reflected in the Confessions. The Christian Reformed Church has recognized this calling, particularly in its report of 1944, but has made less progress than desirable in pursuing it. The World Council of Churches offers an avenue for the further pursuit of this calling.

In the second section we have examined the basic objections to membership in the World Council of Churches, particularly as they touch on matters of principle. Our conclusion from this study is that "membership in the World Council of Churches does not constitute a denial of the faith nor involve a failure in obedience to the Word or loyalty to the Reformed Confessions, and therefore must be judged permissible to a Reformed Church."

In the third section we have assessed, as frankly as we could, the opportunities presented and the problems raised by council membership. The appeal of such membership is indeed great. On the other hand, some serious problems remain, even though upon examination they are not all as great as they seem to be at first glance.

In the resolutions which follow, we have sought to reflect these findings, and to give such advice as will be consistent with the proper understanding of the problems and opportunities presented by the World Council of Churches.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the foregoing considerations, we recommend that Synod adopt the following declarations:

A. Synod recognizes, on the basis of Scripture, that the Church of Jesus Christ is one, and that this unity ought to come to visible expression as a witness to Christ.

B. Synod reaffirms the position adopted by the Synod of 1944, that the Christian Reformed Church bears a responsibility to all other Christian Churches "to gain and to keep our ecclesiastical brethren in the measure in which it is possible for us to do so." (Resolution 8, Acts 1944, p. 359)

C. Synod judges that the basis, nature, and purpose of the World Council of Churches, as defined by its Constitution, are such as to permit a Reformed Church to seek membership in it.

Ground: These constitutional provisions do not violate the requirements of Scripture, nor are they in conflict with the Reformed Confessions.

D. Synod recognizes weighty problems involved in World Council membership, with respect to the actual functioning of the Council, the trends within the Council, and the implications of council membership for relations with other churches.

E. Synod urges the Gereformeerde Kerken to give due consideration, before applying for membership in the World Council of Churches, to the following matters:

1. The preservation of their own internal unity;
2. The question whether their total witness to the world, singly or in conjunction with other Reformed Churches, will be aided or impeded by World Council membership;
3. The implications of the actual functioning of the World Council, judged by the best information available.

F. Synod communicates these decisions and the text of this report to the Gereformeerde Kerken as its response to their request for advice.

G. Synod decides not to commit the Christian Reformed Church to membership in the World Council of Churches at this time.

Grounds:

1. Further information regarding the actual functioning of the World Council and the implications of membership is needed before a responsible judgment on membership can be made.

2. The readiness of the Christian Reformed Church to undertake further ecumenical responsibilities needs further exploration.

H. Synod instructs its Committee on Inter-Church Relations to seek ways and means of arriving at a fuller understanding and riper judgment with respect to the World Council of Churches, to provide for the presence of observers at principal meetings of the World Council and its subsidiaries, to encourage study of this matter by the churches, and to keep Synod informed of its findings.

Respectfully submitted,

C. Boomsma

J. H. Kromminga

REPORT 40

**REPLY OF PROFESSOR H. DEKKER TO 1966 REPORT
ON DOCTRINAL MATTERS**

(see pages 68, 69, 436-507 of the Acts of Synod, 1966)
(All page references are to the Acts of 1966, unless otherwise indicated)

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

I am grateful that I have this opportunity to express myself to the churches and to Synod concerning the report of the "Doctrinal Committee" to the Synod of 1966, since my views are extensively evaluated in it.

At the 1966 Synod I offered to appear before the Advisory Committee on Doctrinal Matters, indicating that I was prepared to respond to the study committee report if desired, but there was no opportunity for this either before the advisory committee or before Synod itself.

I trust that the reader will realize the difficult position I have been in. Subsequent to the appointment of the study committee by the Synod of 1964, I refrained from writing publicly on the issues involved. Moreover, during the past year I have been silent because Synod continued the study. Thus for three years critics of my views have been free to express themselves in print and in public address while I have been silenced by prescribed ecclesiastical procedures.

This silence has been necessary. However, an incongruous situation has resulted. The Synod of 1966 did not discuss the study report as such. Therefore I had no opportunity to elucidate or defend my position. Furthermore, when Synod referred the study report to the churches for study and evaluation, I was left without a way of placing my case there. Thus the churches have been asked to evaluate a report in which my views are adversely judged without being able to hear and evaluate what I have to say on my own behalf.

Let me be specific. The study committee has access to all of my writings. I also had opportunity to explain and defend my views before the committee and appreciatively recognize that my views are reported fairly and accurately in its report. However this is hardly sufficient. It may have been sufficient for the Synod of 1966 because I was there to explain and support my position. But it is quite another matter for the consistories and classes to evaluate the committee's judgment of my views without access to my original articles, without my own defense of my position and without my reply to the committee's report. Can the reactions of our consistories and classes be considered conclusive on this basis?

One more defect in procedure may be noted, namely, that certain members of the study committee spoke and wrote publicly in propagation of their views during the very time that the churches were evaluating

the committee's report. Moreover, these committee members thereby took avowed positions prior to the completion of their study and prior to hearing reactions from consistories and classes. These procedures appear to have been irregular and scarcely fair.

Let us now consider the study report of 1966. At this writing in late February, I do not know what the committee is reporting to the Synod of 1967. The mandate of Synod that the committee "consult frequently with Professor Dekker in order that a spirit and relationship of full and free exchange may exist between the professor and the committee" has not been fulfilled during the past year. I did express a desire for consultation and made myself available to the Committee from the adjournment of Synod to the end of October when I left for Nigeria, but the committee did not meet and there was no contact whatsoever. Recently I received a brief communication from the committee concerning its meetings of February 7-8. From this I have learned the number and the general nature of communications received from the churches. I know nothing as to the content of the committee's 1967 report except that the general position of its 1966 report will be maintained.

Confining myself then to the 1966 report, I wish to make some observations regarding it. The report, as I see it, gives a competent and helpful statement of the traditional Christian Reformed position on the matters under discussion. Within the limits of its presuppositions and aims the committee has rendered a useful service to the churches. Its report has been very useful in my own study. Although its judgments are largely negative with regard to my views, the committee shows good will to me personally. Although in what follows I make some critical judgments about the committee's work, they are no more severe than those which the committee has made about mine and they are offered in the same spirit of personal good will.

It goes without saying that the members of the committee and I share loyalty to the Reformed faith, commitment to our confessional standards and obedience to the Word of God. On this basis there is much in the committee's report on which we are agreed. The committee helpfully calls attention to this at various points and I readily concur. These things need not be repeated here. No doubt I can serve Synod best by stating my strictures on the report. These may be grouped under three general headings: First, the report is one-sided at important points and therefore incomplete. Second, the report does not do justice to the Biblical givens and is therefore inconclusive. Third, the report has a faulty analysis of certain major issues and is therefore imprecise.

I. ONE-SIDEDNESS IN THE STUDY REPORT

The one-sidedness of the committee's report may be seen particularly, to my mind, at three points: a *one-sided fulfilment of the mandate*, a *one-sided use of theological sources*, and a *one-sided stress on the theoretical to the neglect of the practical*.

First then let us consider the committee's fulfilment of its mandate. The Synod of 1964 instructed the committee "to study in the light of

Scripture and the creeds" the following three items: the doctrine of limited atonement as it relates to the love of God, the doctrinal expressions of Professor H. Dekker beginning with and relative to his article entitled "God So Loved — All Men!" and other related questions which may arise in the course of their study." It may be observed that the committee's report deals predominantly with the second item, i.e. with my "doctrinal expressions." (The degree to which the report is personalized in terms of my views is, I believe, unwarranted by the mandate and not in the best interests of a thorough and complete study.) The first item is only touched on and the third is neglected enough that the advisory committee of the 1966 Synod noted "related problems which need theological clarification and precise statement." It may also be observed that the synodical mandate lists seven points for specific attention. With these the committee deals in marked disproportion. The first, pertaining to qualitative distinctions in the love of God, occupies some fifteen pages in its report. The fourth, pertaining to the use of concepts such as universal atonement and limited redemption, is dealt with at even greater length. Meanwhile some of the others are dealt with scantily, particularly the second and the sixth, to which we come later in this statement.

The committee says, "We have taken the liberty to single out two subjects which seem to us most fundamental. . . . If we shall be able to give Synod a clear exposition of these two subjects, then we believe we shall also have dealt with all the questions which the Synod of 1964 put to us" (p. 438). Was the committee justified in this? A close examination of the mandate suggests that if all its questions had been dealt with thoroughly, the report would have been more complete and perhaps even its conclusions would have been modified.

The second factor of one-sidedness in the report is that for the most part theologians on one side of the issues are used. The committee relies heavily on sources from one line within the larger Reformed tradition. Prominent in the report are lengthy citations from Vos and Murray. Conspicuous also are Warfield, Nicole, and Packer. Surely these are responsible and respected writers and they deserve to be included. However, it must be observed that they belong essentially to one school of thought and to one line of theological development. That they should be given a careful hearing is not questioned. But for the committee to use them to the exclusion of Reformed writers who take a different position seems unwarranted. What of our own denominational tradition in the Netherlands and America? Should not this line of thought also be considered? Bavinck is cited once in a one-line parenthesis and once in a four-line footnote. Berkhof is cited only once. Berkouwer, the most influential and widely respected Reformed theologian of our day, is quoted in only two footnotes. H. Ridderbos whose Biblical studies are very relevant is unnoticed. Moreover, Reformed writers in the Netherlands are unmentioned who are at least as authoritative as certain lesser theologians used by the committee as its authorities.

If the report conformed to the viewpoints of Bavinck, Berkouwer and Ridderbos rather than of Warfield, Vos and Murray, its analysis and conclusions would certainly be considerably different. The committee

has the full right to prefer the views of Warfield, Vos and Murray to those of Bavinck, Berkouwer and H. Ridderbos. However as a study committee of our Synod, should not the committee at least have reported the views of these noted theologians who stand in the very center of our own tradition? Their views would then have been known to our consistories and classes in making their "study and evaluation" as requested by Synod.

Not only has the committee omitted some recent and contemporary Reformed authors who do not support its views. There is also a scant use of John Calvin's writings. I used Calvin extensively in my original articles. I referred to him in my consultations with the study committee. Yet in its report the committee uses Calvin only twice, once merely in a footnote. In each case Calvin supports the viewpoint of the committee. But there are numerous points at which Calvin does not support the committee. May we not hear Calvin at these points too? Surely conclusions should not be drawn on questions of this kind without due consideration of Calvin's teaching. The same, incidentally, is true of other authorities in the earlier Reformed tradition. I have used and presented to the committee in support of my position, for instance, the testimony of Ursinus on the Catechism and of Baxter on the universal factors in the gospel. Neither of these have been recognized in the study report.

The committee's one-sidedness in the use of theological sources may also be seen close at hand. The committee was instructed to "seek the advice and counsel of the professors in the departments of Dogmatics and Exegesis at Calvin Seminary." Happily this was done. Having been privileged to attend the various committee meetings at which my colleagues appeared, I know what they presented. Moreover, I have copies of their presentations in my files. Some of their contributions are reflected in the report. However, it is significant that the committee has used only the material which favors its own position. Would it not be proper that the committee share with Synod all the major conclusions of research done by our seminary professors on these questions?

I must be specific. The New Testament Department served the committee with extensive exegetical studies (some 7500 words) on the major Scripture passages under consideration. Most of this exegetical material is favorable to my position. In addition, the New Testament Department submitted an elaboration and defense of its exegesis when challenged by the committee. Most of this material is covered merely by a footnote (p. 482) in the committee's report. I asked the committee why this exegetical material, which I had generally accepted and helped to defend before the committee, was not reported in any way. To this a committee spokesman replied that the committee need not include material which would not support its case. Consistories and classes, and Synod itself, have thus been asked to evaluate the study committee's report without knowing fully what our own seminary professors have said on the issues. Such procedures can hardly lead to satisfactory results in an important ecclesiastical study.

The third factor of one-sidedness to be noted is a predominance of the theoretical to the neglect of the practical. In the committee's defense it must be said that its mandate from Synod is heavily weighted to the

theoretical. However, this is a shift in emphasis from the original context of my articles which was missionary motivation, approach, method and message. Let us review these concerns and consider their relevance to the committee's theoretical judgments.

All will agree that there is—or should be—a correlation between Christian doctrine and practice. Therefore if one believes that God loves all men with a redemptive love, this should be a powerful dynamic for him to love all men in the same way and to seek their redemption. On the other hand, if he believes that God does not love them, there is small incentive for him to do so. It seems to me that the chief reason we do not have a greater zeal for the salvation of others is that we do not sense that zeal in God and respond to it.

The apostle Paul testified, "The love of Christ constraineth us" (II Cor. 5:14). To what love does this refer? Man's love for Christ or Christ's love for man? Clearly the latter. The entire context indicates this, especially the words that follow: "because we are convinced that one died for all." Here we see Paul's love for his fellow men at its deepest level. It is not mere good will, not mere affection for people nor concern for their needs, not even a desire for their salvation as such. There is an infinitely greater love that embraces and impels Paul's own poor love. The love of Christ, he cries, constrains me—the love of Christ for all men!

It makes a great difference in a Christian's attitude to his unbelieving neighbor whether in the back of his head and the bottom of his heart he believes that God loves that neighbor with the love of the incarnation and the love of the cross. Our common aloofness and unconcern toward the spiritual needs of our fellow men can only be overcome by seeing the love of God and the atonement of Christ in fully universal perspective. It is no mystery that churches and Christians who hold this perspective far outstrips us in missionary zeal and effort. I can only repeat what I wrote in my first article, "God so loved *all men* that He gave His only begotten Son! May this great truth permeate the life and witness of the church in full power."

With such very practical matters the study committee deals very theoretically. Theoretical answers should be determinative but such theoretical answers must fit the questions. Principle and practice are essentially one. Principles which are not effective in practice are unreal. Practice which does not conform to principle is worthless. Nearly all of the study committee's report is theoretical. The few pages which deal with more practical aspects are disappointingly abstract, touching ever so lightly and briefly on the sort of questions originally raised in my articles. As long as the committee has not more closely related its doctrinal guidelines to missionary performance and evangelistic methods, to my mind its study is scarcely complete.

In reply to the contention that our common view of divine love and atonement is a hindrance to missionary spirit and activity the committee responds by saying, "The doctrines of election and limited atonement need not in any way dampen our zeal for missions" (p. 503). The committee says further, "Theologically speaking, the doctrine of limited or

definite atonement does not obscure the fact of God's concern for all men" (p. 502). Not only are these statements theologically questionable; as very general and abstract assertions their relevance to actual missionary practice is not evident.

When the committee asks, "Where then lies the blame?" (p. 504) there follows just one paragraph in which it argues that the blame lies not in our doctrines but in such things as spiritual apathy, low level of sanctification, material prosperity, environmental influence, inferiority complexes, lack of Scriptural knowledge, immigrant mentality, ennui with failure, lack of prayerfulness, lack of compassion, doctrinal indifference, and ecumenicism. In all charity it must be said that this analysis is superficial and unconvincing. It is superficial because these are further symptoms of what is wrong more than they are causes. It is unconvincing because it lacks evidence and argumentation.

In my articles I reflected on my personal experience as a missionary, on the experience of scores of other missionaries whom I know, and on my study and teaching of missions for many years. The committee does not tell us the basis for its judgment regarding missionary practice.

The following lines from a letter written by one of our church members give a clear ring of experience and speak for many others we may be sure: "I grew up in Grand Rapids, went to Christian schools and Calvin and then married and went to live 'in the world.' Believe me, I was not prepared. I viewed my fellow men with suspicion and fear rather than with loving concern. I thought that anyone outside was a danger to my own spiritual purity and that of my family . . . I know that I am a living example of the problem you have had the insight to define . . . I pray that God will teach more of us what our church never did teach . . . Only when I looked on (my fellow man) as an object of God's love could I establish the loving relationship necessary to be an influence in his life . . . I want you to know that from my limited, practical experience I understand what you are talking about because it has been a part of my life . . . In spite of the findings published in the Agenda of 1966, I know there is warrant for your statement that 'the doctrine of limited atonement as commonly understood and observed in the Christian Reformed Church impairs the principle of the universal love of God and tends to inhibit missionary spirit and activity.'"

Likewise significant are the following excerpts from the thoughtful statement of a Sunday School teacher: "The current discussion on God's love has been confined mostly to theologians. By contrast, one of the areas where the problems involved come to their most practical expression is in working with children who are objects of our mission outreach. For years our mission Sunday-school teachers have been teaching 'Jesus Loves Me' to little children who do not come from covenant homes. The evident meaning of this little gospel song is that Jesus loves these children in a redemptive way . . .

"What do we say to a mission child who, after hearing the story of Zaccheus, asks us: 'Does Jesus love me too?' If we say, 'Yes, he loves you very much—just as he did Zaccheus,' we run into problems. For these are

children from non-covenant homes . . . Are there two kinds of love in God — one that is redemptive and one that is non-redemptive?

“Isn't it our right and our duty to say that Jesus loves them—loves them sacrificially, redemptively, with the only love that is truly *agape*? Unless we can say so, how can we truly say that He loves them at all? For love is sacrifice. God is *agape*. Where, otherwise, is the dreadful import of the words: ‘How shall they escape who neglect so great a salvation?’”

“If, on the other hand, this thinking is in error—if it is in conflict with Scripture—then what must we say to little children from non-covenant homes when they ask, ‘Does Jesus love me too?’ And how can we conscientiously allow them to sing: ‘Jesus loves me, This I Know?’”

According to the study committee this teacher's thinking is indeed in error. However, for her last two vexing questions the committee has no answer. Do not hundreds of our Sunday School and Vacation Bible School teachers have a right to know?

Another children's song which raises questions is the well known “Jesus Loves the Little Children.” Yes, “all the children of the world,” says the song. These words are well-accepted in our churches and schools. According to the study committee, however, they must express God's general benevolence and not his redemptive love. Do unchurched children realize this? Do even the children of the church realize it? If the committee's view is correct, it would seem that children are being seriously misled and that this song has no place, particularly in evangelistic work with children.

But the theological problem of “Jesus Loves the Little Children” cuts even deeper. The last time I noticed this song it was printed on the back of a bulletin from one of our denominational home mission fields. Shortly before, I saw its first two lines above a picture of Korean children on the front of a folder distributed by our World Relief Committee for promotional purposes. Even more pointedly, the Christian Reformed Board of Foreign Missions, in its series of bulletin covers called “Meet Your Missionary” (Vol. 1, No. 9), featured the lines of this song about Jesus' universal love and added: “These words ring out in Sunday Schools and churches across America every Sunday, and they explain pretty well why we have foreign missions.” Such witness in home missions, such motivation for world relief, and such rationale for foreign missions can hardly be approved by the study committee for they seem to compromise “the qualitative distinction between the general love of God for all His creatures and His special love for the elect,” which the committee posits.

Many problems of this kind arise when we try to apply the committee's missionary theory to missionary practice. Consider what one of our missionaries in Nigeria did a few years ago. At the front of his mission compound he placed a large sign in the Tiv language proclaiming, “God loves all the Tiv people.” One wonders what the consequences would be for such missionary practice if Synod were to adopt the recommenda-

tions of the committee. Would the Board of Foreign Missions have to ban such signs?

The same missionary who displayed this sign, Rev. Rolf Veenstra, also wrote the following lines from Nigeria for his *Banner* column, "Word a Week": "We do not hesitate to say to any man, 'God loves you.' Berkhof declares Christ's death was sufficient for the salvation of every one. John Calvin writes, 'Our Lord Jesus suffered for all' . . . Yet the personal appeal, 'Christ died for you,' is suspect in Reformed circles for the simple reason that Arminian ideas are read into it. Calvinism calls for clear thinking and fine distinctions. Even more than in Jesus' day it requires that the wine of the Word be poured into new bottles" (November 17, 1961). Curiously, apart from one brief challenge in "Voices", this statement by Rev. Veenstra elicited no public outcry and no ecclesiastical action. Now, however, it is disapproved by the study committee.

The Conference of the Japan Mission of the Christian Reformed Church has something to say on the practical implications of the committee's report. This Conference unanimously adopted and sent to the study committee a statement from which the following is quoted: "The new proscription of the use of the sentence 'Christ died for you' in the proclamation of the Gospel seriously straitjackets the kerugmatic situation. As missionaries we feel that . . . it is one of the beauties of the Gospel and one of the joys of preaching to be able to preach to individual sinners and assure them that Christ gave Himself as a sacrifice for the sins of particular individuals . . . Proscription of this phrase would truncate our evangelistic preaching. We need to say this in our preaching so that men as individuals feel individually drawn to the Loving Savior and make an individual commitment of repentance and faith" (quoted from a copy received officially from the Conference).

The foregoing statement speaks forcefully for itself. A sizeable group of experienced and responsible Christian Reformed missionaries have declared that for them to apply one of the study committee's recommendations would truncate their evangelistic preaching. This is a matter of the utmost seriousness. Since the study committee includes no missionaries and since it has shown no research on missionary practice, it becomes the more necessary that Synod itself weigh carefully a testimony of this kind.

The committee says, "essentially the gospel message is not that Christ died for all men, but that Christ died for sinners" (p. 501). Yet the committee does not demonstrate how this message may be communicated to unbelievers in direct confrontation. True enough, Christ died for sinners. But the critical question is just how one says that to a sinner without saying either literally or in effect: "God loves *you*" and "Christ died for *you*". Sermons preached on the Back to God Hour are noteworthy in this connection. They often strikingly illustrate the practical problems which arise. Some significant excerpts from the printed sermons of various preachers follow.

In a sermon on Isaiah 55:6 we find: "It was as though God were saying to us . . . that's why I am giving you a Savior to redeem you,

to purge your hearts, to call you from your wicked ways and your unrighteous thoughts, so that you will seek mercy and pardon while I am near to give it to you." The hesitation between "us" and "you" is noticeable but the eventual universalism of the "you" is unambiguous. Each listener seems to hear clearly that Christ was given for him.

A sermon on Luke 15:7 says, "The value of a man depends upon his personal relationship to Jesus Christ—a relationship of repentance and redemption. If he doesn't want that . . . he has not only refused to repent, but he has rejected the love of God which would redeem him." Does this not communicate a universal redemptive love which may be rejected? Later the same sermon says, "God has paid an infinite price for sinners like you and me—the price of the precious blood of His own dear Son!" Would not the unbelieving listener understand this as saying to him "Christ died for you?" And would he not be justified in understanding it so?

Similarly in a sermon on Deuteronomy 8:3 the preacher said, "For you are nothing less than the image of God, and you are so important to God that He insisted on sending Jesus to suffer, to die and to live again to save you from sin and death and hell." Such preaching is disapproved by the study committee's recommendations. But how would the committee say it? The committee has given its answer in terms of theological discourse but not in terms of gospel proclamation.

An excerpt from a sermon on John 1:29 illustrates how in preaching the first person pronoun may be used with implicitly the same meaning as the second person pronoun. Notice in the following words the switch from "you" to "man", to "our" and "we" without giving the unbelieving listener any feeling that he is being dropped from the terms of address: "Remember you are dealing with a holy God . . . He is a God who can not permit sin to go unpunished, and yet wants man in his fellowship so much that He gave His only begotten Son to take our place and accomplish on Calvary what we could never have accomplished ourselves." The unbelieving listener could hardly hear this in any other way but as saying to him, "Christ died for you." Would this formulation possibly have the committee's approval? If so, what do we really mean by it?

The difficulties of a Christian Reformed preacher in making Christ's death meaningful to any man and the ambiguities of communication into which he falls are further illustrated by the following excerpts from a radio sermon. The first refers to unbelievers saying, "They live and die as though the Son of God had never come to earth! It makes no difference to them that He died on the cross and rose from the grave to save us from our sins." Notice the awkward transition from the general "they" to the vague "us." If the preacher does not intend "us" to be as general and inclusive as "they," he is confusing the unbelieving listener who will surely understand it that way because he assumes that he is included in the customary "us" of a speaker and his audience. If on the other hand, the preacher is referring to the elect by saying "He died on the cross . . . to save us from our sins," he utterly fails to con-

vey his meaning. Perhaps our theological uncertainties confuse our gospel communication.

Another radio sermon—on John 1:29 as in another instance above—speaks more clearly when it says, “The wrath of God against the totality of evil and sin was unleashed upon the Lamb God Himself provided.” It then goes on to say, “And you must believe that that sacrifice was enough to pay for the sins of all—no more sacrifices of any kind are necessary for salvation. You must believe that He died for you.” The unbelieving listener can understand these words in only one way that Christ died for him!

Regrettably the committee has not faced such concrete problems as the foregoing. The report leaves them unsolved. Neither are they raised for the first time here. Essentially they were stated in my original articles.

The basic problem may be illustrated clearly in the context of personal witnessing. Suppose that in the course of a conversation with an unbeliever I tell him that he must believe in Christ to be saved. Suppose that he then responds by asking me what he must believe about Christ. Next I tell him about Christ’s redemptive work including an explanation of the cross. The conversation goes on and according to the advice of the committee, I tell him that Christ died to save sinners. To that he responds by asking, “Is that for me? Do you think that Christ died for me?” What do I say next? The committee has no advice at this point. The implication, however, of the committee’s theory seems to be that I should say, “He died for you if you believe it.” For me that would be a very poor answer to give. It would compromise the gospel and might well lose the contact. No, to any one who asks me, “Did Christ die for me?” I would say, with suitable explanation, “Yes, he did. This you must believe to be saved. Christ died for you!” I pray that no Christian Reformed Synod will ever declare that my answer is “unwarranted in the light of Scripture and the confession,” as the study committee recommends.

II. THE USE OF SCRIPTURE IN THE STUDY REPORT

As a second major observation on the study report, let us note that it does not do justice to the Biblical givens. On this score I submit first that generally the committee has not given Scripture its due. Consider the structure of the report. After an introductory analysis which is wholly historical and dogmatical there is a section dealing with the love of God. This section contains much more traditional dogmatics than Scriptural exposition. One gets the impression, further, that Scripture is interpreted more according to doctrinal formulations than doctrinal formulations are interpreted according to Scripture. Next comes a thirty-page section on the atonement. After giving attention to my views, the committee gives a lengthy historical, dogmatical and confessional survey of what it considers to be the true Reformed tradition. Only then, in the light of all the systematic theology which has preceded, do we come to a section of Biblical analysis which is in turn capped by several pages on the confessions.

It may be questioned whether this gives Scripture the deserved place of priority in a study of this kind. The weight of the committee's argument falls not on Scripture but on traditional dogmatical constructions. In its Biblical analysis, moreover, the committee uses extended quotations from the very theologians previously used in its systematic analysis. One is tempted to ask whether the traditional theologians favored by the committee are being objectively tested by Scripture or are being allowed to support themselves by their own exegesis.

Even more telling than the foregoing observations is the committee's own testimony. The committee says, "We have found that what Candlish asserted was true, namely, that in all cases it was not too difficult to harmonize the so-called universalistic passages with the doctrine which at first sight they were supposed to contradict." The question must be put: Is it the task of Reformed theology to harmonize Scripture with doctrine or to harmonize doctrine with Scripture? The committee seems to have tried the former.

A second general criticism on the committee's handling of Scripture is that it has not evaluated some of the relevant exegetical emphases of certain Reformed theologians today. Especially relevant is the emphasis on understanding Scripture in its specific historical and cultural setting, that is, in its proper context in the history of revelation. At crucial points the committee does not offer a careful historical exegesis.

As examples let us consider the verses from John, chapters 10 and 17, which are often used to argue for the traditional doctrine of limited atonement. The first is about the good shepherd and the sheep. The second is the so-called high priestly prayer of Jesus. In John 10, Jesus speaks of the sheep who hear his voice and whom he leads out (vs. 3). They are his own (vs. 14), those whom the Father has given to him (vs. 29). In John 17 Jesus says that he prays for those whom the Father has given him and not for the world (vs. 9). In John 10 Jesus says that no one will snatch them out of his hand (vs. 28) and in John 17 he says that none of them is lost except the son of perdition (vs. 22). These passages show evident similarities. The important question for our study is: Who are those whom Jesus says that the Father had given to him?

I would suggest that Jesus here refers to those individuals who actually belonged to him in that immediate historical situation, namely his disciples. They were the sheep who at that time and place actually heard his call and followed him (John 10), who actually had come to believe in him during his earthly ministry (John 17). Let the reader examine these passages carefully with this in mind and see how reasonably and meaningfully this interpretation fits in both passages. The Father had given these persons to him, then and there, in the flesh. As such they were to be distinguished from all persons who did not follow and who did not believe. So too Jesus' reference to "other sheep I have which are not of this fold" (10:27) and to "those that believe on me through their word" (17:20) become clear. Jesus expresses his expectation that there will be others too who will hear his voice and follow him—others who will believe and become one with those who then believed.

An important aspect of this properly historical exegesis is that shepherd and sheep are in the first place symbols of God and Israel, derived from the Old Testament where they are prominently so used. When Jesus spoke these words he was carefully confining his ministry to the context of Old Testament particularism. He was revealing himself as sent "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." He told the twelve not to go "into the way of the Gentiles." Some of our brethren in the Netherlands have written helpfully about this exegetical framework.¹ Thus the teaching of John 10 is in the context of God's special relationship to Israel. The gospel of the kingdom was embedded in the historical structure of particularism. The sheep of whom Jesus spoke were Jews, particularly those who believed in him at that time.

In this exegetical perspective, I would suggest, we must see the teaching of Jesus that "the good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep" (10:11) and the prayer of Jesus, "I pray for them; I pray not for the world" (17:9). These are not in principle limiting statements. They are rather references to the immediate historical situation and limited only to that extent, namely to the believers at that time. Notice what the committee says: "Certainly this passage teaches a definite atonement" (p. 487). But is this so clear? The committee asserts but does not prove. What is the exegetical evidence? When Jesus says that he lays down his life for the sheep he says nothing about any persons for whom he does not die. Let us allow this passage to say only what it does say and nothing that it does not say. This is according to the accepted rules of grammatical and historical exegesis.

At this point we should note verse 26 where Jesus says to certain Jews, "But ye believe not because ye are not of my sheep." Does this mean that Jesus would not die for these Jews? Surely not. Even if one holds to "limited atonement," he would not dare say that in the audience to whom Jesus spoke these words there was no one who would later repent and believe, possibly at Pentecost or during the later increase of the church. We must allow this incident to stand separately, just as it occurred. Jesus meant to say, it appears, that the Jews who on that day were questioning him were not of his company. They, then and there, did not believe in him. They were not his sheep and did not belong to his flock.

What now did Jesus mean when he said, "I pray not for the world?" (17:9). If the preceding exegesis is correct, this is not difficult. Surely Jesus did not mean to say that he did not love the world and that under no circumstances would he pray for it. The prayer here offered was a very specific prayer, with specific petitions which he then and there uttered for the followers whom the Father had then given him. It was that specific prayer, and that prayer alone, regarding which Jesus said that he did not pray it for the world.

The exact petitions which Jesus prayed for his little band of believers at that time were as follows: that they would be faithful and joyful, that

¹ Note especially Johannes Blauw, *The Missionary Nature of the Church* and Herman Ridderbos, *The Coming of the Kingdom*.

they would be kept from the evil one, that they would be sanctified in truth, and that they would be united with those who would later believe through them. It then becomes perfectly plain why Jesus did not pray these petitions for the world. It would have made no sense to pray such things for the unconverted world. However that Jesus did not pray these particular petitions for the world says nothing about his disposition toward the world. He was simply praying at that moment in terms of the unique historical relationship which he enjoyed with those followers whom the Father had already given to him, a relationship in which the world did not share. On the other hand, in verses 21 and 23, part of this same high priestly prayer, Jesus did indeed pray for the world. He prayed the very thing which was appropriate as a prayer for the world. He prayed that the world might believe. How natural! He prayed that the world which God loved (John 3:16) and for which he would die (I John 2:2) might believe.²

The committee says in concluding its analysis of the John 10 passage, "Any one who would maintain this (the interpretation I have suggested) misses the whole point of Christ's discourse in this chapter" (p. 487). I would respectfully point out that this statement by the committee begs the question. No matter how convinced the committee may be of its position, saying so does not make it true. Is there not also a possibility that the committee is missing the point?

Let us now consider the committee's exegesis of the so-called universalistic texts. Commenting on all of these would extend these remarks unduly. Moreover, similarities among them are such that what is said about some will apply to others also. Let us look first at the committee's exegesis of John 3:16, a text which has been pivotal in the discussion. It was the starting point of my first article, written in observance of Christmas, 1962, which by title interprets this text as "God So Loved—All Men!"

The study report suggests that "world" in John 3:16 may mean "The cosmos, or the human race, as an undifferentiated totality; and therefore not necessarily every individual in the human race." The committee also says: "Most Reformed writers have taken the word 'world' . . . as referring to all mankind, Jews and Gentiles, but alienated from the life of God, sin-laden, exposed to judgment, and in need of salvation" (p. 461). Here we come to a point which seems to need clarification. The committee speaks of "the human race" or "all mankind" in the sense of "an undifferentiated totality" which does not necessarily include "every individual." The concept of "undifferentiated totality," prominent in the committee's exposition of the "universalistic" passages, needs careful examination.

The committee says regarding John 1:29, "We believe that the term 'world' here has the same meaning that it has in John 3:16, and refers to mankind in its totality" (p. 478). For me "mankind in its totality" is

² This exegesis of John 10 and 17 is relevant also to other passages which the committee interprets in a particularistic manner, e.g., Matthew 1:21 and John 6:39. These too must be interpreted in the context of Old Testament particularism.

an acceptable formulation of the meaning of "world" in these two passages. Adding I John 2:2 and 4:14 will enable us to concentrate on four passages simultaneously. The committee maintains that "mankind in its totality" has the obvious and natural meaning of "all men." In none of the four passages under scrutiny here is there any limitation in the context. Let us try the substitution of "mankind in its totality" for "world" in each case. We then have: "God so loved *mankind in its totality* . . ." (John 3:16). "Behold, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of *mankind in its totality*" (John 1:29). "He is the propitiation for our sins and not for ours only, but also for the whole of *mankind in its totality*" (I John 2:2). "The Father hath sent the Son to be the Savior of *mankind in its totality*" (I John 4:14). Does this not yield the simple and natural sense of "all men" in each case? The Reformed principle of the perspicuity of Scripture would seem to apply here.

There are also numerous respected authorities who interpret John 3:16 as referring to all men. Surely the vast majority of Christian teachers and preachers throughout the centuries have so understood it. Not he who understands this celebrated verse as declaring God's love for all men but he who narrows that perspective carries the burden of proof before the bar of historic and contemporary Christian faith. The study committee asks Synod to declare: "The word 'world' in John 3:16 . . . is to be interpreted not distributively . . ." (p. 506). Such exegesis is the liberty of any individual or committee, but for a Synod to adopt it would seem to many to be theologically partisan and even ecclesiastically sectarian.

Surely Calvin should speak at an important juncture like this. In his commentary on John 3:16 he says, "God loves the human race and wishes that they should not perish." Evidently he speaks of a totality inclusive of all its parts when he uses the word "they," which is personal and inclusive of all. Then when he explains the term "whosoever" Calvin adds, "Such is also the import of the term *World* . . . for though nothing will be found that is worthy of the favor of God, yet he shows himself to be reconciled to the whole world when he invites all men without exception to the faith in Christ . . . but the elect alone are they whose eyes God opens that they may seek him by faith." In the latter lines he teaches plainly that the measure of "world" is "all men without exception."

To show further that Calvin uses "human race" distributively in such contexts as the foregoing, we may note that on II Peter 3:9 ("not wishing that any should perish"), he declares, "This is his wondrous love towards the human race, that he desires all men to be saved." Here too "human race" is equated with "all men." Numerous confirmatory interpretations of this kind are available elsewhere in Calvin's writings.

Neither is the view that John 3:16 includes all men so unusual in the Christian Reformed Church.³ For instance, the Reverend John Van-

³ The committee quotes Professor D. H. Kromminga in its own support, from a treatment of John 3:16 published in *The Banner* in 1940. A careful reading of this quotation (see committee report, p. 462) indicates, however, that Professor

der Ploeg, Editor of *The Banner*, holds that the love of which John 3:16 speaks is a love for all men. In 1960 (issue of December 16) he published an editorial similar in occasion to that of my article of 1962. Both were written for Christmas and both featured John 3:16. His was entitled "God's Christmas Greeting to the World—I Love You!" Mine was entitled, "God So Loved All Men!" Here is a remarkable coincidence. But it goes farther than these titles. Editor Vander Ploeg stated, as I did two years later, that world in John 3:16 should be understood as all men distributively. He wrote: "Dare we say it? That God's Christmas greeting to the world is, 'I love you!' *Dare we say it?* Listen to the Lord Himself: 'For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have eternal life.' Written large in letters of gold all over the mysteries of Bethlehem and Calvary is God's greeting to us, 'I love you.'" Let the reader note carefully what is said here. In the first part of the quotation the author says that God's "I love you" is to the "world." In the second part he says that God's "I love you" is to "us." Evidently if the latter is individual and distributive, so is the former. Likewise, if the former does not include all, neither does the latter.

The editorial then goes on to say, "At this point a question confronts us: *Does God really love the world?* We have no difficulty in saying that God loves his people—but, *the world?* There is good reason to believe that in this connection we are to think of *mankind* or *the human race*. God's Christmas greeting, 'I love you!' is then for mankind or the human race in general." Evidently here too Rev. Vander Ploeg interprets "world" in a universally distributive manner.⁴

One word should be added regarding the term "undifferentiated totality" which occurs frequently in the study report. The committee uses this concept to support its case for non-distributive interpretations of various passages. Perhaps the committee took this notion from the exegetical material of the New Testament Department where it often appears. The members of this Department, however, do not necessarily support the committee in its conclusions. These professors stated to the committee that the concept of "undifferentiated totality" grammatically neither requires nor excludes a distributive interpretation. In other words, the significance of this concept is neutral on the point at issue. To my mind an undifferentiated totality is still a *totality*. Therefore, unless positive contextual evidence points to a non-distributive interpretation, the primary and natural interpretation would be distributive.

Kromminga did not mean to exclude "all mankind" from the "cosmic totality" of which he speaks. Professor Kromminga meant only to object to Arminians who hold that "world" means "the whole human race" and "nothing else." An examination of this quotation within the article of which it is a part will show further that it hardly supports the committee's exegesis.

⁴ Rev. Vander Ploeg also says in his editorial, however, "All men have a sort of dual personality. In so far as they are his creatures or workmanship and bearers of his image, God loves them; in so far as they are sinners he hates them. He does both at one and the same time." This must be recognized as part of his viewpoint on John 3:16, although it does not bear on the exegetical point at issue.

In the four Johannine passages under consideration there seems to be no contextual reason for not accepting the latter sense.

Let us now turn to the Pauline passages at issue. Two of the more representative ones will engage our attention, with the assumption that points at issue in all of these passages will thus be brought into focus. The central question is clear: Are the occurrences of "all" and "all men" distributive or non-distributive?

The first Pauline passage which we single out for attention is II Corinthians 5:14-15: "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that one died for all, therefore all died; and he died for all, that they that live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him who for their sakes died and rose again." The committee's exegesis of this passage is found on pages 480-482 of its report. In a footnote, the committee states that it gives "a rather extensive exegesis" of this passage "because in connection therewith our committee was given a lengthy document in which, on the basis of the ideas of 'human solidarity' and 'corporate personality' it was proposed that all men distributively are involved in the death of Christ as well as in his resurrection."

The reader may wonder what is back of this rather obscure reference. As indicated previously in this communication, the New Testament Department of Calvin Seminary gave the study committee an exegesis of certain passages as requested. Among these was II Corinthians 5:14-15. Regarding this passage, along with I Corinthians 15:22 and Romans 5:18-19, the New Testament professors submitted a lengthy document under the following three headings: "All men" and the Death of Christ; "All Men" in Christ and the Resurrection of the Body; and "All Things" in, by and under Christ.

What the committee concludes regarding this document is rather surprising. It says, "We do not presume to evaluate this material in our report, but only mention it as a possible area of fruitful theological reflection, as we continue to articulate the biblical data regarding the universal and particularistic aspects of Christ's work." May the committee rightly refuse to evaluate this material? Is such material legitimately regarded as a "*possible*" area for theological reflection, or is it rather a "*necessary*" area in this study?

The document of the New Testament Department, which I have before me, interprets the phrases "one died for all" and "he died for all" in the passage above as *universal* rather than *limited*. It says that Paul realized the death of all by knowing that Christ died for all. I quote: "Paul reached the understanding that all men died—the 'men' he is trying to persuade (5:11)—from understanding that Christ died for all." The document contains a formidable argument to support this judgment, an argument available to Synod from its authors or from the study committee.

The study committee's exegesis of this passage is complex—too complex to analyze in detail here. I only wish to affirm the literal and self-evident meaning of "all who died" as simply all men. This is really the crucial point at issue. For everyone agrees that the "all" for whom

Christ died must be the same as the "all" who died. In the committee's view the latter are those who died with Christ, namely believers. To my mind this contradicts the natural and perspicuous meaning without contextual necessity, and also forces the meaning to fit dogmatical pre-conceptions. What the committee fails to recognize in three pages of exegesis is that the predominant feature of the text, the immediate context, and the larger context is Paul's mission. That mission was to all men. Paul's universal mission makes reasonable and even necessary the interpretation of the "all" who died and the "all" for whom Christ died as the same all men to whom the love of Christ constrained him to preach.

The second Pauline passage to which I would call particular attention is I Timothy 2:4-6: "Who would have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, one mediator also between God and men, himself man, Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all; the testimony to be borne in its own times." Concerning this passage the committee states that the issue is whether "all men" (vs. 4) and "all" (vs. 6) should be interpreted as all men individually or as all classes of men. The committee claims the latter, saying that "Paul exhorts his readers to avoid the narrow particularism of the Jews, who would exclude heathen and publicans from salvation, and also the exclusivism of the Greeks who under the influence of Gnostic ideas would limit salvation to an elite number" (pp. 482-484). The committee rightly contends that the context must decide the foregoing question.

So let us consider the context. In verse 1 Paul exhorts his readers to pray for "all men." But, claims the committee, in verse 1 Paul speaks of all classes of men rather than of all men individually. Therefore the same is true of the "all" in verses 4 and 6. But is this a reasonable interpretation of verse 1? It would be rather unnatural that the reader would be urged to pray for *all kinds* of men. How does an accent on *classes of men* fit this exhortation? That rulers are mentioned specifically does not help the argument because rulers are only one class. Most certainly *all kinds* of men are involved if all *men* are designated, but to exclude the latter by emphasizing the former, as the committee does, produces a strange and improbable interpretation. There should be a compelling reason for not using the simplest and most obvious meaning, namely, that Christians should pray for all men without exception.

Relevant here is the comment of Dr. A. C. De Jong, a member of the study committee. He says in his book, *The Well-Meant Gospel Offer* (quoted by the committee also): "Frequently those who confess the Biblical teaching of predestination have restricted the phrase (all men)⁵ in this text to mean only the elect sinners. This is accomplished by reading 'all men' as 'all classes of men'. Now it is true that only those chosen in Christ (Eph. 1:4) will ultimately be saved. But we do not believe that this particular truth is in focus in this passage It is exactly the truth of the universal offer of salvation which comes into

⁵ Parentheses within these quotations give the English equivalent of Greek words and phrases of the author's text.

focus in this passage, and it speaks of the redemptive disposition of the calling God who wants all men to be saved in the way of faith" (p. 171). Dr. De Jong continues: "In verse 1 Paul urges his readers to pray for all men. This injunction is concretized in verse 2 as Paul insists that they are also to pray for kings and (all) in high places. But the concretization of verse 2 does not necessarily restrict the universality of the (all men) of verse 1 by making it to mean all classes of men, i.e. all men of all sorts, of all social, economic and political classes" (p. 172). He adds: "We call attention to the fact that (all) in the plural without the article can have various meanings but seldom if ever means all classes, all types or all kinds" (p. 173).⁶

It is not difficult to find other respected exegetes who hold that the passage before us teaches a universalism of persons rather than of classes. A striking example has come from one of our ministers. He submitted a personal communication to the study committee and sent me a copy. This correspondent, whom I do not name because I can not now ask his permission, writes to the committee "You give your interpretation of I Timothy 2:1-6 and that of those who agree with you. But in that way we do not get ahead in doctrine. Why didn't you also give the explanation of, e.g., Professor Henry Schultze of this same text? He was always considered to be a good exegete and thoroughly Reformed, wasn't he? Would he not also be worth listening to? Or are we not to hear him just because his view is different than yours? He wrote for the Men's Societies in *The Federation Messenger*, and his comments can be found in the issues of October and November, 1944."

This correspondent proceeds to quote extensively from Professor Schultze's articles. Detailed documentation is not given and can not be added here. I include only enough excerpts to show that Professor Schultze was among those who interpret this passage in a completely universal manner. Concerning "all men" in verse 1 he says, "This is universal. There is no limitation. Pray and thank God for all men. Jesus practiced this. He even prayed for those who were maltreating him on the cross . . . All men means *all men*." When he comes to the "all men" in verse 4, Professor Schultze says, "Calvin makes this to *mean all classes of men*. Then God is not willing to save every individual but just representatives from all races. However, it is well to remember that as you limit the meaning of ALL MEN here you will have to do the same in verse 1 . . . It seems to me that it is difficult to make anything else out of ALL MEN than ALL MEN. That is every individual."

Neither did Professor Schultze hesitate to draw the obvious conclusions from his exegesis. Concerning the words, "gave himself a ransom for all," he wrote, "Jesus surrendered himself voluntarily to death . . . He did it not for his own sake, but for the sake of 'all men' . . . If this

⁶ This exegesis of Dr. De Jong is part of his doctrinal dissertation, written under the guidance of Dr. G. C. Berkouwer of the Free University. As such it has a legitimate place in Reformed scholarship regardless of whether Dr. De Jong still holds to it today.

interpretation seems at odds with the idea of election and predestination, I can but plead, 'so it does'."

I wish to rest my position on I Timothy 2:4-6 with the exegesis of Dr. De Jong and Professor Schultze. They state well what I consider to be essential in its proper interpretation. This exegesis, along with that of II Corinthians 5:14-15, as applicable in important respects also to other Pauline passages such as Romans 5:28, I Corinthians 15:22, Titus 2:11 and I Timothy 4:10.

In the foregoing section of this communication I have attempted to show that the committee's interpretation of Scripture does not represent the only legitimate Reformed exegesis of the passages in question. What is more I have tried to demonstrate that the missionary principles and practices which I advocate are consistent with Scripture and expressive of its normative teaching.

III. THE ANALYSIS OF ISSUES IN THE STUDY REPORT

The third general observation offered here on the report of the study committee is that its analysis of certain major issues contains significant imprecisions, resulting in a degree of confusion and misunderstanding.

The first instance is the committee's conception of covenant love and its argument based thereon. There is a fallacy involved which bears on its view of a qualitative difference within the one love of God. This qualitative distinction the committee finds in both the Old and New Testaments, a distinction between "the general love of God for all his creatures and his special love for the elect" (p. 505). In the Old Testament, the former is defined as God's elective covenant love for Israel and the latter as his general love for those outside of Israel. In the New Testament, the former is defined as God's elective covenant love for individuals and the latter as his general love for all men. The committee spells out its conception as follows: "Nevertheless, the fact remains that Israel alone was the recipient of God's particular and covenant grace in which the other nations did not share. True, the prophets foretold the coming of the New Testament day, when the blessing of Abraham would be extended to all the nations of the earth We see, therefore, that even then the grace and the love of God that comes to the Gentiles is and remains particular covenant grace" (pp. 451-452).

Let us observe carefully the committee's argumentation at this point. Allegedly God's special love is covenantal throughout—initially for elect Israel (Old Testament) and subsequently for elect individuals (New Testament). One wonders how the second fits with the first. Is there not a strange inconsistency here? In the first case, the limited redemptive love of God is for a group without regard to belief; in the second case, that limited redemptive love of God is only for those who believe. The delineation of election and the focus of redemptive love have changed from the first to the second. The committee's argumentation at this point suffers from an undisclosed shift in terms from one part to the other.

Let us now observe the result of this shift for the committee's case. The committee defines divine redemptive love in the Old Testament time as

covenant love for Israel and regards divine love for those outside of Israel as non-redemptive. In the committee's view, God's love for unbelievers within Israel is redemptive and his love for unbelievers outside of Israel is non-redemptive. This distinction carries some very interesting implications. It implies that God's love for disobedient Achan was redemptive while his love for the king of Ai was non-redemptive; for suicide Saul it was redemptive while for Goliath it was non-redemptive; for evil Ahab it was redemptive while for Nebuchadnezzar it was non-redemptive; for wicked Jezebel it was redemptive while for the Queen of Sheba it was non-redemptive; for murderous Caiaphas it was redemptive while for Pilate it was non-redemptive; and for betrayer Judas it was redemptive while for the soldiers at the cross it was non-redemptive. Is this really the kind of a line the committee wishes to draw between redemptive and non-redemptive divine love? If the love of God had a redemptive quality for unbelievers in Israel such as those listed, what is the real meaning of its redemptive quality in distinction from non-redemptive love?

A further difficulty arises in the committee's New Testament delineation of redemptive love. The committee says, "During the Old Testament dispensation the nation of Israel collectively was the object of Jehovah's love. God was the God of His people. But in the teaching of Jesus the possession of this privilege is individualized" (p. 451). By being "individualized" the committee means that in the New Testament time the love of God (i.e. his redemptive love) was for individual believers (and not for individual believers). Obviously the committee is caught in a strange twist in its argumentation. For in the Old Testament framework it has drawn the circle of redemptive love to include unbelievers within Israel, while in the New Testament framework it has drawn the circle to exclude believers within the church. What then happens in the Old Testament framework to the committee's principle that God's redemptive love must surely redeem because the love of God can not be frustrated? Were Ahab and Jezebel redeemed? And Judas? Or, according to the committee's analysis, was the redemptive love of God perhaps frustrated in the case of unbelieving Israelites?⁷ And if God had genuine redemptive love for apostate Israelites can the committee explain that he would not have the same for covenant breakers in the church?

⁷ Dr. A. C. De Jong takes a very positive view of this in his book previously referred to. He says, "We hear Hosea, the prophet who addressed the apostatizing ten tribes, reminding the unbelieving and erring sheep of the house of Israel of God's disposition of love. 'When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my Son out of Egypt. The more the prophets called them, the more they went from them: they sacrificed unto the Baalim, and burned incense to graven images. Yet I taught Ephraim to walk: I took them on my arms; but they knew not that I healed them. I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love . . . ' (Hosea 11:1-4) . . . Was God not favorably disposed toward all of Israel when he said, 'For I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first born?' (Jer. 31:9). The Lord of redemptive love pleads here with his whole people. . . . This divine disposition also terminated upon all persons who were members of that select nation. . . . we have no theological right to say that the Lord was not really favorably disposed toward those Israelites." (*The Well-Meant Gospel Offer*, pp. 158-160).

On the other hand, it seems to me, if one sees that the redemptive love of God is for all men at all times, a clear covenant line is evident from the Old to the New Testament. For Israel was one nation chosen out of all nations to stand for a time in the place of all nations; one nation dealt with by God with special favor for the benefit of all (Genesis 12:3, Exodus 19:5-6, I Peter 2:9-10). In other words, God's covenant relationship to Israel was in principle a covenant relationship to all men. For God had from the beginning established a covenant relationship with all men, a covenant relationship which God had never broken even though it had been broken by man. Therefore God's redemptive covenant love was already in the Old Testament time in principle a redemptive love for all men, and in the New Testament dispensation what had been in principle redemptive love for all men was openly revealed as such. The committee correctly holds that covenant love is redemptive love. But what the committee fails to see is that covenant love is essentially for all men.

We have noted that the study committee's concept of covenant love lacks precision in relation to its concept of redemptive love. It remains to examine more closely the latter concept itself. In contrast to the view that the love of God is one and that this one love is redemptive for all men, the committee holds to a qualitative distinction within the one love of God. In its first recommendation the committee posits "a qualitative distinction between the general love of God for all his creatures and his special love for the elect" (p. 505). For the committee "special love" is equivalent to "redemptive love."

At this point an ambiguity appears. The phrase "qualitative distinction" is not clear. It may be variously interpreted. If by "qualitative distinction," for instance, the committee means that in the love relationship between God and the believer there is a *quality* of affection which is not found in the relationship between God and the believer, I would agree. Affection is possible only where love is reciprocated, as in the case of the believers. But exactly what does the committee mean by "qualitative distinction" in its first recommendation? It is difficult to agree or disagree with this recommendation as it stands because of the imprecision of the word "qualitative." The ambiguity is increased by the fact that at certain points the committee uses the word "essential" as equivalent to "qualitative" (e.g. p. 448). As far as I am concerned, there are indeed certain distinctions applicable to the one love of God which may be termed *qualitative*, but there can be no *essential* distinction within that love.

Perhaps terms such as "qualitative" and "essential" are not sufficiently precise in the present doctrinal context to state clear meanings. Although I too have used them, as far as I am concerned both are expendable. It is more important to be Biblically correct. So I will state my point of view in Biblical terms. Both the Old Testament *ahab* and the New Testament *agape* are used indiscriminately for God's disposition to the good and evil, to believers and unbelievers, to the saved and the lost. There is no line, either grammatical or conceptual, to separate two different kinds of love in the Bible for two different classes of people.

The Biblical analogy of marital love, often cited on this point, does not support the committee's argument for a distinct redemptive love. For from the Biblical point of view the proper love of a man for his wife does not differ *essentially* from his proper love for any other person. The love for both alike must have the quality of *agape* to meet God's standard. The difference between marital and non-marital love from the Biblical standpoint is a difference not in the nature of the love but in the relationship in which it is exercised. The notion that marital love is love of a different nature derives from worldly conceptions of romantic love rather than from Christianity.

Biblical teaching reveals that the love of God in the case of the believer is different than in the case of the unbeliever only in so far as the relationship of the former to God is different than the relationship of the latter. As in the case of marital love, the difference is relational, and therefore also quantitative, rather than essential. God loves the believer more and in a different way than the unbeliever, just as a husband loves his wife more and in a different way. But the difference in neither case, according to the Bible, is in the nature of the love. Further, this difference in relationship to God for the believer is explainable only by the grace of God, just as in ancient time the wife enjoyed her relationship only by the grace of her husband.

Let us now consider more directly the word "redemptive" in the phrase "redemptive love." This word too has caused confusion and misunderstanding. At first I used the distinction of "redeeming" and "redemptive," meaning thereby to distinguish between the love of God as experienced by the believer in a relationship of redemption from that love experienced by the unbeliever in a merely redemptive (not redeeming) relationship. However, when these terms proved confusing because they suggested two loves, I dispensed with them as contrasting terms and concentrated on the word redemptive as expressing the nature of God's love for all men. The latter was my primary interest because of its missionary significance. But the term "redemptive" is still dogged with misunderstanding. Why this should be I do not comprehend. It is a plain English word. What is *redemptive* need not *redeem* any more than what is *explosive* must *explode* or what is *curative* must *cure*. Explosive means "tending to explode." Curative means "tending to cure." "Redemptive" means "tending to redeem" and this is exactly the picture which I get in the Bible of the love of God for all men. But "tending to redeem" does not imply that redemption will inevitably result. Is this not perfectly Biblical?

In order to speak as clearly as possible in the context of the present discussion, the word "redemptive" may be considered expendable. It is not necessary to the statement of my position. What I believe is this: I believe that God loves all men with the one indivisible love which the New Testament calls *agape*. To be more specific, I believe that God loves all men with the love with which He loved the world in giving His Son (John 3:16); with the love with which Jesus loved the rich young ruler (Mark 10:21); with the love with which Jesus said, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden . . ." (Matthew 11:28); with the love with which Jesus cried, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem . . . How often I would . . .

but ye would not. . . . (Matthew 23:37); with the love with which Jesus prayed, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34); and with the love of Christ about which Paul said that it constrained him to preach (II Corinthians 5:14). Whatever theological terms may be used to express it, that is the love which I affirm to be for all men.

On this point, as on other points, much of our study and discussion has become snarled in abstract terms which are not in themselves Biblical. If we would start over using Biblical terminology the result might be surprising. This much should be evident. If Synod is to test and possibly use terms such as "qualitative distinction," "general love," "benevolence," "covenant love," and "redemptive love," there must be greater agreement as to what they mean than has been achieved thus far.

We come now to an area of discourse even less precise than the preceding, i.e. the atonement. At the beginning there is the problem of definition. The study committee reports that I declined to give a definition of the atonement when asked to do so (p. 465). True enough. However, this declining was not as evasive as it might appear. The context of discussion in the committee at that time included the following: that the confessions do not define the term, that none of the confessions even use the term (except Heidelberg Catechism, Q. 37, which speaks of Christ's "atoning sacrifice"), that Berkhof's *Systematic Theology* does not define it, that the concept of atonement in the Bible is not exact, and that any definition of atonement tends to beg the question in respect to present issues. It may be noted further that the committee itself does not give a definition of atonement but uses it rather loosely as an equivalent to the concept of the death of Christ in the Canons of Dort. Hence it should be recognized at the outset that in our present discussion there is no clear definition of atonement, not even on the part of the committee. Can any careful doctrinal statement be made on this basis?

Additional vagueness in the committee's formulations arise from, on the one hand, its declaration that "Whenever we speak about the *nature* of the atonement, no reformed person would ever maintain that the atonement is limited" (p. 440) and on the other hand its recommendation that Synod declare "the doctrine of a definite or particular (limited) atonement must be maintained" (p. 506). Just how is the committee using "atonement" and "limited" in these formulations? Surely this variability in the use of terms can not provide a sure basis for a synodical doctrinal pronouncement.

The difficulty in speaking of the doctrine of limited atonement with clarity is that it has never received precise formulation in any official way. For this reason I referred in my articles to the doctrine of limited atonement "as commonly understood and observed in the Christian Reformed Church." The only technical creedal standing the phrase "limited atonement" has, to my knowledge, is that it has been superimposed on the Canons of Dort in an introduction attached by the Psalter Hymnal Revision Committee in 1934 with routine synodical approval. "Limited atonement" as a doctrinal formulation has standing in the Christian Re-

formed Church chiefly as a part of the popular doctrinal tradition which has grown up around T-U-L-I-P, that facile but misleading mnemonic for the so-called "five points of Calvinism."

One is therefore unable to define "limited atonement" with any official sanction. One may, however, attempt to describe it as a commonly held doctrinal idea in the Christian Reformed Church. This I attempted by describing it in terms of the following popular conceptions: that God gave his Son for the salvation of the elect, that Christ died only for the elect, that the phrase "universal atonement" is heterodox, and that it is improper to say "Christ died for you" to an unbeliever. Moreover, these common conceptions I have opposed because I am convinced that they "inhibit missionary spirit and activity." But to define theologically or technically the term "atonement" which our confessions do not and which many writers find difficult, is quite a different matter. Hence I declined to define it when asked by the committee to do so, preferring to take it in its commonly accepted usage and to insist that in this commonly accepted usage the atonement is universal rather than limited.

However, the press of the committee's challenge and the stimulation of further study and reflection now prompt me to say something more precise about the concept of atonement, even though this is advanced in no way as a technical definition. I would suggest that "atonement" is best used as a comprehensive term to designate the whole of God's redemptive work in Christ. In this connection I wish to revise what I stated to the committee a year ago when these matters were under discussion. I then suggested that direct efficaciousness is not in the atonement *as such* but rather in the work of the Holy Spirit (p. 463). At that time discussion in the committee centered only on the death of Christ as atonement.

I wish now to alter and hopefully clarify this matter by saying that as far as my view is concerned, the death of Christ has efficacy in the same way and to the same extent that any part of Christ's redemptive work has efficacy, that is as a part of the whole. In this connection Christ's work through the Spirit has efficacy to the same extent and in the same way as any other part of Christ's work has efficacy. It is noteworthy that the Canons of Dort lay stress upon the efficacy of the Spirit, along with stress upon the efficacy of Christ's death (III-IV/11, 12). In this sense, as the totality of Christ's work, the atonement has efficacy.

I regret that a year ago, under the pressures of discussions with the study committee, I attempted to articulate my view of the atonement in the way I did. The committee has judged on the basis of that statement that I "introduce a disjunction between the work of Christ and that of the Holy Spirit" and that I seem to "drive a wedge between the work of the Father and that of the Son" (p. 473). I hereby wish to remove whatever justification there may have been for that criticism.

In connection with the foregoing examination of the concept of limited atonement in the committee report, we may note a somewhat imprecise application of this concept to the presentation of the gospel. The committee holds that "it is unwarranted to say to each and every man without distinction, 'Christ died for you' " because "such a statement is not found

in the preaching of Christ or the apostles" (p. 506). Would not this reason exclude saying "Christ died for you" to *any one*, the believer as well as to the unbeliever? For neither is such a statement found in the preaching of Christ or the apostles to believers.

It is true, as the committee points out (p. 500), that in instituting the Lord's Supper Christ said to his disciples: "This is my body which is given for you" and "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, even that which is poured out for you." The committee argues that whereas Jesus would not address such words to unbelievers, He did address them to believers. The committee says, "Certainly Christ would not have said those words to the chief priests who were even then plotting his death." But right here is a difficulty in the committee's position. For one of those present was indeed plotting Jesus' death, i.e. Judas.⁸ Thus Jesus said to Judas what the committee holds should be said only to believers. Furthermore, Paul directed the words, "This is my body which is given for you," to the congregation at Corinth (I Cor. 11:24) which included members whose status as believers was dubious to say the least. Is it ever warranted, according to the committee's argument, for these words to be used in celebrating the Lord's Supper in a congregation? Can the officiating minister ever be sure that there is no unbeliever present?

The same problem, incidentally, is involved in the committee's position on the redemptive love of God. If this love is only for believers, the minister has no warrant for addressing his congregation with the familiar words, "Beloved in Christ." For he must realize that there may be unbelievers present—either from the congregation or from the community, or perhaps both. It would seem that the study committee is not presenting the correct alternatives. In public proclamation the choice is not between saying to believers or to unbelievers: "God loves you" and "Christ died for you." The choice is rather between saying these things to *any* audience or to *no* audience at all.

To conclude this summary of points of imprecision in the study report, let us note a concrete and vivid example in the form of Dr. Roger Nicole's illustration of a refrigerator sale, an illustration which is used with approval by the study committee (p. 475). The illustration is too lengthy to repeat here. Its main point is that a refrigerator merchant is responsible to sell refrigerators only to those who come with money to buy, and that he need not have a refrigerator in stock for each person who reads his advertisement in the newspaper because he knows that customer response will be limited. This illustration is meant to show that a sincere gospel offer does not depend on the availability of salvation for all. To use Nicole's own words: "A coextensive prevision is not an essential prerequisite for a sincere offer."

⁸ The evidence for Judas' presence is strong. The three gospels which record the event agree that the Lord's Supper was instituted during the meal. Only John, who does not record the institution, records the departure of Judas. A strong majority of New Testament scholars maintain that Judas was present and partook of the Supper. It may be added that according to the Belgic Confession Judas was there (Art. 35).

This illustration is quite misleading in representing the committee's position, for it suggests that God acts on man's foreseen response and that man must pay for his salvation out of his own resources. Obviously this is not consistent with the Reformed emphasis on salvation by sovereign grace, and therefore any argument based upon this illustration is not convincing. What is more, the illustration of Dr. Nicole gives a rather distorted picture of the nature of God. Surely the God of the Scriptures does not offer salvation in the mechanical and calculating manner of a refrigerator merchant. On the contrary, the God of the Scriptures, in whose mission we serve, proclaims in the timeless words of Isaiah: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Isaiah 55:1).

IV. GENERAL REMARKS

In closing I wish to offer three general remarks. The first pertains to the function of the confessions in this study, the second to the theological methodology of the study report and the third to my personal position in this doctrinal study.

Little reference has been made thus far in this communication to the confessional standards. It has not been necessary to do so. For the confessions do not speak directly to the missionary questions which have been raised. These questions were far from the minds of those who framed and first affirmed our confessions. That was done in a day when the church was looking within and saw virtually no missionary opportunity or challenge other than that of restoring, reformulating and redirecting the gospel within Christendom. We seek in vain therefore for definitive and normative pronouncements in the creeds concerning the questions which precipitated the present discussion.

Here again it becomes evident that our confessional standards are historically conditioned, as was made clear in the decision of the Synod of 1961 not to proceed with revision of the Belgic Confession. We have no way of knowing what the authors of our confessional standards would say about the concrete missionary questions now before us. The creeds contain affirmations which underlie and govern all that the church does and says, but these questions require fresh guidance by the Word and the Spirit.

I earnestly believe that the position I have taken herein concerning missionary principle and practice is faithful to our confessional standards. It is in conformity to these standards that I seek to articulate the gospel and to serve in its cause.

My second general remark concerns the theological method used in the study report. Various individuals have already written about this, pointing out that the method is rather scholastic and hence rationalistic. I would not claim immunity from the same criticism. However, my emphasis has always been Biblical. Further, I have come to see more and more clearly that the missionary problems with which we are here

concerned derive from the rationalistic and scholastic methodology which has dominated our immediate theological tradition.

This methodology is challenged today most notably by Dr. G. C. Berkouwer. He is a pioneer within our own tradition of a more Biblical method in dogmatics and of the freedom of faith from systems of human logic. For him the purpose of theology is not to construct a logically coherent system. The committee, it seems, is still so motivated to a considerable degree.

The study committee speaks in a "preliminary observation" (p. 440) of "great difficulties." It goes on to say that "there will always be mysteries that will baffle our finite minds" and that it wishes "fully to recognize these mysteries and paradoxes." But the report hardly lives up to this introduction. In the opinion of many it is characterized by deductive argument and attempted logical consistency more than by recognition of mystery and paradox. This is most clearly evident in the committee's use of the principle of causality. The argument is that it follows from the non-salvation of some men that God does not love all men redemptively and that the atonement is for some men rather than for all. To buttress this argument the committee uses logical propositions such as that the love of God can not be frustrated and that the atonement must be savingly efficacious for all whom it covers. Then when this logical construction encounters Scripture passages which speak of God's redemptive love being frustrated and of some for whom Christ died who are yet unsaved (cf. I Cor. 8:11, Heb. 2:9, and II Peter 2:1 in addition to passages previously cited), the committee tends to tailor Scripture to logical dogmatic structures.

Such ways of explaining non-salvation go beyond Biblical warrant. Scripture leaves the problem of non-salvation in the realm of mystery—the mystery of sin and unbelief. Although the committee would not think of attributing sin to God, strangely it seems willing to attribute unbelief to him. In the Bible unbelief is never rationalized or explained. It is simply acknowledged for what it is—an irrationality, an utter mystery.

Surely salvation is a mystery too. But there is a difference. Salvation lies in the mystery of grace—the incomprehensible sovereign grace of God (John 3:16-17, Romans 11:33-36). Non-salvation on the other hand lies in the mystery of unbelief—in the realm of sin and darkness and death.⁹ The difference is important. The mystery of grace is in God. The mystery of unbelief is outside of God. This difference, it appears, the study committee has not fully recognized in its report.

Let us leave to mystery the problems of non-salvation—the problem of a redemptive love that does not always redeem and the problem of an atonement for all which does not save all. Let us consign the enigmas of non-salvation to the mystery of iniquity and unbelief, just as we

⁹ Cf. John 3:18-20, Mt. 13:38, Rom. 11:20, 25, and II Peter 2:1. Cf. also Canons of Dort, I/5 and II/6.

have long left the incomprehensible things of salvation to the mystery of sovereign grace.

My third and last general remark is strictly personal. I believe that in the present discussion the integrity of the gospel and fidelity to the mission of Christ are at stake. It is for this reason that I have written the foregoing communication. Moreover, I believe also that I speak for many church members and for scores of missionaries who have had no voice in the ecclesiastical procedures followed thus far.

I respect the report of the study committee as an expression of sincere conviction and as a competent statement of our traditional position on the matters under study. I do not wish to diminish in any way the opportunity of its members to maintain and to propagate their point of view. I do not ask them or any one else to agree with the position I advocate. I desire only that the freedom which I have enjoyed to express my own conviction in teaching and preaching be continued. In such freedom the Word may have free course and the Spirit will be unquenched. In such freedom God's truth will prevail and his mission will be accomplished.

Respectfully submitted,

Harold Dekker

REPORT 41

DOCTRINAL MATTERS

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

The Doctrinal Committee presents the following report:

I. INTRODUCTION

A year ago we presented our first report to the Synod of 1966. Synod, however, did not take any action upon our recommendations, but acting upon the advice of its advisory committee Synod decided the following: "to recommit this report to the study committee for further reflection and improvement, taking into account the above observation, and that the committee report to the Synod of 1967." The grounds for this decision were the following:

"a. The grounds of the recommendations fail to reflect adequately the Biblical and confessional support found in the report and may necessitate reformulation of the propositions.

"b. Additional problems in the context of this discussion need to be articulated."

Synod further adopted the following recommendation: "That Synod refer the report to the churches for study and evaluation urging the churches to submit their responses to the study committee by January 30, 1967.

Grounds:

"a. This will give the churches opportunity to express their responses to the complex issues involved.

"b. Several overtures request time for reflection on this report."

As we analyze this mandate, we may observe, first of all, that the Synod of 1966, without directly adopting the observations of its advisory committee, nevertheless did instruct the Doctrinal Committee to take these into account, indicating thereby that it considered them valid. These observations were the following:

"1. The report expresses substantially the Reformed tradition in the areas discussed.

"2. The grounds of the recommendations fail to reflect adequately the Biblical and confessional support found in the report and may necessitate reformulation of the propositions.

"3. There are related problems which arise out of this context which need theological clarification and precise statement, such as the following:

"a. The relationship and distinction between the love of God and the grace of God.

"b. The relationship between election and the sincere offer of salvation.

"c. The specific role which each person of the Trinity has in the atonement and its effectuation in the lives of men.

"d. The universal implications of the atonement.

"4. In view of the confusing state of contemporary theology the committee would caution all concerned against the use of poorly defined categorical statements and ambiguous terminology."

When we consider what the Synod of 1966 said about our report, and also the responses which we received from the consistories and classes, we believe that we may legitimately draw the following conclusions:

A. That neither the Synod of 1966 itself, nor the churches, expected the Doctrinal Committee to come to the Synod of 1967 with an entirely new report. For had Synod desired this, it would certainly have appointed a new committee. It cannot very well be expected that the present committee, which was unanimous in its thinking, would radically change its outlook, unless it were persuaded to do so by an overwhelming response from the churches to that effect. Also the specific mandate did not require an exhaustive overhaul of the report as such, but only an improvement of the same. And this improvement was to be sought for particularly in the recommendations, since these failed "to reflect adequately the Biblical and confessional support found in the report"; and secondly, in that there were "additional problems" which needed to be articulated.

B. From the decisions of the Synod of 1966 and the responses of the churches we believe we may also legitimately draw the conclusion that the advisory committee made a correct observation, when it stated that "the report expresses substantially the Reformed tradition¹ in the areas discussed." It is this consideration also that prompted our committee to come to Synod with substantially the same report, except for certain changes and suggested improvements. We are, however, adding an appendix which will deal with the related problems to which the advisory committee referred.

Looking back upon what has transpired in the last year, we are thankful that in the providence of God the Synod of 1966 postponed action on the report of the Doctrinal Committee. For it has become evident that previous to the meeting of that Synod our churches, indeed, had not had sufficient time to study the report. Now, however, all the churches have received ample time and opportunity to do so. And the committee is very grateful that so large a number of churches have responded to Synod's appeal, and have sent us the fruits of their study and their evaluations,

¹The word "tradition" here must be taken in the sense of "position," since we were informed by the reporter of the advisory committee that the latter word was originally used, and when the word "tradition" was substituted, it was definitely not done with the intention of conveying a different idea than the word "position" implies. Moreover, when on the floor of Synod the question was asked, whether the word "tradition" was to be taken in the sense of "position," the reporter answered in the affirmative, and no member of the advisory committee, nor of the Synod, questioned his interpretation.

either by themselves or through their classes. We have publicly thanked them for this response by placing an acknowledgment thereof in our church papers.

It may be useful to apprise Synod of the nature and content of these responses. Their total number was as follows: 77 from consistories; 7 from classes; and 12 from individuals. Besides these a missive was received from the Conference of the Japan Mission and a document from Prof. Carl Kromminga. All these responses were sent to us spontaneously and unsolicited. As to the responses of the consistories, 65 of these were either in substantial, or even in hearty agreement with the report and its recommendations. Nine consistories were not in agreement with the report, or its recommendations. Most of the criticism which they offered dealt with the recommendations which lacked proper Scriptural and creedal substantiation; while some chided the committee for what they called its one-sided, dogmatic emphasis on the doctrine of election. Three consistories informed us that they did not take any official action, because their members were divided in their opinions about the report. Of the seven classes, four (Grand Rapids West, Grandville, Wisconsin and Zealand) substantially agreed with the report; one (Lake Erie) disagreed; and two (Alberta South and Kalamazoo) decided to send our committee certain documents which had been presented to them, but which they did not endorse.

A few, particularly Classis Lake Erie, have raised objections to the committee's method which is then characterized as rationalistic and dogmatic, rather than exegetical and Biblically theological. However, the method advocated is neither defined nor demonstrated. In fact it is averred that the whole church must still look for a different theological method.

The committee reacts to this by calling attention to the fact that its method is that used by the church in the past and that the report is saturated with Biblical exegesis. The Synod of 1964 mandated the committee to carry out its study in the light of both Scripture and the creeds. This certainly indicates that in our method we were required to give due and careful consideration to the history and formulation of doctrine arrived at in the past by a Spirit-guided Church.

Permit us, therefore, at this juncture to go back to our former report, and once more to present this to Synod with the necessary improvements and additions.

II. HISTORY

The problem which the Synod of 1964 gave in the hands of our committee was initially precipitated by an article in the December, 1962 issue of *The Reformed Journal* from the pen of Professor Harold Dekker, incumbent of the chair of Missions in our Seminary. Disturbed at the apparent paucity of results of our mission endeavor and animated by the desire to be biblically and theologically sound in mission motivation, Prof. Dekker proposed the thesis that "The doctrine of limited atonement as currently understood and observed in the Christian Reformed Church impairs the principle of the universal love of God and tends to

inhibit missionary spirit and activity."² This thesis was developed in subsequent articles and gave rise to a spate of journalistic comment.

It also occasioned classical and congregational action. Two Classes, Wisconsin and Orange City, took official action. The former addressed a communication to the Board of Trustees of Calvin College and Seminary expressing its concern and requesting an inquiry into the doctrinal views of the professor of missions. Classis Orange City engaged in classical study of the matter and finally decided to suspend judgment until a full evaluation of the doctrinal implications could be made. That decision failed to secure the concurrence of the Hospers Church, which addressed itself directly to the Board of Trustees, and First Orange City, which drew up an overture and forwarded it to the Synod of 1964.

The Board of Trustees, at its May 1964 meeting, conducted a doctrinal colloquy with Prof. Dekker. As a result of this discussion the Board declared that in its estimation there were issues involved that merited further inquiry and it solicited and urged further exchange of research and opinion. It also commended Prof. Dekker for his deep interest in the principles and motivations of missions and expressed its confidence that the occupant of the chair of missions would continue to have the love and welfare of the church at heart.

It was proposed by the advisory committee of the Synod of 1964 that the broadest assembly conduct a doctrinal discussion similar to the one previously held by the Board of Trustees. After weighing the proposal, however, the Synod decided to place the question in the hands of a study committee. This action having been taken, Prof. Dekker was given the privilege of the floor. Expressing himself to the effect that in a day when evangelism is so urgent and the need of restudy of missionary motivation so essential, he had been constrained by obedience to the Scriptures and love for the Reformed faith to raise the issue in our communion. He reminded the Synod that the church in its re-evaluation of its position throughout the ages has been led by the Spirit to rid itself of misconceptions and erroneous theological tenets in order to better fulfill its God-ordained task. He suggested that the Christian Reformed Church may have reached such a juncture, and he concluded his remarks by avowing that his aim was to "continue studying and working in obedience to the Scriptures, in loyalty to the confessions, in response to the Spirit, in co-operation with Synod's committee, and in devotion to the gospel and to the church."

III. MANDATE

We received the following mandate: "To study in the light of Scripture and the Creeds the doctrine of limited atonement as it relates to the love of God, the doctrinal expressions of Professor H. Dekker beginning with and relative to his article entitled "God So Loves . . . All Men" and other related questions which may arise in the course of their study, paying specific attention to:

"a. Whether the nature of the atonement and the decree of election

²*The Reformed Journal*, Dec. 1962.

allow for the validity of making a qualitative distinction between the general love of God and His special love for the elect.

“b. Whether there is Scriptural evidence that the universal love of God includes any intent to bring about the salvation of the non-elect or to perform any redemptive act on their behalf.

“c. Whether the nature of the atonement as satisfaction reveals the universal love of God.

“d. Whether the teachings of the Canons of Dort warrant the use of such concepts as universal atonement and limited redemption.

“e. Whether the efficacy of the atonement is determined by the good pleasure of God in distinction or abstraction from the love of God.

“f. Whether, ‘the doctrine of limited atonement as commonly understood and observed in the Christian Reformed Church impairs the principle of the universal love of God and tends to inhibit mission spirit and activity.’

“g. Whether it is consistent with the genius of the New Testament evangelism to say to each and every man, ‘Christ died for you,’ and whether this statement is productive of confusion and misunderstanding in this generation of universalism and Arminianism.

“Grounds:

(1) A mandate to study these matters will allay much of the unrest which prevails in the churches.

(2) Such a study will help clarify the Reformed witness to our generation.

(3) This study may assist Professor Dekker in carrying forward his own work of carefully examining the various matters which he has raised.

(4) This carries forward the spirit of the report of the Board of Trustees which reads, ‘After the discussion the Board concluded that there are issues worthy of further inquiry and it trusts that future exchanges of research and opinion on these issues will be profitable to the Church.’

“(5) A study of this nature is requested in Overture No. 45.”

The committee was also mandated “to consult frequently with Professor Dekker in order that a spirit and relationship of full and free exchange may exist between the professor and the committee.” Moreover, the committee was authorized “to seek the advice and counsel of the professors in the departments of Dogmatics and Exegesis at Calvin Seminary.”

And finally the committee was mandated “to evaluate its findings and study and make every effort to bring a report to the Synod of 1965.” (Acts 1964, Art. 122, pp. 88, 89)

Your committee has tried to adhere to the stipulations of the mandate in that it requested our professor of missions to be present at many of its meetings and gave him ample opportunity to express himself on all points under discussion. It also made a grateful use of the advice and counsel from the Calvin Seminary professors in the departments mentioned above.

A careful analysis of the mandate, however, will reveal that, on the

one hand, it is very broad, as it includes all "other related questions which may arise in the course of their [the committee's] study." On the other hand, the mandate calls the attention of the committee to certain specific questions which were more directly raised in connection with the articles in *The Reformed Journal* which precipitated the present discussion.

There were various ways in which the committee could have tackled the problem assigned to it. For example, we might have tried to give a broad exposition of all the questions which came into our purview during our study. Or we might have simply tried to give concise answers to the seven questions which are enumerated in our mandate. However, we were of the opinion that neither course was feasible. Instead, we have taken the liberty to single out two subjects which seem to us most fundamental in the consideration of our task. If we shall be able to give Synod a clear exposition of these two subjects, then we believe we shall also have dealt with all the questions which the Synod of 1964 put to us.

The first subject concerns the love of God and the question whether, in the light of Scripture and the Confession, it is valid to make a qualitative distinction between the general love of God for all His creatures and His special love for the elect. The second subject concerns the doctrine of the atonement and raises the question whether, in the light of Scripture and the Confession, we may properly speak of a universal atonement or whether the traditionally Reformed terminology about an atonement which is limited or particular should be maintained. After this study we also wish to consider the following two questions, namely, whether it is proper to say to every man "Christ died for you," and whether "the doctrine of limited atonement as commonly understood and observed in the Christian Reformed Church impairs the principle of the universal love of God and tends to inhibit missions."

IV. INTRODUCTORY ANALYSIS

Before your committee takes up its mandate proper, it would like to place the problem that was committed unto it in a focus that may help Synod to understand more clearly the issues involved. For this purpose we would first like to make some general remarks in regard to Prof. Dekker and the articles which he has written. We wish to do so in order that Synod may consider what he wrote in its proper perspective, and not be tempted to evaluate or judge him and his writings merely on the basis of some isolated statements which he has made. For this reason also we feel constrained to point up, first of all, the things that we may appreciate about Prof. Dekker and what he wrote in *The Reformed Journal*. We may begin by stating that we consider his motive for writing as he did laudable. He himself expressed that motive in these words: "I wrote out of concern for the mission of the Church. I wrote out of a desire for a well-directed missionary motivation and aim, and a correctly conceived missionary message and method."³

³*The Reformed Journal*, Feb., 1963.

Since he occupies the chair of missions in our Calvin Seminary, it is not surprising that he would be greatly interested in the missionary task and program of our denomination, and that he would deplore that this program seemingly did not produce the fruit that was desired and might be expected. In his zeal for missions he has attempted to find reasons which might explain this apparent failure. As he did so, he came to the conclusion that one of these reasons was our failure to stress the love of God for all men, which he claims was due to "the doctrine of limited atonement as commonly understood and observed in the Christian Reformed Church." According to him our controversy with the Rev. H. Hoeksema and his followers in 1924 has made many of us afraid to speak freely about God's universal love and concern for all men, and His desire that all might be saved. He claims that it is only with tongue in cheek that we dare to say that God loves all men. This is what he wrote in this connection: "In the mind of the Christian Reformed Church the distinction between common and special grace has sometimes been understood qualitatively, and thus understood it has tended to obscure the true character of the universal love of God and the Biblical realism of its implications for the witness of the gospel to all men."⁴

Whether this last judgment about our church is correct or not we leave an open question at this juncture. But it may be argued, and perhaps with some justification, that in our reaction to the Rev. H. Hoeksema's attacks upon 1924 we may have been inclined to be somewhat afraid of being too evangelical in our missionary approach. This may have accounted for our apparent lack of zeal in witnessing to the world outside, especially during the first decade after 1924. We must confess that oftentimes our evangelistic efforts were feeble and sporadic. For example, only in a few places did we carry on extensive evangelistic programs, and even these were almost completely institutionalized and did not challenge the active participation of the rank and file of our church members. Even today, although we have made much progress in our missionary outreach, we still have to admit that more of our church members ought to be personally involved in evangelism. But especially in the first years after 1924 many of our people lacked the evangelistic fervor and zeal that should have characterized them.

Another observation we wish to make in regard to Prof. Dekker is this, that he expresses his desire to be in harmony with both the Scriptures and the Reformed Standards. Even though some have seen dangerous leanings toward unreformed views, he himself considers them to be reformed. It is the task of your committee to make judgment on this matter.

There is still another preliminary observation which we wish to make, namely, that we must all remember that in connection with the matters touched upon in his articles mentioned above we meet great difficulties. No one is able to give a completely satisfactory solution of the problems which they raise. There will always be mysteries that will baffle our finite minds. But, although we do wish to fully recognize these mysteries and

⁴*The Reformed Journal*, Feb., 1963.

paradoxes, we shall have to make certain affirmations in connection with them so as to avoid extremes, either on the one side, or the other. For example, who will ever be able to fully comprehend the relationship between God's eternal counsel and man's moral responsibility? Yet this should not prevent us from firmly holding to both these truths, without allowing the one virtually to cancel out the other in our theological reflections. Again, who will ever be able to harmonize the decree of divine election with man's own responsibility for his eternal destiny? All we can say is that in dealing with this question we do not believe that it is necessary to choose between a decree of God which would make man's decision impossible and a decision of man upon which God's decree would be dependent. And so, too, we should recognize that it is not easy to harmonize the doctrine of a definite atonement with the equally important truth, enunciated in the Canons of Dort, namely, that "as many as are called by the gospel are unfeignedly called," (III & IV, 8) and that "the promise of the gospel is that whosoever believes in Christ crucified shall not perish, but have eternal life;" and furthermore, that "this promise, together with the command to repent and believe, ought to be declared and published to all nations, and to all persons promiscuously and without distinction, to whom God out of His good pleasure sends the gospel." (II, 5)

Finally, your committee wishes to state that we consider the term, "limited atonement," which is commonly used in our theological discussions, and is even employed in our mandate, to be a far from happy term. Perhaps the word "TULIP" which was employed to teach catechumens an easy way to remember the five points of Calvinism found in the Canons of Dort may be responsible for the use of that term. It would have been better, perhaps, if this term, "limited atonement," had never been used; but that in its stead we would have employed the adjectives "particular" and "definite" in regard to the atonement. For the advocates of the doctrine of limited atonement always meant to convey only this idea—that Christ in His suffering and death paid the redemption price of His precious life-blood for a certain definite numbers of persons, namely, those who are said to be "the given unto Him by the Father," and who, according to our confession, are the same "certain number of persons," who, "according to the sovereign good pleasure of God's will, were chosen from the whole human race, . . . to redemption in Christ, whom He from eternity appointed the Mediator and Head of the elect and the foundation of salvation" (C. of D., I, 7).

But again, before we consider the mandate as such, it would seem to be very profitable that we would first see the problems raised by the articles from the pen of our professor of missions and the reactions to them in the light of our ecclesiastical history. For, as Prof. Dekker himself has intimated, and Dr. James Daane has openly stated, these problems will only be seen in their proper perspective, if we bring into focus the bearing that the common grace controversy of 1924 has on them. We may note, therefore, that these writings compel us once more to take a good look at the decisions of our Synod of 1924 and the interpretation of these decisions that was given by the Synod of 1959. For we are convinced that now

as then we are again wrestling with the age-old problem concerning the grace of God. Can we make qualitative distinctions when we refer to that grace? Is it valid to posit that there is besides the special or saving grace of God also a common grace or benevolence which God bestows on all men indiscriminately? Hence, let us briefly review 1924 and its aftermath in our ecclesiastical history.

In 1924 the Revs. H. Danhof and H. Hoeksema stressed the exclusiveness of God's grace at the expense of leaving no room at all for the doctrine of so-called common grace. Prof. Dekker, and perhaps some others with him, are inclined to wipe out the distinction between special and common grace. Yet both meet on this point that both would maintain that God's grace is one. The former, however, would limit that one grace of God to the elect alone; and from their standpoint draw the conclusion that any mention of common grace or even general favor or benevolence on the part of God towards the non-elect is forbidden. Fact is, the Rev. Hoeksema contended that God could manifest only His wrath towards those whom he labelled the reprobate. Not for one moment could God be favorably disposed towards any one who did not belong to his elect people. Even when the prophet Ezekiel says so plainly that the Lord "has no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live;" these deniers of the doctrine of common grace went so far as to aver that this text refers only to the elect wicked. The others God delights to visit with His wrath.

Our Synod of 1924 rightly repudiated this conception of God, and stated emphatically that "on the basis of Scripture and Confession it is certain that there is, besides the saving grace of God shown only to the elect unto eternal life, also a kind of favor or grace of God which He manifests towards his creatures in general." Moreover, in the two points of doctrine, which followed that first point, Synod declared that this general favor of God manifests itself in a "restraint of sin" and in this, that "unregenerate men, though incapable of any saving good, are capable of doing civil good."

Nevertheless, although the Synod of 1924 made these clear and definite statements in regard to the doctrine of common grace, it soon became evident that there were still several problems left in the area of God's grace that remained unresolved. For example, there was, first of all, the question about the so-called "favorable disposition of God toward all His creatures in general" that gave rise to a long debate. But more important than this was the problem that was presented by what Synod had adduced as one of its grounds for the position taken in the first point, and which Rev. Hoeksema called "the little point of the first point" ("het puntje van het eerste punt"). This ground stated that this certain favor or grace of God toward all His creatures in general appears from the well-meant offer of the gospel, which the Canons of Dort present as coming to all men promiscuously (II, 5 and III & IV, 8, 9). It was this point especially that became the main target of Rev. Hoeksema's attack upon 1924; and it is this same point that is also calling forth the shades of 1924 in our present controversy.

Needless to say that the debate which followed on this matter was

characterized by much misunderstanding and confusion. This confusion was compounded by the use of the term "offer of grace" ("aanbod der genade") which became the bone of contention to both sides in the dispute.⁵ The question was posed: in the preaching of the gospel what kind of grace is supposed to be offered to the non-elect? Rev. Hoeksema vehemently contended that God's grace (and by this he meant, of course, the one grace of God which is always particular) can never be common, or something that is offered to all men indiscriminately. And certainly he was on solid ground, when he argued that the confessions, and particularly the Canons of Dort, never did speak of a grace of God that is offered to all men, except when they referred to the so-called "common grace" of Arminian vintage. The Arminians spoke of a common grace that "is given without exception to all men," enabling them, together with the exercise of their own free will, to convert themselves and to accept Christ. (cf. C. of D. II, par. 6; also III & IV, 10) Again, Rev. Hoeksema was right, when he contended that the word "grace," as used in the Canons never referred to what the Synod of 1924 meant with common grace. Fact is, the term "common grace" as such was never used by the Canons, except once, and then as something which should be condemned as an Arminian heresy. Otherwise the Canons of Dort do use the word "grace" some 42 times with reference to God, and in every case it always refers to what we are wont to call special grace. It is well that we realize this in order to avoid confusion and misunderstanding in our discussion of our present problem.

From the side of our church, however, there were also those who, in spite of contrary evidence from the confessions, did try to maintain that God *offers* grace to all men indiscriminately.⁶ By doing this they allowed

⁵It is noteworthy that neither the advisory committee of the Synod of 1924, nor the Synod itself in its official declarations ever used this term. The committee spoke of a "well-meant offer of salvation" and the Synod referred to "the general offer of the gospel." Nevertheless, both sides began to argue about the meaning of the phrase "offer of grace."

⁶Notably among those who make this same mistake of maintaining that God *offers* some kind of grace in the preaching of the gospel is Dr. Daane. Like the Rev. Hoeksema he also strenuously maintains that the grace of God is one, and is always saving in its nature. For he writes: "A grace which cannot save is *not* the grace of a sovereign God." But he parts company with Hoeksema in that he would expand that grace into a blessing that is bestowed by God upon all men, without any regard to His elective purpose and without any regard to the fact that many recipients of that grace may ultimately be lost. Dr. Daane goes so far as to state that, if two essentially different types of grace are thought to be possible, then consistency would demand that we should also posit two Holy Spirits, two Crosses, two Gods, etc. We must note, however, that he also comes to this conclusion, because he holds as axiomatic that grace is *offered* in the preaching of the gospel. And he upbraids the Synod of 1924 for even considering it possible that such "common grace" would be offered in the gospel preaching. To his mind such an idea is wholly erroneous, and if true, would be meaningless. And we must agree. But did the Synod of 1924 say this? Dr. Daane claims it did. He asks the rhetorical question: "How can such a non-saving grace come to expression in the preaching of the gospel that preaches only saving grace?"

The best answer given Daane is that of Dr. Roger Nicole. He writes: "You [Dr. Daane] are insisting that the offer of grace, and grace itself, must be of the same nature. Obviously if it is true grace that is offered, a certain connection

Rev. Hoeksema to put them in the uncomfortable position of having to explain what kind of grace then was supposed to be offered in the so-called offer of grace. Was it common grace, as some thought was implied by the Synod of 1924? Or was it special grace that was offered to all men? Or again, was it some kind of grace in between? This was the problem that plagued all those who tried to defend the doctrinal declarations of 1924 on the basis of some kind of grace which was supposed to be offered by God to all in the preaching of the gospel. Unfortunately, however, none seemed to realize that Synod had never spoken of an "offer of grace;" but rather of "the offer of salvation," or "the offer of the gospel." If this had only been realized, much misunderstanding and needless debate might have been avoided, and the controversy with our Protestant Reformed brethren would have been much more pointed and profitable. For, while the Canons do not speak about an offer of grace, they do plainly state that in the preaching of the gospel there is a sincere and well-meant offer of salvation made to all men indiscriminately. More than that, the Canons do not hesitate to aver that Christ Himself is offered in the gospel preaching. Again, they state that the gospel contains a promise of "salvation, rest of soul, and eternal life" to all men who are called by that gospel to come to Christ and to believe in Him. (II, 5; III & IV, 8, 9) But, if this is so, where then does the so-called "certain favor or grace of God" come in? Is there then such a thing as common grace in the proper reformed sense of that term? Certainly! For this favor or grace appears in the gifts which God bestows upon all men in general, and especially upon those who are privileged to come in contact with the gospel. All men experience common favors and undeserved blessings of God, as is abundantly evident from those texts which the Synod of 1924 quoted in support of its declarations. Such texts are: Ps. 145:9: "Jehovah is good to all; and His tender mercies are over all his works." Or Matthew 5:44, 45: "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you; that ye may be sons of your Father who is in heaven: for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust." Or again, Acts 14:16, 17: "Who in the generations gone by suffered all the nations to walk in their own ways. And yet He left not Himself

may be recognized, but this ought not to lead to an identification between the offer and the thing offered. An offer of bread is a statement made in the form of a proposition, while bread is a substance whose effects are quite different from the hearing of a sentence. It appears quite conceivable to me that the offer may be prompted by one kind of grace, while the benefit offered is grounded in another kind. You seem to consider identity here as axiomatic. I deem it to be highly questionable. Hence I must object strongly to your statement, "To this day no one has been able to make clear to anyone that the well-meant offer of salvation is an instance, not of saving, but of a qualitatively different non-saving common grace." What you apparently meant is, 'I have thus far not read any presentation which made clear to me . . . etc.' The terms you use are much too sweeping; specifically the members of the Synod of Dort made it quite plain in their pronouncements that the offer of the Gospel was distinct from saving grace itself. Some one must have made it clear to them. To my mind, it is not difficult at all to distinguish between the offer of the gospel and the effectual application of the Gospel by the Holy Spirit." (Quoted from a document received by our committee)

without witness, in that He did good and gave you from heaven rains and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts with food and gladness."

But besides these common favors which come to all men alike, there are also some special tokens of God's mercy which they receive who are privileged to hear the gospel, and to receive in that gospel the command to repent and believe, accompanied with a promise, sincere and well-meant, that, if they do repent and believe, they will receive "rest of soul and eternal life," yea, all the blessings of salvation which Christ has merited on the cross. More than that, not only are they confronted with this urgent command and gracious promise; but that gospel offer is also accompanied with various operations of the Holy Spirit, striving with sinful men: such things as the author of Hebrews describes in these words: "Those who were once enlightened and tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the age to come."

But there is *one thing* that is not common to all men, nor even to all who hear the gospel. And that is the special grace of God, that grace which the Canons of Dort refer to under various names, such as "saving grace" (III & IV, par. 5); "the grace of election" (I, 13, 15, 18); "the grace of conversion" (I, 15; III & IV, par. 7); "regenerating grace" (III & IV, 3, 12, 13, 16); "the grace of the covenant" (II, par. 5); "the grace of adoption" (V, 6); also "glorious grace" (I, 7) and "richer grace" (I, 16). It is true, of course, that in the presentation of the gospel all these graces are exhibited. The gospel tells us that all these graces, which Christ through His Word and Spirit must work in the heart (C. of D., I, 16; III & IV, par. 8; V, 14), as well as the gift of the Holy Spirit Himself, are the fruit of Christ's sacrifice on the cross. Therefore, those who receive Christ by a true faith will also with Him be the recipients of all these graces; or rather, it may be more correct to say that the recipients of all these graces are those to whom, through the work of the Holy Spirit, it has been given to believe on Christ. Hence, when one is a recipient of saving grace, this is due wholly to the free and sovereign good pleasure of God's will.⁷

As we have stated before, the above mentioned articles in *The Reformed Journal* and the reaction toward them called forth the shades of 1924. But we might say that this time we have the problem of 1924 in reverse. For, while Rev. Hoeksema denied that "besides the saving grace

⁷Dr. James Daane has correctly set forth that grace, strictly speaking, is not an attribute of God, but always freely and sovereignly bestowed by Him upon whomsoever He wills. But it was wrong of him to assume that God's grace is always one and universally bestowed. For, strictly speaking, the grace of God referred to in our confessional standards—that which we are wont to call "special grace"—is never universal. These standards always speak only of the grace of God in Jesus Christ, which is based on His atoning sacrifice, and bestowed only upon the elect. But there is also a "grace" or rather favor or benevolence of God which is universal. And this is what we have been wont to call "common grace." But, as Dr. A. Kuyper already pointed out in his day, this term, common or general grace (*algemeene genade*) is not felicitous. He preferred to speak of "gemeene gratie," a term which is untranslatable in the English language; but which means a certain longsuffering benevolence or execution-postponing goodness of God which all men share in, at least in this life.

of God there is also a certain favor or grace which He bestows upon all His creatures in general," Prof. Dekker is inclined to make the saving grace of God universal and given or offered to all men. He did so by equating the grace of God with His love, and then stating that this love of God is always one and redemptive to all men. In other words, he and perhaps others with him, seems to deny that there is an essential and qualitative difference between the grace which God bestows upon the elect and that which He manifests to all His creatures in general. Even though in regard to the love of God Prof. Dekker will admit that it may be shown in various ways and in various degrees, yet according to him we have no right to make qualitative distinctions in regard to the love of God. For him God's love, indicated by the Greek word "agapé," is always one. Yet in *The Reformed Journal* articles he himself did characterize that love by using qualifying adjectives, such as "redemptive" and "redeeming." He maintains, however, that these adjectives are not added to distinguish between two qualitatively different kinds of love, but only indicate that the one love of God in the case of all men is redemptive; while in the case of the elect it is redeeming, since in them it actually reaches its culmination. In a later statement made to our committee, however, he dropped this distinction, and now prefers to speak only of the one love of God which is always redemptive to all men. According to him the only difference is that "this one love of God is experienced differently by the redeemed."

But to return once more to the grace of God with which Prof. Dekker has equated His love, we may note that he also claims a universality for this grace. For, in answer to a question put to him by the committee, whether "he can subscribe to the statement of the Synod of 1959, namely, that the grace of God shown to the elect, and which is irresistible, is not the same as that shown to all creatures in general, he wrote: "My answer to this question depends entirely on the definition given to the word 'grace' in this sentence. If it stands for *special* grace, as distinguished from *common* grace in the traditional manner, I could not accept the statement for I do not accept the theological construction upon which it is based. Moreover, if the term 'grace' is understood as synonymous with redemptive love, as I presupposed in my articles, I would have to disagree with the statement since I hold the love of God to the elect to be the same in essence as His love to all men. On the other hand, if the term 'grace' is defined as Dr. Daane defines it in his article 'What is Grace?' (*The Reformed Journal*, Oct., 1965), this statement has no real point since it evidently regards grace as a divine attribute, a conception which Dr. Daane disputes. The problematics of Dr. Daane's views, if accepted, make the synodical statement inapplicable.⁸ One more remark

⁸As stated before one may agree with Dr. Daane that grace is not a divine attribute. We would rather characterize it as a manifestation of the attribute of God's goodness, and then this goodness as it appears to those who are unworthy. But this does not imply that the distinction between irresistible grace and common grace is irrelevant. On the contrary, we believe that this distinction should be maintained, if we are not to drift into Arminian waters. For was not this exactly the Arminian error, namely, that they taught that God furnished all men equally "with grace sufficient for faith and conversion"? (C. of D., III & IV, 10).

is fitting here, it seems to me that, strictly speaking, it is not grace in itself which is irresistible, but rather God in His grace who is irresistible."⁹

There is one more problem at stake here, and that perhaps the most serious one of all. That is the question about the design or scope or extent of the atonement. This problem also is closely related with the question concerning the grace and the love of God.

Prof. Dekker prefers to speak of Christ's atonement as being universal and in no sense limited. True in his *The Reformed Journal* articles, he did admit that it may be said to be limited in one sense, namely, in its efficacy. But again, in a later statement sent to the committee, he wrote: "I wish to abandon the distinction between the atonement as *universal* in certain respects and *limited* in another respect. Further study and reflection have led me to see that the atonement as such has no *efficacy* (the sense in which I previously said it was limited). Redeeming efficacy lies neither in the love of God *as such* nor in the atonement *as such* but rather in the redeeming work of the Holy Spirit. Here too is the sovereign freedom of divine grace (cf. John 3:3-8, 16-18) and the particularism of redemption. The atonement itself is inherently universal, as both the Scriptures and the Confessions, it seems to me, teach (Canons II, 8 and Catechism, Q. 37). Moreover, the Canons speak only once of the atonement itself as being efficacious (II, 8) and this statement must be seen in its immediate and larger contexts. It seems to me that there is neither need nor warrant for retaining the concept of limited atonement, as it has been traditionally used among us. At the same time I recognize, of course, that the redeeming work of the Spirit is a fruit of and is dependent upon Christ's atonement."¹⁰

After this preliminary discussion of the problem with which your committee had to deal, let us now turn to our mandate proper, and first consider the question concerning the love of God, as Prof. Dekker spoke of it in his first article, "God loves . . . all men," as well as in his later writings, and which elicited a spate of journalistic comment.

V. THE LOVE OF GOD

The first subject our mandate deals with is the love of God and the question whether, in the light of Scripture and the Confession, it is valid to make a qualitative distinction between a general love of God for all men and His special love for the elect.

Prof. Dekker's views on the love of God are set forth by himself in the following propositions:

1. That the love of God is the most basic and comprehensive of all missionary principles.
2. That God loves all men with a redemptive love.
3. That the love of God is one, and that the Scriptures do not allow

⁹Letter to the Committee, Jan. 28, 1966.

¹⁰Letter to the Committee, Nov. 17, 1965.

us to hold two qualitatively different loves in God. There is *one* love of God and this one love is *redemptive* in nature.¹¹

4. That in the presentation of the gospel, one may say to any man 'God loves you.'

5. That, although, on the one hand, God loves all men and Christ died for all, on the other hand, not all men are saved. This constitutes a Biblical paradox which we must accept.¹²

Furthermore, Prof. Dekker maintains, this one love of God for all men distributively is explicitly stated in the Bible, as, for example, in such texts as John 3:16; Matt. 5:44, 45; Luke 6:35; etc.; is involved in the sincere offer of the gospel, and is implied in God's desire that all may be saved. If God's love is infinite, it "cannot have as its object only a part of mankind."

In evaluating these propositions, we may begin by stating that we do not wish to dispute the first one, namely, "that the love of God is the most basic and comprehensive of all missionary principles."¹³ He may find support in the words of the Canons of Dort: "But in this the love of God was manifested, that He *sent His only begotten Son into the world, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life* (1 John 4:9; John 3:16)." (I, 2)

The bone of contention, however, is the view of Prof. Dekker that God loves all men with the same, that is, with a *redemptive love*; and that we have no right to make any qualitative distinctions in regard to that love. In other words, he denies the validity of *distinguishing* between divine benevolence and love, between common and special

¹¹Classis Grandville reminded the committee that in the report, "There should be reference made to the love of God as it expresses itself in the ontological Trinity." It further stated that "certainly this love which God has for Himself cannot be termed 'redemptive.'" We agree with this statement of classis. However, we did not make a point of this matter, because Prof. Dekker himself assured us that the love of God cannot be called "redemptive" when we speak of that love within the Godhead. This is what he wrote: "The love of the Father for Him, of which Jesus spoke, could not have been redemptive." (Letter to the Committee, Dec. 24, 1965).

¹²Letter to the Committee, Nov. 17, 1965.

¹³Classis Grand Rapids West takes exception to this statement of the committee and disagrees with the proposition that the love of God is the most basic and comprehensive of all missionary principles. It stated: We believe that the Doctrinal Committee should give serious consideration to the Kingship of Christ as expressed in the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19, 20; cf. "authority" in verse 18) as the most basic and comprehensive of all missionary principles. Since all authority has been given to Christ he commissions His Church to evangelize the world. He tells every believer to be His witness (cf. Acts 1:8). The Great Commission is very directly and explicitly related to the mission task of the Church, of which Christ is the King and Head. He confers His authority (His power and right) upon the Church so that the Church can carry out the mandate to preach the gospel to all nations. The Church, in obedience to the Kingship of Christ, must preach the gospel to all nations. It must feel the compulsion and restraint of this divine "must."

In answer to this observation of classis, the committee wishes to state that it did not enter into this question, because we did not feel that it had any direct bearing on the views of Prof. Dekker which were in dispute.

grace, or between a non-redemptive and a redemptive love.¹⁴ But, although he wants to maintain that God's love is one, yet he himself does admit that "we must discriminate between the different ways in which people experience this one love of God." He writes: "God does love all men alike in the sense that He loves them all without exclusion—and He does so with a redemptive love. On the contrary, God does not love all men alike in the sense that the love relationship which actually exists between God and man is the same for all men alike."¹⁵ Furthermore, in his attempt to clarify this distinction, which he himself makes here, he refers to the analogy of human love. He writes: "God requires us to love all our fellow men as ourselves, that is, according to the same standard and with the same love. In that sense we must love all men alike. All these love relationships, however, are not alike. They differ, for instance, in that some love is close and personal, other is casual and impersonal, and some is even extended but spurned."¹⁶ Thus, as he compares this love of God with its human analogy, he draws the following conclusion: there are differences within God's love as exercised in relation to man, but these differences are not to be understood as qualitative or essential. If they are there, they can only be quantitative or relational in nature. We need not say that God loves all men "just as much and in the same way."

In his articles, published in *The Reformed Journal*, Prof. Dekker tried to point up this difference by the use of the terms: *redemptive* and *redeeming love*. However, in a later statement to our committee he admitted that this distinction was ineffectual in expressing his real meaning, "because of semantic confusion between the two terms and because of its suggestion of two qualitatively different loves." Therefore he now prefers "to speak simply of the one love of God as redemptive to all men." But he adds, "I recognize, of course, that this one love of God is experienced differently by the redeemed. This was my intent in using the term '*redeeming love*.'" Yet, after he writes this, he still adds another sentence in which he states: "another consideration which favors abandoning the distinction of redemptive and redeeming love is that, strictly speaking, it is not the *love* of God as such which redeems. Rather it is God Himself who redeems through His Word and Spirit."¹⁷

But to have a complete picture of the professor's position concerning the love of God, we should still add certain other statements which he

¹⁴The committee has been criticized for positing already at this point its disagreement with Prof. Dekker's views, as if this implied that before it had studied these in the light of Scripture and the Confession, it was already determined to reject them. This, however, is not true to fact. Just because the difference between the professor and his critics is stated at the beginning does not indicate that the committee had not reached its conclusions by previous study and on exegetical grounds. We believe it is quite customary to state one's position first, and then to put forth the exegetical and creedal proofs on the basis of which it was arrived at. After all a year and a half of mutual consultations preceded the writing of the report.

¹⁵*The Reformed Journal*, March, 1963.

¹⁶*Ibid.*

¹⁷Letter to the Committee, Nov. 17, 1965.

made to our committee. For example, in answer to the question, whether there are differences in regard to the love relationship that God sustains to believers and unbelievers, he stated: "This is precisely the position I have held in my articles. Moreover, I contend that this difference in relationship is not to be understood as a difference in the quality of love, but only as a difference resulting from the fact that some men are regenerated by the Holy Spirit and therefore believe while others are not so regenerated and therefore do not believe."¹⁸ Again, in answer to the question of the committee, whether then this difference is merely due to man's attitude toward God's love, or whether it is due to a difference which God also willed, his reply was: "I would answer unequivocally that it is the latter."¹⁹ And again, when the committee asked him to articulate this difference, namely, that God wills to love some men (e.g. the elect) in a different way than He loves all men in general, he replied: "I do not and cannot articulate this difference. For this difference belongs to Biblical paradox, to the mystery of belief and unbelief which the Bible recognizes but does not explain."²⁰ Finally, when the committee asked him, Does the universal love of God include any intent on His part to bring about the salvation of the non-elect or to perform any redemptive act on their behalf?—his reply was: "Let me answer the second part of the question first. In my view God does perform redemptive acts on behalf of the non-elect. Such redemptive acts must then belong to His intent, for nothing that God does is excluded from His intent. What are these redemptive acts? They are the same, it seems to me, as those which He performs for all men, for example, the restraint of sin, the giving of His Word, the incarnation and the atonement of Christ, and the preaching of the gospel. It remains to answer the first part of the question. I would say that the universal love of God does not include any ultimate intent to bring about the eternal salvation of the non-elect. On the other hand, it remains true that Christ is the Savior of all men (I Timothy 4:10)²¹ and that all men experience salvation in certain proximate ways, e.g. the continuation of life and wellbeing, the conquest of evils such as sickness which result from sin, social order, peace, and justice, and physical resurrection."²²

From the quotations from the writings of our professor of missions Synod may obtain a rather unbiased and comprehensive survey of his views in regard to the love of God. Perhaps at times it may seem that the differences between us are largely semantic in character—shall we say "a battle of words"? For all of us agree that love, considered as an attribute of God is one. But the problem arises when the further question is asked: Is it valid, nevertheless, to introduce qualitative distinctions with reference to the love of God, depending on the different objects upon which that love of God terminates? Prof. Dekker maintains that such

¹⁸Letter to the Committee, Dec. 24, 1965.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Note that I Tim. 4:10 does not state that Christ is the Savior of all men, but rather, "God, who is the Savior of all men, . . ."

²²Ibid.

qualitative distinctions may not be introduced. He states emphatically: "God's love is one: it cannot be something else. Where in Biblical language or concept is there a qualitative difference within love as 'agape'? . . . A *qualitative* disjunction between different kinds of divine love is a sheer contradiction in terms. It safeguards neither the love of God nor the decrees of election."²³

And again, ". . . The love of God for sinners is either redemptive or non-redemptive. If one holds that it is both redemptive and non-redemptive, redemptive for the elect and non-redemptive for the non-elect, has he not abandoned the concept of one love?"²⁴

Those who disagree with Prof. Dekker, however, take exception to his contention that the love of God is redemptive to all men distributively. They are indeed willing to admit that there is but one love in God, which may, however, express itself in various ways and in different relationships. But they demur when he qualifies this one love of God with the adjective "redemptive." This, it seems to them, is an unwarranted assumption on his part. They would maintain that, although love as an attribute of God is one, yet it can very well be expressed and manifested by Him in different ways, so that it is, indeed, possible to speak on the one hand of a general love or compassion or benevolence which God manifests toward all His creatures; and on the other hand of a special or saving love or grace which He bestows only upon the elect. Hence, those who differ with him would maintain that God not only shows *more* love to the elect than to the non-elect; but that His love to the former is qualitatively different from that to the latter. In other words, they would hold that the one love of God has two facets.

At this juncture your committee desires to turn to the Word of God and our confessional standards in order to discover what they teach us about the love of God. First, let us see what is the Scriptural doctrine of the love of God.

We may begin with a study of the Old Testament. The most prominent Hebrew word for love is "ahab." This word itself, however, does not indicate any particular type of love, since it covers the whole range of meanings which are expressed by the Greek words "eros" (erotic love), "philia" (friendship), and "agapé" (the highest type of love). Therefore the particular force that the word "ahab" may have must always be determined by the context in which it is found. Then, too, we should remember that the Old Testament was God's revelation originally given to a semitic people. This means that they would not be inclined to view God's attributes in an abstract manner, but rather in their concrete manifestations in single and historical events. As Dr. Geerhardus Vos states: "To translate these attributes from the sphere of action into the sphere of being, and thus to eternalize them, has been the task of the New Testament."²⁵

²³*The Reformed Journal*, Dec. 1962.

²⁴Letter to the Committee, Dec. 24, 1965.

²⁵The Scriptural Doctrine of the Love of God, in *The Presbyterian and Reformed Review*, 1902, p. 6.

Again, although love is, indeed, presented as an essential element in the character of God, yet the use of the word itself, when applied to God, is not numerous in the Old Testament. It speaks more often of man's love for God than of God's love for man. Therefore, if we want to obtain from it a more comprehensive view of what the love of God is like, we should also consider such cognate words as "grace," "mercy," "loving-kindness," and furthermore, those words which describe an elective act on God's part, such as "to know" and "to choose"; and still further, such concepts as the Fatherhood of God and His covenant. For example, the word love ("ahab") is not used at all until we come to the book of Deuteronomy. Yet we do find long before this that God established His covenant of friendship with the patriarchs. Of Abraham God says, "I have known him" (Genesis 18:19). This indicates that He had chosen Abraham to be in a relation of special intimacy with Himself. The same is true of God's relationship to Israel, the people whom He has chosen for "his own possession from among all peoples: . . . to be unto Him a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Exodus 19:5, 6). Then, when we come to the book of Deuteronomy, we note that the word love is first used with regard to God. But there, too, this love of God is revealed in its elective character, as the love which God has set upon his people Israel to the exclusion of all other nations. God says: "For thou art a holy people unto Jehovah thy God: Jehovah thy God hath chosen thee to be a people for His own possession, above all the peoples that are upon the face of the earth. Jehovah did not set his love upon you nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all peoples: but because Jehovah loveth you, and because he would keep the oath which he sware unto your fathers" (Deut. 7:6-8; cf. Deut. 4:37; 10:15; 23:5; 32:8-12). The fact is that throughout the whole Old Testament this love of God for His people continues to be stressed. The prophets compare this covenant relationship between God and His people to the love that a father has for his children (Isa. 1:2; 63:8, 16; 64:8) and to the love that exists in the marriage relationship. Israel is called the wife of Jehovah (Isa. 54:5; Jer. 2:2; 3:14, 20; Hos. 1-3).

Although the Old Testament lays stress upon this special and peculiar love that God has for His chosen, covenant people, we should not conclude from this that He is unconcerned about the lot of His creatures in general. On the contrary, His benevolence reaches unto all men. Israel was enjoined by Jehovah to show kindness to the sojourner, and even to its enemies. For example, a stray animal had to be restored to its owner, whether he were a brother or an enemy (Deut. 22:1-4; Ex. 23:4, 5). And Proverbs 25:21 states: "If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink." Nevertheless, the fact remains that Israel alone was the recipient of God's particular and covenant grace in which the other nations did not share. True, the prophets foretold the coming of the New Testament day, when the blessing of Abraham would be extended to all the nations of the earth. But, when these prophecies are fulfilled in the New Testament dispensation, James, the president of the Council at Jerusalem, tells the multi-

tude of disciples that this is a token of God's elective grace extending even to the Gentiles; for, says he, "Brethren, hearken unto me: Symeon hath rehearsed how first God visited the Gentiles, *to take out of them a people* for His name." (Acts 15:14, 15) We see, therefore, that even then the grace and the love of God that comes to the Gentiles is and remains particular grace, covenant grace. The love of God reaches the nations via the Church which itself has first experienced that mercy.²⁶ God takes unto himself a people out of the Gentiles and ingrafts them into the one olive tree, which represents the Church of all ages, and which is rooted in Christ, the Savior of the world.

Dr. Vos sums up the whole situation correctly, when he writes: "Before taking leave of the Old Testament doctrine (of the love of God) . . . we must note one fact which stands out quite prominently, namely, that wherever the specific term or the specific concept of the love of Jehovah appears, the reference is always to the sphere of the covenant. It would be an inadequate explanation to say that the Old Testament, on the whole, concerns itself with the relation of God to Israel *exclusively*, and that consequently its silence on His love for other nations is a mere negative datum, from which no doctrinal inference to the particularistic character of the divine love as such can be drawn. In point of fact the Old Testament has a great deal to teach on the benevolent side of God's self-revelation to the world at large. The strongest terms are used on occasion to emphasize this truth. Even the covenant conception is not deemed too sacred to be employed for the purpose of describing the solemn manner in which God pledged to the whole creation, in the day of Noah, His abundant, ever-flowing kindness in the sphere of natural life, His longsuffering in the view of universal sin, His common grace working for the restraint of sin. It is attributed to His righteousness, universally revealed, that He keeps this covenant and preserves man and beast. As Jonah took pity on his gourd, so He pities and spares the Ninevites and their cattle. His mercy is wider and deeper than the ocean of human misery. But when the Old Testament seeks for the general category under which these several manifestations of universal benevolence are to be subsumed, it does not choose the term love."²⁷ . . . Obviously the reason for this phenomenon lies in the absolute character the Old Testament ascribes to the divine love. In his general goodness God bestows various gifts upon the creatures; in His love He gives Himself and holds nothing back. Consequently it was felt that wherever such absolute, unreserved covenant self-communication was lacking, the term love could not properly apply. The Scriptural terminology on this point was not the product of any abstract theological speculation, but the faithful transcript of the simple facts of experience, as interpreted by the Holy Spirit to the minds of the sacred writers."²⁸

²⁶cf. C. Kromminga, *The Communication of the Gospel through Neighboring*, p. 163, Note 173.

²⁷Perhaps Deut. 10:18 may be considered to be an exception to this rule.

²⁸The Scriptural Doctrine of the Love of God, *Presbyterian and Reformed Review*, 1902, p. 19.

Let us now turn to the New Testament. Does it then teach a universal love of God which is the same for all men? There is no doubt about it that the New Testament does teach a love of God which is universal in character. For example, Jesus tells His disciples, "Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you; that ye may be sons of your Father who is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust" (Matt. 5:44, 45; Luke 6:35; cf. Acts 14:17). But again the question may be asked, whether that love of God is the same for all men; or is the distinction between God's covenant love and His general benevolence carried over into the New Testament dispensation also? A careful study of the New Testament will reveal the latter to be true.

There is indeed a real advance from the old dispensation to the new, and that in two respects. In the first place, during the old dispensation the nation of Israel collectively was the object of Jehovah's love. God was the God of His people. But in the teaching of Jesus the possession of this privilege is individualized. God is the Father of every disciple in the kingdom. But more important is the fact that in the new dispensation the conception of the divine love is universalized, in this sense also, that now it is denationalized. God's love extends not merely to Israel, but includes the Gentiles. Men and women of all nations and tribes and peoples are incorporated in the Church and together with believing Israel form the one body of the Lord Jesus Christ. But still the question may be asked, whether besides this denationalization of the love of God our Lord also taught a universally redemptive love of God which extends to every individual person.

According to Dr. Vos this question requires a careful discrimination. He writes: "It must be admitted that what the Old Testament used to call the goodness of the Lord in the sphere of natural life, is drawn by our Lord within the circle of God's love (cf. Matt. 5:45). . . . Although this benevolent attitude toward mankind universally is not explicitly called love, —reasoning implies that it may correctly be so designated. . . . Undoubtedly, by thus emphasizing the universality of common grace, and making it flow from the love of God, our Lord sought a point of contact for the approaching universalism of the gospel. That God loves the world in its natural existence, even outside the sphere of the covenant, contains a pledge of the bestowal upon the same world of an infinitely higher redemptive love. . . . For it should be observed, in the second place, that the work of redemption itself bears in our Lord's representation a broad cosmical character—the gospels set forth as the goal of the divine love not the salvation of isolated individuals, but the salvation of the world as an organic whole (cf. John 3:16, 18). Christ is called 'the Light of the world.' . . . *From the nature of the case, however, this cosmical love, though in certain of its effects pertaining to every man, does not permit in its absolute sense of being individualized. It involves a purpose to save the world organically, not a purpose to save every person in the world individually.*"²⁹ (italics ours, the committee)

²⁹op. cit., pp. 19-21.

Dr. Vos further states that he was well aware that such a qualification in regard to the love of God would be regarded in many quarters as a subterfuge inspired by dogmatic prejudice. "But," says he, "in matter of fact, the reasons which compel this interpretation are purely biblico-theological, and consist of a number of Johannine utterances giving the saving love of God a special reference to the elect."³⁰ And to prove how little ground there is for the charge of dogmatic bias, he appeals to men like Holtzman and Pfeleiderer, liberal theologians, who obviously not from any dogmatic motive also admit this, because they see no other way of making the Johannine teaching consistent with itself. And then he draws the following conclusion: "Neither this indiscriminate goodness in the sphere of nature, however, nor the collective love which embraces the world as an organism, nor the love of compassion which God retains for every lost sinner, should be confounded with that fourth and highest form of divine affection which the Savior everywhere appropriates to the disciples. This is represented under the figure of fatherhood."³¹ He then goes on to show that in the Synoptics Jesus always speaks of "your Father," and "their Father," when He refers to his disciples; but never speaks of "the Father" absolutely, except where the altogether unique trinitarian relation between Himself and God is meant. In the gospel of John, however, the words "the Father" are used with reference to the disciples also; but then because, according to John, the disciples are considered as being adopted into the same relationship with God through Christ.

Thus, according to the findings of this theologian, we are not justified in identifying God's common and special grace, or His love of compassion with that of adoption. Ultimately, the distinction between these two kinds of love, the wider and the narrower, can be traced back to the sovereign grace of God according to which he chose to save some, while He left others in their sin, in which they wilfully plunged themselves. For we must admit that believers, as well as all other men, are by nature the children of wrath. Now then, is the special love of God for them conditioned by their spiritual character, as, for example, by the fact that they are regenerated? Prof. Dekker contends that this difference in relationship is not to be understood as a difference in the quality of love, but as a difference resulting from the fact that some men are regenerated by the Holy Spirit and therefore believe, while others are not so regenerated and therefore do not believe. Dr. Vos, however, denies this, and correctly remarks: "Even before the divine wrath is lifted off the sinner at the moment of his believing, there exists alongside of the general benevolence which embraces all mankind a special affection in the heart of God for certain individuals, who are destined to become subsequently His children, and who are in their subjective consciousness as yet the objects of His wrath. Already during the pre-Christian state of the elect there are two lines, that of general and special love, running parallel to God's disposition toward them. It is not the

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Ibid. pp. 23, 24.

special love itself which originates at the moment of conversion but only the subsequent realization and enjoyment of it on the part of the sinner."³² In other words, that God loves the elect more than others and in a different way is not simply due to the fact that in the elect the one, so-called redemptive love of God gets through to them, while it fails to get through to the non-elect. But the very fact that God's love gets through to the elect is already an evidence of God's sovereign, efficacious grace which He, according to the good pleasure of His will, bestowed only upon the elect. There must be a qualitative difference between the love of God for the elect and the love of God for all mankind: a difference which accounts for the difference in effect. For "the effects which get through to the elect get through ultimately because God bestows on them a special working of His particular mercy, thus enabling them to believe (not to the exclusion of their own response of faith, of course)."³³ Those who are appointed unto life are children and sheep of the fold antecedently to their own acceptance of the gospel. They belong to the Father in a special sense, and in virtue of His ownership are given by Him to the Son."³⁴ All this is corroborated by what Paul says in Ephesians 1:4-6: "Even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blemish before him, *having in love foreordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.*"

Let us next turn to our confessional standards. Do they confirm Prof. Dekker's contention that the love of God is redemptive to all men?

The phrase "the love of God" does not appear very often in the Confession, and where it is found, it always refers to the love of God which He has for the believers or the elect. There is only one place where, according to Prof. Dekker's reasoning, the love of God might have a universal meaning, and that is in the Canons of Dort (I, 2), where we read, "But in this the love of God was manifested, that He sent His only begotten Son into the world, that whosoever believeth on Him, should not perish, but have eternal life (I John 4:9; John 3:16)." Otherwise the love of God always has reference to believers only. For example, the Canons speak of an "everlasting love towards the elect" (II, 9 cf. also I, 13 and I par. 9); and of those whom "God loved in the highest degree" (II, 7). Again they speak "of the good pleasure and unmerited love of God" that accounts for the fact that not all peoples receive the mystery of God's saving grace revealed in the gospel. Once more, when we ask the question whether it is valid to make distinctions in regard to the grace of God, we have already shown in our introductory analysis that the Canons of Dort explicitly speak about a grace of God for the elect only, as, for example, they refer to "this grace" or "that grace" and distinguish it from any other type of favor or grace which God

³²op. cit. p. 25.

³³Quoted from the document of Profs. A. Hoekema and F. H. Klooster.

³⁴G. Vos, op. cit. p. 25.

may extend to all men in general. For instance, the Canons, in III & IV, 13, speak of "this grace" of God, meaning the grace of regeneration by which believers "are enabled to believe with the heart and to love their Savior." Again, in III & IV, 15, where the Canons speak of faith as the gift of God, they state, "God is under no obligation to confer 'this grace' upon any one." Also the terms "saving grace," "regenerating grace," "the grace of election," and "the grace of conversion" are used. Of all these graces we can never say that they are common to all men.

The Heidelberg Catechism also, whenever it speaks about the grace of God refers to that grace in which only the believer has a share (2, 28, 37, 56, 60, 70).

Finally, we wish to quote some of the statements made by members of the Synod of Dort, which reflect the universe of discourse in which the Canons were written and which corroborate the view that the grace of God to the elect is qualitatively distinct from that grace or favor which He may show to all His creatures in general, and this distinction is not merely quantitative and relational.

The following is an excerpt of an opinion presented by the delegates from the Palatinate: "A general inclination of the love of God, whereby He loves all His creatures, but especially the human race, we on both sides acknowledge and confess with one mouth. The heavenly Father also extends the same toward man after the fall, giving us life and health and all things, Acts 17:25; making His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sending rain on the just and the unjust, Matt. 5:45. Yea, he bears with sinners, in their continuous custom and practice of sinning, with great longsuffering, in order at least with goodness He may break their wickedness, Romans 2:4. And as He does punish and destroy the obstinate and impenitent, yet He has no pleasure in the destruction of creatures, but only in the carrying out of His righteous judgment, Isa. 1:24. This is indeed a great love toward the sinner. But greater and higher is correctly evaluated the love which moved God to give us His Son to be a Savior from our sins. This we posit not as a general, but particular, not common for all or each individual, but distinctively for the elect. For this love is nothing else than the good pleasure to save in Christ, Eph. 1:4, 5. Is this love the good pleasure of the Father to save all men? This Christ plainly denies, Matt. 11:25, 26. It is moreover apparent that God's intent is not general, Romans 8:28, 29; nor general His mercy by which He has pity on whom He will, Romans 9:18; nor yet common to all that grace by which those are given faith in Christ but others not, Matt. 13:11. . . . Therefore it remains a special gift, ordained out of a particular and special love of God, to redeem the elect and save the believers. This causes Paul to say that God is a Savior or Preserver of all men, but especially of believers, I Tim. 4:10. He preserves them all by a general mercy, see Psalm 36:7, but He preserves believers through a particular goodness and grace in Christ prepared for them before the world began, II Tim. 1:9."³⁵

³⁵We have attempted to give a literal translation of the Dutch version, which inevitably makes for some awkwardness in expression. The following is the Dutch

The delegates representing the particular Synod of Gelderland wrote: "So the love of God toward mankind, commonly so-called, is scarcely posited as a preceding cause; Armin. disput., priv. 42, Thes. 3. . . . For God does not embrace every individual with this particular love and affection, but only some particular persons; and this particular affection does not spread itself farther, nor to more persons than to those to whom it is extended."³⁶

The following from the delegates of the Synod of South Holland:

"Therefore we posit:

I. That the outward grace, manifested by the book of nature, is common to all men, Rom. 1:19; Acts 14:17; Ps. 19:1, 2.

II. But that the grace, manifested by the book of Scripture, is not communicated to all peoples, far less to all men and to every man in particular, Ps. 147:19, 20; Acts 14:16; Eph. 2:12.

III. That the reason why God gives His Word to some peoples, in preference to others, and has it preached to them, is only the good pleasure of God and His gracious inclination, apart from any foreseen

version: "eene algemeene neiging der liefde Gods, waarmede Hij alle zijne creaturen, maar voornamelijk het menschelijk geslacht liefheeft, bekennen wij aan weerszijden, en belijden het met eenen mond. De Hemelsche Vader strekt ook dezelve goedertierenlijk uit tegen den mensch, ook na den val, ons gevende leven, adem en alles, Hand. 17:25; doende Zijne zoon opgaan over de kwaden en goeden, en regenende over de rechtvaardigen en onrechtvaardigen, Matt. 5:45. Ja, in de gedurige gewoonte en oefening van te zondigen, verdraagt Hij met groote lankmoedigheid de zondaars, opdat Hij ten minste met goedheid hunne boosheid breke. Rom. 2:4. En als Hij de hardnekkigen en onbekeerlijken straft en verderft, zoo heeft Hij geen vermaak in het verderf van de creaturen, maar in de uitvoering van Zijn rechtvaardig oordeel, Jes. 1:24. Dit is voorwaar eene uitnemende liefde tegen de zondaars. Maar uitnemender en hooger wordt met recht geacht de liefde, door welke God, bewogen zijnde, Zijnen Zoon ons heeft gegeven tot een Zaligmaker van onze zonden. Dezelve stellen wij niet algemeen maar bijzonder, niet allen en ieder mensch gemeen, maar den uitverkorenen eigen. Want die liefde is anders niet dan een welbehagen van in Christus zalig te maken, Ef. 1:4, 5. Is dezelve het welbehagen des Vaders van de zaligheid aller menschen? Dat ontkent Christus duidelijk, Matt. 11:25, 26. Het is daarenboven kennelijk dat Gods voor-nemen niet in algemeen, Rom. 8:28, 29; noch ook algemeen Zijne barmhartigheid, waarmede Hij erbarmt wien Hij wil, Rom. 9:18; noch ook die genade allen gemeen, uit welke dezen gegeven wordt het geloof in Christus, anderen niet, Matt. 13:11. . . . Zoo blijft het dan eene bijzondere gave, geordineerd uit eene bijzondere en speciale liefde Gods, om de uitverkorenen te verlossen, en de geloovigen zalig te maken. Hieruit zegt Paulus, dat God is een Zaligmaker en Behouder aller menschen, maar voornamelijk der geloovigen, I Tim. 4:10. Want Hij behoudt ze wel allen door eene algemeene goedertierenheid; waarvan Ps. 36:7; maar Hij behoudt de geloovigen door eene bijzondere goedheid en genade in Christus, die hun voor de tijden der wereld al bereid is, 2 Tim. 1:9." (*Acta der Nationale Synode van Dordrecht*, bl. 425)

³⁶The Dutch version has: "Zoo wordt dan de liefde Gods tot de menschen, in 't algemeen alzoo genoemd, kwalijk tot eene voorhenen gaande oorzaak gesteld; Armin. disput., priv. 42, Thes. 3. . . . Want met deze bijzondere liefde en genegenheid omhelst God niet een ieder mensch, maar sommige bijzondere menschen en deze bijzondere genegenheid spreidt zichzelf niet wijder uit, noch tot meer personen, dan tot dewelken zij zich uitstrekt." (*ibid.*, bl. 776)

greater worthiness in them above others, or any better preparation, piety, or teachability.

“Therefore we posit:

1. That this grace is to be distinguished from external grace; yes, that the same is also indeed separated from the external grace in those who are not actually converted.

2. That this grace is not common to all men, not even common to all those to whom the Word is preached and whose inner life was partially enlightened unto the knowledge of the truth; but the same is exclusively the possession of the elect, Deut. 29:4; Matt. 11:25, 26; 13:11; John 5:21; 14:17; 12:39; II Thess. 3:2; Tit. 1:1; John 17:6, 9; Rom. 11:7; Phil. 2:29; II Tim. 2:25, 26.”³⁷

And finally, we quote the opinion of the delegates from North Holland: “This grace does not signify to us a mere external urging like that of morality, which urging is only external and invites from without; but to us it means a certain divine power and stirring of God’s mercy, according to His eternal purpose, which is powerful in the mind, will, and heart of the elect, and which is identical with that powerful internal calling, which previously was demonstrated, according to the first article, to be a work and fruit of the external and gracious election. As to the external urging of morality, it is denied that this cannot be withstood. But pertaining to this internal grace, although the corrupt nature of man by itself is inclined to withstand it, nevertheless it is not at all withstood by the person who is converted, nor can it be withstood, according to the teaching of the Scriptures, Eph. 1:19.”³⁸ (Compare with this the decla-

³⁷The Dutch version has:

“Derhalve stellen wij,

I. Dat de uitwendige genade, die daar geschiedt door het boek der natuur, gemeen zij allen menschen; Rom. 1:19; Hand. 14 en 17; Ps. 19:1, 2.

II. Doch dat de genade, die daar geschiedt door het boek der Schriften niet aan alle volkeren, veel minder aan alle en een ieder der bijzondere menschen, medegedeeld wordt; Ps. 147:19, 20; Hand. 14:16; Ef. 2:12.

III. Dat de oorzaak, waarom God deze volkeren, voor andere, Zijn Woord geeft, en hetzelfde doet prediken, alleen het welbehagen Gods is, en Zijne genadige goedgunstigheid, zonder eenig voorzien van eenige meerdere waardigheid in dezelfde boven andere, of van eenige betere voorbereiding, vroomheid of leerzaamheid.

“Derhalve stellen wij:

1. Dat deze genade onderscheiden is van de uitwendige genade, ja, dat dezelve ook van de uitwendige metterdaad afgezonderd is in diegenen, dewelken dadelijk niet bekeerd worden.

2. Dat deze genade niet aan alle menschen gemeen is, zelfs niet gemeen aan alle degenen, aan dewelken het Woord gepredikt wordt, en welker gemoed ten deele tot kennis der waarheid verlicht wordt, maar dat dezelve den uitverkorenen alleen eigen is; Deut. 29:4; Matt. 11: 25, 26; Matt. 13:11; Joh. 5:21; Joh. 14:17; en 12:39; 2 Thess. 3:2; Titus 1:1; Joh. 17:6, 9; Rom. 11:7; Fil. 2:29; 2 Tim. 2:25, 26.” (ibid., bl. 781, 782.)

³⁸The Dutch version has: “Deze genade beteekent bij ons niet eene uiterlijke aanrading, naar de wijze van de aanrading der zeden, die alleen uitwendiglijk en van buiten noodigt, maar beduidt bij ons eene zekere Goddelijke kracht en beweging der barmhartigheid Gods, naar Zijn eeuwig voornemen, zijnde krachtig in der uitverkorenen verstand, wil en hart; dewelke een en dezelfde is met die krachtige

ration of the Christian Reformed Synod of 1959: "The doctrine of irresistible grace would indeed be jeopardized, if we held that the grace shown to the elect is the same as that shown to creatures in general. We would then be guilty of the error of the Arminians who teach that all men enjoy the same grace.")

Let us now consider some of the arguments upon the basis of which Prof. Dekker reasons that the love of God is universally redemptive in character.

In his initial article he employs a rather long list of rhetorical questions, such as these: "Can an unlimited love be limited in its scope? Can an unrestricted love be restricted in those whom it loves? Can the infinite love of the incarnation have as its object only a part of mankind?"³⁹

To all these questions he himself gives the answer, "Hardly." And yet he does not give that answer without qualifications. For, when he asks, "Can an unlimited love be limited in scope?" he wants to exclude from that love those who have committed the unpardonable sin; and we may assume also those wicked men whose eternal destiny has already been settled.

However, in answer to that question—"Can an unlimited love be limited in its scope?"—we would not say "Hardly," but "Yes." For, although God's love is unlimited in its character and intensity, it may very well be limited in the choice of its objects. Fact is, it can be expected that God, who loves Himself and His chosen people with an unlimited love, must exclude those from that love who ultimately on account of their sin and unbelief must be the objects of His just and holy wrath (cf. John 3:36; Eph. 2:3; I Thess. 2:16; I Pet. 2:8; Jude 4). This does not imply, of course, that those objects of His wrath may not for a time be spared through His longsuffering with them, and even be the recipients of His benevolent favors; just as His chosen people, before their conversion, may experience His wrath for a time, even though they are the objects of His elective love and grace. For we must always remember that in the historical process through which both the elect and the non-elect pass, neither class has yet reached its ultimate destiny. Each man is still on the move.

The professor of missions also quotes certain Scripture passages to prove that God loves all men alike with a redemptive love. For example, from the Old Testament he quotes such passages as these:

Deut. 10:17-19: "For Jehovah your God, he is the God of gods, and the Lord of lords, the great God, the mighty, and the terrible, who

inwendige roeping, dewelke voorhenen bewezen is, op het eerste Artikel, te zijn eene werking en vrucht van de eeuwige en genadige verkiezing. Aangaande die uiterlijke aanrading wordt niet ontkend, dat men die wederstaan kan. Maar belangende deze inwendige genade, alhoewel de verdorvene natuur des menschen bij zichzelf genegen is om te wederstaan, evenwel nochtans door den mensch, die daar bekeerd wordt, wordt ze geenszins wederstaan, of kan ook geenszins wederstaan worden, volgens de spreuken der Schriftuur, Ef. 1, vs. 19." (ibid., bl. 790)

³⁹*The Reformed Journal*, Dec. 1962.

regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward. He doth execute justice for the fatherless and widow, and loveth the sojourner, in giving him food and raiment. Love ye therefore the sojourner for ye were sojourners in the land of Egypt."

Ezek. 18:23: "Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked? saith the Lord Jehovah; and not rather that he should return from his way, and live." (cf. Ezek. 33:11)

Isa. 45:22: "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else."

As to the first passage, we may note that Jehovah is said to be no respecter of persons, and therefore loveth the sojourner also and shows this love for him by providing him with food and raiment. This love, however, is not the same love that He has for His covenant people. For of them we read in verse 15: "Only Jehovah had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all peoples, as it is this day." Notice, how in each case God's love is qualified. He loves His people by delighting in them and choosing them only above all others; and He loves the sojourner by giving him food and raiment. As Keil & Delitzsch state: "The force of this passage is to show the greatness of God's love to Israel, even though He does not regard persons, as is evident from the fact that 'Jehovah does justice to the defenceless (orphan and widow) and exercises a loving care toward the stranger in his oppression.'"⁴⁰

As to the second passage, from Ezekiel, we may say that it states succinctly that God, according to His revealed will proclaimed in the preaching of the gospel, has no delight in the death of the wicked, but desires that they will repent and be saved. In connection with these texts, however, Professor J. H. Stek makes the following comment: I would only add the *caveat* that one must not on reading such passages rush immediately to "systematic" conclusions. Consider Ps. 81:10ff:

I am Jehovah thy God
Who brought thee up out of the land of Egypt:
Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.
But my people hearkened not to my voice:
And Israel would none of me.
So I let them go after the stubbornness of their heart,
That they might walk in their own counsels.
Oh that my people would hearken unto me,
That Israel would walk in my ways!

Notice the clear affirmation of the desire of God's heart that His people would hearken to Him and walk in His ways. But because they were stubborn He "let them go after the stubbornness of their heart, that they might walk in their own counsels." From which it is evident that God does not always choose to effect what delights Him. He sometimes chooses to do what does not delight Him.⁴¹

⁴⁰Commentary on the Pentateuch, Vol. III, (Martin transl.), p. 344.

⁴¹Quoted from Prof. Stek's notes given to the Committee, p. 8.

As to the third passage, Isaiah 45:22, we find therein an invitation extended and a command given to all men to turn to the Lord and be saved. Since God is the only living God and alone able to save, no limitation can be set on this invitation. All men without exception are invited, because all need to be saved and can only be saved by the One who extends this invitation. Again we have in this verse the general invitation of the gospel.

Turning to the New Testament, we find that our professor of missions, in his attempt to prove God's universal redemptive love appeals especially to John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life." To him it seems obvious that the word "world" in this verse must include all men, and each and every man. For he writes: "Whether taken as the cosmos or as the human race, 'world' in this passage clearly covers all men."⁴²

But again we ask, Why is this so? Why could we not just as well say that God loved the world, meaning thereby the cosmos, or the human race, as an undifferentiated totality; and therefore not necessarily every individual in the human race? In that case the love of God would be consummated in and experienced by those who believe. We need not accept Prof. Dekker's interpretation of the word "world" in John 3:16. There are many other ways to explain the use of this word. For example, Dr. W. Hendriksen lists no less than six meanings of this word in the writings of the apostle John. According to him it may refer: "(1) the (orderly) universe, 17:5 (2) by metonymy, the human inhabitants of the earth; hence, mankind, . . . human race, . . . 16:21; (3) the general public, 7:4; . . . (4) ethical sense: mankind alienated from the life of God, sin-laden, exposed to the judgment, in the need of salvation, 3:19; (5) the same as (4) with the additional idea that no distinction is made with respect to race or nationality; hence, men from every tribe and nation; not only Jews but also Gentiles, 4:42; and probably also 1:29; 3:16, 17; 6:33, 51; 8:12; 9:5; 12:46; 1 John 2:2; 4:14, 15; (6) the realm of evil. This is really the same as (4) but with the additional idea of open hostility to God, his Christ, and his people, 7:7; 8:23; 12:31; 14:30; 15:18; 17:9, 14."⁴³

Most Reformed writers have taken the word "world" in John 3:16 in the sense mentioned in (4) and (5) above, namely, as referring to all mankind, Jews and Gentiles, but alienated from the life of God, sin-laden, exposed to judgement, and in need of salvation. Rev. H. Baker in his article in *The Banner* of December 3, 1965, gave a plausible interpretation, when he wrote: "Jesus called Nicodemus' attention to the judgment that fell on Israel when God 'sent fiery serpents among the people . . . and much people of Israel died.' Verse 15 tells us that 'Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness,' as God instructed him to do, that the dying might live. Then follow the words, 'even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth may in him have eternal life.' God

⁴²*The Reformed Journal*, Dec. 1962.

⁴³Commentary on John, Vol. I, p. 79 (note).

made provision for the saving of His covenant people, and in doing this He was undoubtedly motivated by His love for them. God's love that moves Him to save is, however, not limited to Israel. It embraces the world — a truth which to Nicodemus and to the Jewish people generally was new. The judgment that rests on the world is much more serious than that which fell on the people who were bitten by fiery serpents. Men's souls are 'in danger of the hell of fire' (Matt. 5:22). Deliverance from that perilous state requires that God send His only begotten Son. And Scripture tells us that His love for the world was so great that He did send His Son."

Perhaps a still better exegesis of John 3:16 was given by Dr. B. Warfield. He said in a sermon on this text: "The key to the passage lies . . . in the significance of the term 'world.' It is not here a term of extension so much as a term of intensity. Its primary connection is ethical, and the point of its employment is not to suggest that the world is so big that it takes a great deal of love to embrace it all, but that the world is so bad that it takes a great kind of love to love it at all, and much more to love it as God has loved it when He gave His Son for it. The whole debate as to whether the love here celebrated distributes itself to each and every man that enters into the composition of the world, lies thus outside the immediate scope of the passage and does not supply any key to its interpretation. The passage was not intended to teach, and certainly does not teach, that God loves all men alike and visits each and every one alike with the same manifestation of His love; and as little was it intended to teach or does it teach that His love is confined to a few specially chosen individuals selected out of the world. What it is intended to do is to arouse in our hearts a wondering sense of the marvel and the mystery of the love of God for the sinful world—conceived, here not quantitatively but qualitatively as, in its very distinguishing characteristic, sinful."⁴⁴

⁴⁴*The Savior of the World*, p. 120. The late Prof. D. H. Kromminga gave the following exegesis of John 3:16: "I think there is no difficulty whatever if we can just bring ourselves to let the text say neither more nor less than what it naturally appears to say. It certainly makes no express mention at all of God's elect, whatever may lie in the background. I see no occasion for those who heard it first to have thought here of election. I know that by the Arminian the mention of God's love to the world is used as an argument against the doctrine of election, especially since that love occurs here in such intimate connection with the declaration of the free offer of salvation. But I see no reason whatever for letting the Arminian exegesis of John 3:16 drive us into a forced and unnatural exegesis. I think the Arminians themselves are fundamentally wrong in imposing an arbitrary limitation upon the term 'world' as if this word *here must of necessity* [italics, the Comm.] refer to all mankind, the whole human race, and to nothing else. The simplest and most natural understanding of the word takes it as indicating the whole cosmos, the totality of what God has created, as indicating about the same thing which is in Gen. 1:1 indicated as heaven and earth. Supposing a Calvinist with his distinctive view of election and depravity understands John 3:16 as declaring God's love to the whole creation as of such nature that He gave His Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish etc., does that not make eminently good sense? The free offer of salvation will elicit no response of faith except from those whom God has chosen unto salvation and whom He therefore regenerates and equips with faith." (*The Banner*, Vol. 75, p. 677)

Prof. Dekker refers to several other texts to prove that God loves all men redemptively. However, these we expect to deal with more particularly in connection with the doctrine of the atonement. At that time we also shall take up the subject of the well-meant offer of the gospel, which the professor also used as an argument for the universality of God's redemptive love.

VI. THE ATONEMENT

Let us now take up the doctrine of the atonement and consider the question whether, in the light of Scripture and the Confession, we may speak of a universal atonement, or whether the traditionally Reformed terminology about an atonement which is limited or particular should be maintained.

Again, let us first of all set forth the views of our professor of missions on the atonement, as they may be gathered from his articles in *The Reformed Journal* and from the documents which he submitted to our committee. We shall present them by way of the following propositions:

1. The love of God is universal, in the sense that God loves all men distributively; and the atonement which is an expression of that divine love is also universal.

2. The scriptural texts which have usually been quoted to prove a "limited" atonement, and which speak of those for whom Christ died as "His sheep," or "His Church," or "His people," do not state for whom Christ died exhaustively or exclusively. They say nothing about the possibility that He may have died for others also.

3. The atonement of Christ is universal in its *sufficiency*, its *availability* and the divine *desire* which it expresses.⁴⁵

4. "In the presentation of the gospel, one *may* say to *any* man: *God loves you and Christ died for you.* (Not that one *must* say these things to *every* man. Circumstances and context vary and will affect *whether* and *when* such statements will be made.)"⁴⁶

5. "Nothing in the foregoing implies that all men are saved. That on the one hand God loves all men and Christ died for all and on the other hand not all men are saved—This constitutes a thoroughly Biblical paradox which can be accepted as readily as any other Biblical paradox."⁴⁷

We may note further that in his *The Reformed Journal* articles the professor made a distinction between the atonement as *universal* in certain respects and *limited* in another respect. However, in a letter, sent to the committee later, he wrote: "Further study and reflection have led me to see that the atonement as such has no *efficacy* (the sense in which I previously said it is limited). Redeeming efficacy lies neither in the love of God as such nor in the atonement as such but rather in the redeeming work of the Holy Spirit. Here too is the sovereign freedom of divine grace (cf. John 3:3-8, 16-18). The atonement itself is inherently universal, as

⁴⁵*The Reformed Journal*, Dec. 1962.

⁴⁶Letter to the Committee, Nov. 17, 1965.

⁴⁷Letter to the Committee, Nov. 17, 1965.

both the Scriptures and the Confessions it seem to me, teach (cf. Canons II, 8 and Catechism Q. 37). Moreover, the Canons speak only once of the atonement itself as being efficacious (II, 8) and this statement must be seen in its immediate and larger contexts. It seems to me that there is neither need nor warrant for retaining the concept of limited atonement, as it has been traditionally used among us. At the same time I recognize, of course, that the redeeming work of the Spirit is a fruit of and is dependent upon Christ's atonement."⁴⁸

To complete the picture, we wish to add a few more statements which Prof. Dekker sent to our committee, in answer to certain questions which were put to him. For instance, we asked him: "Would you tell us what you mean with the atonement of Christ being universal in its availability? Does this refer only to the concrete presentation given in the gospel, or does it extend beyond this?—he said: "It seems to me that just as the redemptive love of God can not be limited to the concrete presentation of the gospel, neither can the availability of the atonement be so limited. Surely, as the committee suggests, the factor of availability is involved in the offer of the gospel. However, it is then also necessarily involved in the atonement which is revealed by the gospel. May we separate between what is *revealed* in the gospel and what actually *exists*, in a way to eliminate the latter? If the notion of availability is limited to 'the concrete presentation of the gospel,' without some objective reality behind it, does not the gospel offer itself become unreal? It seems to me that the integrity of God and the sincerity of the offer of the gospel are at stake here."⁴⁹

Another question was: "Does the universal love of God include any intent on His part to bring about the salvation of the non-elect or to perform any redemptive act on their behalf?" To this he answered: "Let me answer the second part of the question first. In my view God does perform redemptive acts on behalf of the non-elect. Such redemptive acts must then belong to His intent, for nothing that God does is excluded from His intent. What are these redemptive acts? They are the same, it seems to me, as those which He performs for all men, for example, the restraint of sin, the giving of His Word, the incarnation and the atonement of Christ, and the preaching of the gospel. It remains to answer the first part of the question. I would say that the universal love of God does not include any ultimate intent to bring about the eternal salvation of the non-elect. On the other hand, it remains true that Christ is the Savior of all men (I Tim. 4:10) and that all men experience salvation in certain proximate ways, for example, the continuation of life and wellbeing, the general restraint of sin, the conquest of evils such as sickness which result from sin, social order, peace and justice, and the general resurrection."⁵⁰

Finally, we asked him: "When you say, 'Christ died for you' to every man, what does this mean? Does it mean that certain benefits of Christ's death are for all? or that Christ actually expiated the guilt of all, and

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹Letter to the Committee, Jan. 28, 1966.

⁵⁰Letter to the Committee, Jan. 28, 1966:

was their Substitute? Can any such statement as 'Christ died for you' be found in the preaching of Christ or the apostles? or anywhere in the Bible?" His reply was: "When I say, 'Christ died for you' to any man, I mean to say that Christ has actually suffered for his sins and has in that sense expiated his guilt. If, however, the word 'expiate' is intended by definition to include the idea of *effectuation*, which to my mind it need not include, I would not want to use the word *expiation* to describe what Christ has done for all men. Question 6 further asks whether any such statement as 'Christ died for you' can be found in the preaching of Christ or the apostles, or anywhere else in the Bible. No, it can not. However, it should be noted that this is hardly an argument against the validity of making such a statement to unbelievers. For, as a matter of fact, such a statement is not even used in the Bible as an address to believers. Yet does anyone question that it may be properly so used? The Bible is not a textbook in missions or a manual for evangelism. The Bible gives us general principles which must be applied to the life and work of the Church. If then the Bible teaches that God loves all men and that Christ died for all, this teaching must be articulated in a message which may be properly directed to individuals. In fact, without this content what is the gospel? It seems to me that there is no real good news without it—nothing essential to be believed or disbelieved, accepted or rejected, by the sinner as it applies to him."⁵¹

As we seek to evaluate Prof. Dekker's views of the atonement, our committee desires to point up, first of all, a certain vagueness that characterizes his writings on this subject. For example, nowhere in his articles does he give any definite indication as to what the atonement really means to him. Fact is, when he was asked to give his own definition of it, he declined to do so. Moreover, whenever he was asked whether the elements in the atonement which stress its expiatory and substitutionary character allow us to speak about an atonement that is universal, he either avoided giving a direct answer, or he pleaded that it was "scarcely possible" for him to answer such a question, since he considered an emphasis on those elements one-sided and inadequate. Yet he did state very definitely that God performs the same redemptive acts for all men; and that among these redemptive acts he would include the incarnation and the atonement. He writes: "It remains true that Christ is the Savior of all men (I Tim. 4:10)." And again, "When I say, 'Christ died for you' to any man, I mean to say that Christ has actually suffered for his sins and has in that sense expiated his guilt." He adds, however, "if the word 'expiate' is intended by definition to include the idea of *effectuation*, which to my mind it need not include, I would not want to use the word 'expiate' to describe what Christ has done for all men."⁵²

From all this we gather that Prof. Dekker, although he is vague in his treatment of the atonement, yet is inclined to put the major emphasis on its universality. Fact is, he definitely states "that there is neither need nor warrant for retaining the concept as it has been traditionally used

⁵¹Letter to the Committee, Jan. 28, 1966.

⁵²Ibid.

among us."⁵³ This raises the question as to what concept of the atonement he does champion. From his articles, however, we may draw the conclusion that it is his stress on the universal character of the love of God that prompted him to hold that the atonement is also universal. Now, although we do not wish to dispute that the atonement made by Christ on the cross is, indeed, a revelation of the love of God; yet we maintain that it is not that exclusively; for it also has reference to the expiation of human guilt and the satisfaction of divine justice. In other words, we believe that one can never have a true conception of the atonement, unless he recognizes that Christ *had* to suffer primarily because of our sins which had merited the wrath of a righteous and holy God. (Luke 24:26; Gal. 1:4; II Cor. 5:21) This means that, when we speak about the atonement, we should never consider the love of God only, but also all His other perfections, and especially, His justice and His truth, God's love can be shown to us when also His justice will be satisfied.⁵⁴ This implies that Christ's death was not merely an exhibition of divine love, as the advocates of the moral influence theory of the atonement would have us believe; but it also was an exhibition of the wrath of God which Christ bore in our stead. The moral influence theory of the atonement holds that the death of Christ was not really necessary, since God would have been willing to forgive our sins and to count us as His children without it. Those who hold this view usually have nothing but scorn for the orthodox satisfaction theory of the atonement. They say it pictures God as an avenging deity who demands his pound of flesh, and whose wrath can only be appeased by the shedding of blood. It is of this theology of "penal Substitution" that Vincent Taylor says "Modern Christianity has no option but to discard."⁵⁵ He himself, as a modern representative of the moral influence theory, has this to say: "Modern Christianity has fully grasped the belief that the Cross is the commendation of the love of God. It is, indeed, the supreme service of all Moral Theories of the atonement, . . . that they have impressed this truth as deeply upon the Christian consciousness. Gone for ever are feudal and merely legal conceptions of God, except in quarters where the modern spirit finds it difficult to enter."⁵⁶

It would take us too far afield, of course, to attempt a full discussion of this view. Suffice it to say that what Taylor describes as the orthodox position is only a caricature of it. The historical Reformed position in regard to the atonement, as a sacrifice to satisfy the righteous demands of God's justice, does not conflict at all with the idea that it also exemplifies God's great love. On the contrary, we confess, in the words of St. Paul, that it was God Himself who "was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses;" (II Cor. 5:19) and that He did so, since "Him who knew no sin he made to be sin on our

⁵³Letter to the Committee, Nov. 17, 1965.

⁵⁴It is exactly this position, namely, that God's justice must be satisfied and has been satisfied by the only Mediator, Jesus Christ, that is put forth in the Heidelberg Catechism (cf. Q. 12-18).

⁵⁵*The Atonement in New Testament Teaching*, p. 9.

⁵⁶*Ibid*, p. 195.

behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in him." (II Cor. 5:21) The latter text plainly teaches us that Christ, the innocent One, was made our Substitute, our Sin-bearer, and only in this way could we become righteous in the sight of God. Far from the idea that God is like a heathen deity whose wrath and hatred against mankind must first be placated (which position Dr. Bavinck criticizes as a Gnostic contrast between the Father and the Son), we hold that it was God Himself who in love and compassion for us sinners "gave his only begotten Son." Nevertheless, we must remember that, when God did give His Son over to the death of the cross, He did not do so needlessly, nor simply in order that by His willingness to die Christ might have some moral influence on us; nor even that His death was a mere token payment to God's law (as the governmental theory of the atonement maintains) but because only in that way could Christ render that perfect obedience which was required, if He was to atone for our sins and to restore us into God's fellowship. We must never forget that Christ's atonement was necessary, because there was an obstacle in the way of our fellowship with God, namely our sin. And this obstacle not merely made it impossible for us to have fellowship with God; but it also prevented God from having fellowship with us. In other words, the obstacle was there also on the part of God. This means that the Reformed position has always stressed the primarily objective character of the atonement (not to the exclusion of the subjective, of course). Not man, but God had to be reconciled first. This does not mean that God is a hard and unforgiving Judge. On the contrary, He is "merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth." (Ex. 34:6) But He is also righteous and holy. And thus, as our Catechism puts it, "God will have His justice satisfied; therefore we must make full satisfaction to the same, either by ourselves, or by another" (H. Cat., A. 12). The obstacle, namely, our sin, must be removed before the reconciliation between God and us can take place. T. J. Crawford puts it clearly, when he writes in this connection: "Now if by 'an obstacle on the part of God to the forgiveness of sinners' there be understood anything in the shape of personal resentment, or implacable vindictiveness or unwillingness to show mercy, it is perfectly true that there is no such obstacle. But that there are what may be called obstacles of another kind, arising from God's holy aversion to sin, His just condemnation of it, and His determination to punish it, can hardly be denied by any plain reader of the Scripture. How else are we to explain those frequent and express statements that 'God is angry with the wicked every day,' — that 'our iniquities have separated between us and our God, and our sins have hid His face from us, that he will not hear,'—and that 'the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness.'"⁵⁷

Perhaps it may seem that in these last few pages of our report we have somewhat digressed from our main subject. Yet we feel our comments therein are pertinent. For, as Steele and Thomas write in their pamphlet, *The Five Points of Calvinism*, "One should not attempt to settle the question of the *extent* or *intended application* of Christ's atoning work

⁵⁷*The Fatherhood of God*, p. 74.

until he first considers the broader question of the *nature* or *purpose* of the atonement. Before asking the profound question 'for whom did Christ die?' one should first ask the more fundamental question, 'Why did Christ die?' or to state it more pointedly, 'what was *accomplished* by his death?'⁵⁸

It would be both interesting and profitable, if we could trace the historical, orthodox position concerning the atonement—in the sense of satisfaction of God's justice, reconciliation through sacrifice, expiation, propitiation, substitution, and obedience—as it has been held and developed throughout the whole history of the Christian Church. For this would show clearly that far from being a one-sided and inadequate view, it really presents the heart of this all-important doctrine. Fact is, it is the only view of the atonement that occupies the central place in the Scriptures.

Various theologians have distilled from Scripture the following descriptions of the doctrine of the atonement:

"It is in the *work of atonement* for sins which Christ accomplished by His death that Scripture always concentrates the efficacy of His appearance for our salvation. It was there that 'propitiation' was made for sin (Rom. 3:25; Heb. 2:17; I John 2:2; 4:10); that 'reconciliation' was effected, and 'peace' made between man and God (II Cor. 5:18-21; Rom. 5:9, 11; Eph. 2:13-17; Col. 1:20, 21); that the one 'sacrifice' was offered by which sin has been for ever put away (Heb. 9:26-28). The atonement is the basis on which the whole superstructure of redemption rests. To deny it is, in effect, to take the foundation from the gospel."⁵⁹

"The Reformed doctrine of the atonement has been designated by the following terms—vicarious or substitutionary atonement, penal satisfaction view of the Atonement, Limited or definite atonement. Putting these terms together, one might say the Reformed view of the atonement is the penal satisfaction, vicarious atonement, which was limited to the elect in its design and extent."⁶⁰

"When we speak of the sacrifice of Christ as vicarious, we use the term in its proper sense. We mean that Christ as our Substitute suffered the punishment due to us, and in our place met all the requirements of the law."⁶¹

⁵⁸David N. Steele and Curtis C. Thomas, *The Five Points of Calvinism*, p. 79.

⁵⁹James Orr, in *Sidelights on Christian Doctrine*, p. 126.

⁶⁰Dr. F. H. Klooster, *Notes on The Reformed Doctrine of the Atonement*, p. 1.

⁶¹Professor L. Berkhof, *Vicarious Atonement through Christ*, p. 111. In the chapter, "The Restricted Design of the Atonement," he writes: What was said in the preceding respecting the close relation between the atonement and the covenant of redemption, in which Christ appears as the representative, not of all men, but only of those whom the Father has given Him, already contains a clear indication of the limited design of the atonement. But it will not be superfluous to call particular attention to this subject, especially in view of the widespread conviction that the atonement in Christ is universal in purpose. . . . The real point at issue in the controversy that has been carried on for centuries pertains to the design or purpose of the atonement. Did God in sending His Son into the world to be the Savior of sinners, and did Christ by taking upon Himself the work of redemption, intend to save all men, that is, all the inhabitants of the human race; or did they intend to save only the elect whose representative Christ became in the Coun-

"Atonement is the term that has come to be widely used to denote the substitutionary work of Christ which culminated in the sacrifice of Calvary."⁶²

"In resolving what man sees as a dilemma and in rescuing man from his dire predicament, God by the death of Christ carries out an action which is bewilderingly vast and manysided, an action which has cosmic and eternal effects. Hence all the startling Biblical metaphors are essential, whether drawn from the marketplace, slave trade, military campaign, temple sacrifice or law court. But Warfield is incontestably correct when he maintains that the writers of the N.T. 'enshrine at the center of this work its efficacy as a piacular sacrifice, securing the forgiveness of sin; that is to say, relieving its beneficiaries of the penal consequences which otherwise the curse of the broken law entails' (*Atonement*, p. 262).⁶³

What has been said in all these descriptions of the atonement, quoted above, does not imply, of course, that there are no other aspects of the death of Christ which also have value. Indeed there are. For instance, we too believe that Christ by His perfect obedience was our example; and that by His willingness to humble Himself for our sake He exercised a moral influence which, if realized by us, will also make us more willing to humble ourselves (cf. Phil. 2:1-8). But let us never lose sight of the fact that the heart of Christ's atoning work was His substitutionary sacrifice of Himself as the perfect "Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). He died that "He might purchase unto God with his blood men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation" (Rev. 5:9). It was that spotless Lamb of God who "his own self bare our sins in his body upon the tree, that we, having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness, by whose stripes ye were healed" (I Pet. 2:24).

Again, we do not wish to ignore the other benefits of Christ's death which indeed have a universal reference. It is noteworthy that Dr. Geerhardus Vos also relates these to the atonement. He writes in this connection: "It must be granted, however, that . . . some sort of reference of the atonement to every man may be affirmed; and insomuch as this reference is a beneficial one, we are led to posit back of it a form of love equally comprehensive and effective, which will have to be co-ordinated with the three other forms of universal love previously distinguished. . . . The Bible gives no right to say that Christ in His atoning work acted as the legal Substitute of every human being. But certainly neither does it require us to assert that for the non-elect the atonement is void of all

sel of Redemption? Lutherans and Arminians take the former position, and Calvinists the latter. (p. 151)

On page 156, he writes: They [Calvinists] believe that the atonement is effectual in the lives of all those for whom it is made. It necessarily carries with it all that is needed for the application of the work of redemption. Christ not only made salvation possible, but actually saves, and saves to the uttermost, every one for whom He made atonement. God's designs do not fail through the failure of men to meet the requirements of the gospel.

⁶²J. Murray, *The Atonement*, p. 9.

⁶³In an article on "Atonement" in *Baker's Dictionary of Theology*, p. 76, by Vernon C. Grounds.

benefit or significance. Every man is indebted for great privileges to the cross of Christ."⁶⁴

Dr. Vos mentions among these universal benefits of the atonement such things as these: 1. The continued existence of the human race; 2. that, because of the sufficiency of Christ's atonement the gospel has a message which can be preached to every human being; 3. that the offer of the gospel holds out hope to every one who hears it, and that it makes an immense difference whether man's present life is spent in the consciousness of this hope or without it." But he continues: "On the other hand, the love from which these universal benefits of the atonement flow should never be so defined as to obscure the fact that it falls short of the intention to bestow efficacious grace."⁶⁵

Allow us to add still another quotation from this same article of Dr. Vos: "The divine love for the elect is different not only in degree, but specifically from all the other forms of love, because it involves a purpose to save, of which all the other forms fall short. It was the great fault of the Amyraldian system that, on the one hand, it ascribed to the universal redemptive love, which it assumed, the character of a purpose to save; and that, on the other hand, by doing so it made the special relation of God to the elect emerge at a secondary stage in the decree of redemption. This is not only destructive of the principle that the purpose of God cannot under any circumstances be frustrated; it also strikes at the root of the specifically religious significance of the doctrine of election. The love of God for His own thus becomes an afterthought and loses the better part of its value. The fact that the one historic attempt to reduce the principle we have been considering to a theological formula has been a signal failure, ought to fill the church of today with great humility and to make her proceed with extreme caution in the task which, wisely, or unwisely, she has set herself;—the more so since, as we have seen, the air is rife with extravagant, un-Calvinistic, unscriptural notions on this subject."⁶⁶

Let us also listen to Prof. J. Murray. He writes: "The question is not whether many benefits short of justification and salvation accrue to men from the death of Christ. The unbelieving and reprobate in this world enjoy numerous benefits that flow from the fact that Christ died and rose again. The mediatorial dominion of Christ is universal. Christ is Head over all things and is given all authority in heaven and in earth. It is within this mediatorial dominion that all the blessings which men enjoy are dispensed. But this dominion Christ exercises on the basis of and as the reward of his finished work of redemption . . . (Phil. 2:8, 9). Consequently, since all benefits and blessings are within the realm of Christ's dominion, and since this dominion rests upon His finished work of atonement, the benefits innumerable which are enjoyed by all men indiscriminately are related to the death of Christ and may be said to accrue from it in one way or another. If they thus flow from the death

⁶⁴*Op. cit.*, p. 30.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*

⁶⁶*Op. cit.*, p. 31.

of Christ they are intended thus to flow. It is proper, therefore, to say that the enjoyment of certain benefits, even by the non-elect and reprobate, fall within the design of the death of Christ. The denial of universal atonement does not carry with it the denial of any such relation that the benefits enjoyed by all men may sustain to Christ's death and finished work. The real question is something very different."⁶⁷

Again, Murray writes in another place: "All the favors which even the reprobate receive in this life are related in one way or another to the atonement and may be said to flow from it. If so, they were designed to flow from it, and this means that the atonement embraced in its design the bestowment of these benefits upon the reprobate. But this is not to say that the atonement in its specific character as atonement, is designed for the reprobate. It is one thing to say that certain benefits accrue to the reprobate from the atonement; it is entirely different to say that the atonement itself is designed for the reprobate. And the fallacy of the latter supposition becomes apparent when we remember that it is of the nature of the atonement to secure the benefits which the reprobate never enjoy. In a word, the atonement is bound up with its efficacy in respect of obedience, expiation, propitiation, reconciliation, and redemption. When the Scripture speaks of Christ as dying for men, it is His vicarious death on their behalf that is in view, and all the content which belongs to the atonement defines the significance of the formula 'died for.' Thus we may not say that He died for all men any more than that He made atonement for all men."⁶⁸

As mentioned before, we do not wish to present all the historical proofs for the orthodox position of the atonement. But we do want to take the time to show that in the Scriptures, too, all the emphasis is placed on its substitutionary and piacular character. This is evident, first of all, from the words that are used to describe this doctrine. For example, the words "to atone" and "atonement" occur frequently in the Old Testament, as a translation of the Hebrew words "kaphar" and Kippurim." Literally they refer to a covering or a being covered, as sin is covered by expiation. Particularly in the book of Leviticus the word atonement occurs very often in connection with the sin- and the trespass-offerings, and especially in connection with the offerings that were brought on the great day of atonement. It was through these offerings that the high priest was to make atonement for the sins of both, himself and his people. It was through these sacrifices that Israel was constantly reminded of the fact that "without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins."

In the New Testament the atoning work of Christ is referred to by the Greek words "apolutrosis" (also "lutron" and "antilytron"), "katallage" and "hilasmos." Of the first word "apolutrosis" Trench states that it refers to the complete redemption which Christ has purchased for us by the price or ransom ("lytron" and "antilytron") which He paid for us. Here are a few examples of the use of these words: Titus 2:14: "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity;" I Peter

⁶⁷*Redemption—Accomplished and Applied*, p. 61f.

⁶⁸*The Atonement*, p. 27f.

1:18, 19: "Knowing that ye were redeemed, not with corruptible things, . . . but with precious blood, . . . even the blood of Christ;" Matt. 20:28: "The Son of man came . . . to give His life a ransom for many." (Cf. also I Cor. 6:20; Heb. 9:12).

Of the second word, "katallage," Trench says the following: "It is first a reconciliation, 'qua Deus nos sibi reconciliavit,' [by which God reconciled Himself to us], laid aside His holy anger against our sins, and received us into favor, a reconciliation effected once for all for us by Christ upon the cross; so II Cor. 5:18, 19; Rom. 5:10. . . . But *katallage* is secondly and subordinately the reconciliation, 'qua nos Deo reconciliamur' [by which we are reconciled to God] the daily deposition under the operation of the Holy Spirit, of the enmity of the old man toward God, . . . II Cor. 5:20 and I Cor. 7:11. All attempts to make this, the secondary meaning of the word, to be the primary, rest not on an unprejudiced exegesis, but on a foregone determination to get rid of the reality of God's anger against sin."⁶⁹

Finally, the word "hilasmos" refers to the propitiation which Christ Himself has become to us, as our Mediator, High Priest, and Surety (cf. I John 2:2; 4:10). "Hilasmos" in distinction from "katallage" refers more particularly to the means whereby reconciliation was accomplished, or that which effected the reconciliation. A good example is Romans 3:25: "Whom [Christ Jesus] God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, in his blood, to show his righteousness because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God."

But once more the question might be asked, Why spend so much time on proving that the Scriptures place the predominant emphasis on the peculiar and substitutionary character of Christ's atonement? Why stress that idea that Christ by His death satisfied the justice of God, and that only in this way reconciliation between God and us could be effected? In the first place we consider this necessary, because, especially in our day, there are so many views on the atonement that are contrary to this Reformed and scriptural point of view. Not merely should we be on our guard against the error of Arminianism, but greater dangers threaten us from the side of Existentialism and Neo-modernism. The theological atmosphere of our day is charged with all sorts of erroneous views, encouraged as they are by the extremely tolerant attitude of the ecumenically-minded churches. For the most part, however, all these new theologies have one thing in common, namely, that they tend to gravitate towards a universalism.

We do not mean to imply, of course, that Prof. Dekker has denied that Christ made His atonement to satisfy the justice of God; or even that he may be accused of having universalistic tendencies. On the contrary, we appreciate the fact that he repeatedly avers that his idea of a universal atonement should be distinguished from the theory of universal salvation. He also stresses the truth that in the application of salvation we are dependent upon the work of the Holy Spirit, who must regenerate the heart and work faith in us. But we cannot escape the impression that

⁶⁹R. C. Trench, *Synonyms of the New Testament*, p. 138f.

the piacular and substitutionary character of Christ's suffering does not receive the place that it should have in his theology. For the sake of holding to an atonement which is universal, he always seems to stress those aspects of Christ's work which lie on the periphery and do not touch the heart of his atoning sacrifice. The following statement made to our Committee seems to illustrate this: "It remains true that Christ is the Savior of all men (I Tim. 4:10) and that all men experience salvation in certain proximate ways, — for example, the continuation of life and well-being, the conquest of evils such as sickness which result from sin, social order, peace and justice, and the general resurrection."⁷⁰ Moreover, when he is faced with the question whether Christ on His cross actually bore the sin and guilt and the curse of the law for every man, and whether He actually merited for them eternal life and salvation, he is inclined to hedge somewhat on these questions, and he answers that in some sense Christ is the Substitute for all men, and that somehow all men are involved in His death and resurrection. He even goes so far as to deny that the atonement has efficacy in itself, and thus seeks to transfer that efficacy from the atonement to the redeeming work of the Holy Spirit. In certain of his statements Prof. Dekker seems to come close to the governmental theory of the atonement which, A. A. Hodge characterizes as follows: "The atonement renders the salvation of all men possible, and it bears, from its very nature, precisely the same relation to the non-elect that it does to the elect. Its sole design and effect is to remove legal obstacles out of the way of the salvation of all men indifferently. It secures nothing more than this for any man. The principles which secure its actual application to individual men, whether these lie ultimately in the free will of men or in the sovereign election of God, in either case have no place in the atonement itself."⁷¹

Like the advocates of the governmental theory of the atonement, Prof. Dekker also holds that the benefits of Christ's work for any individual are left undetermined by the atonement itself. He does not seem to believe that Christ by His death on the cross has also actually purchased for those for whom He died faith and repentance, the adoption of sons and eternal inheritance. This it seems to us is the fundamental fault in his position. For, while he would definitely reject the Arminian position that the application of salvation depends on the free will of man, he does make the assertion that it is dependent on the operation of the Holy Spirit only, and is not to be ascribed to the efficacy of the atonement as such.⁷² Thus he introduces a disjunction between the work of Christ and that of the Holy Spirit. If Christ has effectually merited *faith and repentance* for those for whom He died, it is not possible to say that His atonement is universal, unless one also believes in universal salvation. This Prof. Dekker does not do.

⁷⁰Letter to the Committee, Jan. 28, 1966.

⁷¹*The Atonement*, p. 330.

⁷²In the same context, however, he also made another assertion, which to us seems inconsistent with the above, namely: "At the same time I recognize, of course, that the redeeming work of the Spirit is a fruit of and is dependent upon Christ's atonement." (Letter to the Committee, Nov. 17, 1965)

There is, of course, a legitimate distinction between the *atonement* and its application to men in *redemption and salvation*. But this is not the question that we are dealing with. The real question is this, whether we may distinguish between a *universal atonement* and a *particular redemption*. The Arminians did this, when they said that Christ died for all, but that men, by the exercise of their own wills must appropriate redemption to themselves. The School of Saumur also was inclined to make that distinction, when it posited an antecedent decree of hypothetical universalism and a consequent decree of particular redemption. Prof. Dekker, however, makes that same distinction in still another way, when he insists on a *universal atonement*, in the sense that God loves all men and Christ died for all, and a *particular redemption*, based on God's decree to save only the elect. This we believe is not in harmony with the genius of Reformed theology and certainly is contrary to the teachings of the Canons of Dort, as we hope to show later in our report. We hold that the particularism of redemption is the fruit of a particular atonement, since even the Holy Spirit Himself, who applies that redemption is a gift of God which Christ has merited for His people through His death.

Again, not only does our professor of missions introduce a disjunction between the work of Christ and that of the Holy Spirit, but he also seems to drive a wedge between the work of the Father and that of the Son. For in his first article he criticizes those who hold that the doctrine of limited atonement can be logically deduced from the doctrine of election. We too, of course, admit that we should not try to establish a truth *merely* by the way of logical deduction. However, it cannot be denied that the Bible itself definitely links our election in Christ with the love that God had for us in Him. For Paul says in Ephesians 1:4-7: "Even as He has chosen us in Him before the world was founded, to be holy and blameless in His presence. In love He predestined us in Jesus Christ for His sonship, in agreement with the kind intent of His will, for the praise of His glorious mercy with which He has graced us in union with the Beloved. In Him and through His blood we enjoy redemption, the forgiveness of our trespasses to the measure of the wealth of His grace."⁷³

Moreover, as Steele and Thomas point up, the whole purpose for which the Synod of Dort was summoned was to set forth, over against the Arminian heresy, that this "one view [Calvinism] presents the three acts of the Holy Trinity for the recovering of lost mankind—election by the Father, redemption by the Son, calling by the Spirit—as directed towards the same persons, and as securing their salvation infallibly. . . . For the five points, though separately stated, are really inseparable. They hang together; you cannot reject one without rejecting them all, at least in the sense in which the Synod meant them. For to Calvinism there is really only *one* point to be made in the field of soteriology: the point that God *saves sinners*. God—the Triune Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; three Persons working together in sovereign wisdom,

⁷³We have here followed the Berkeley version, which is a clearer translation of this passage.

power and love to achieve the salvation of a chosen people, the Father electing, the Son fulfilling the Father's will by redeeming, the Spirit executing the purpose of a Father and Son by renewing. . . . God *saves sinners*—and the force of this confession may not be weakened by disrupting the unity of the work of the Trinity."⁷⁴

Prof. Dekker finds that the atonement is universal on the basis of three things, namely, its *sufficiency*, its *availability*, and the divine *desire* that all men be saved. Let us briefly consider these points also, and see whether they actually teach all that is claimed for them.

It is true, that the death of Christ was, as the Canons say, "of infinite worth and value, abundantly sufficient to expiate the sins of the whole world." (II, 3) But why was it so sufficient? "Because the person who submitted to it was not only real man and perfectly holy, but also the only begotten Son of God, of the same eternal and infinite essence with the Father and the Holy Spirit, which qualifications were necessary to constitute Him a Savior for us; and, moreover, because it was attended with a sense of the wrath and curse of God due to us for sin." (II, 4)

Prof. Dekker seems to hold that, since the death of Christ was infinite in value and sufficient to expiate the sins of the whole world, that therefore, too, the atonement, which was accomplished by that death, is universal in character, and intended by God for all men. For he writes: "With respect to the sufficiency of salvation for all men, it has been observed in the current discussion that this has little to do with the universalism of redemptive love, because the atonement would have had to be the same for one as for all. This understanding of sufficiency is familiar and generally accepted. It should not, however, mislead us in this connection. For the Bible goes far beyond abstractions of this kind and indicates that it precisely belonged to the divine intention that the atonement would be sufficient for all men. In other words, universal sufficiency belongs to the design of the atonement and is an essential element in the witness of the gospel."⁷⁵

However, the conclusion drawn, that the sufficiency of Christ's death proves the universality of God's redemptive love and consequently of the atonement, does not necessarily follow. It is true, of course, that, since the death of Christ was to be sufficient *to be able* to save all men, God also desired that it would have that sufficiency. But from the fact that the death of Christ is indeed sufficient for all men does not follow the conclusion that the atonement *as such* is also *actually universal* or *intended for all men*. For the same article of the Canons which teaches the infinite worth and sufficiency of the death of Christ also states that these qualifications were necessary to constitute Him a Savior *for us*, and because it was attended with a sense of the wrath and curse of God due *to us* for sin." Notice, that it does not say that these qualifications constitute Him a Savior for all men. Fact is, we may well ask whether the sufficiency of the atonement properly belongs to its *design*, and not rather to its *nature*. Steele and Thomas write: "All Calvinists agree that Christ's

⁷⁴*Op. cit.*, p. 22f.

⁷⁵*The Reformed Journal*, Jan. 1964.

obedience and suffering were of infinite value, and that if God had so willed, the satisfaction rendered by Christ would have saved every member of the human race. It would have required no more obedience, nor any greater suffering for Christ to have secured salvation for every man, woman, and child who ever lived than it did for Him to secure the salvation for the elect only. But He came into the world to represent and save only those given to Him by the Father. Thus Christ's saving work was limited in that it was designed to save some and not others, but it was not limited in value for it was of infinite worth and would have secured salvation for every one if this had been God's intention.⁷⁶

The Canons teach, moreover, that if any one "perish in unbelief this is not owing to any defect or insufficiency in the sacrifice offered by Christ upon the cross, but is wholly to be imputed to themselves." (II, 6). "But," they continue, "as many as truly believe, and are delivered and saved from sin and destruction *through the death of Christ*, are indebted for this benefit solely to the grace of God *given them in Christ* from everlasting, and not to any merit of their own." (II, 7). This last article also teaches that, although the death of Christ was sufficient, able to save all men, if God had willed this, nevertheless it was not God's purpose or intention to save all men by it.

A similar difficulty faces us, when we consider Prof. Dekker's contention that the universal character of the atonement is proved by the availability of salvation to all men. He calls this availability "the second factor in the design of the atonement." With much that he wrote about this subject in *The Reformed Journal*⁷⁷ we can agree, since he repeatedly stressed the fact that salvation is only available to those who meet the conditions of repentance and faith. But again we ask, Is this availability of salvation to all men a *design* of the atonement? Or is this availability involved in the offer of the gospel? It seems to us one should carefully distinguish between these two things.

Prof. Dekker claims that if "the factor of availability is involved in the offer of the gospel . . . it is then also necessarily involved in the atonement which is revealed in and explained by the gospel. May we separate between what is *revealed* in the gospel and what actually *exists*, in a way to eliminate the latter? If the notion of availability is limited to the concrete presentation of the gospel, without some objective reality behind it, does not the gospel offer itself become unreal? It seems to me that the integrity of God and the sincerity of the offer of the gospel are at stake here."⁷⁸

⁷⁶*Op. cit.*, p. 39. W. G. T. Shedd writes: "The Dort Synod held that the atonement, though sufficient in value for the salvation of all men, was intended only for those to whom it is effectually applied, namely, the elect. . . . The atonement saves all for whom it was intended" (*History of Doctrine* II, p. 497). And Dr. A. Kuyper writes: "Now then, let it . . . be understood and granted that to say, 'In this ocean of value and worth, which was opened up in Jesus' blood, there is abundant benefit for all,' yet this does not at all and in the least imply that this 'is therefore also for all.'" (*Uit het Woord*, IV, p. 13)

⁷⁷Jan. 1964.

⁷⁸Letter to the Committee, Jan. 28, 1966.

Here again, the professor seems to imply that somehow Christ has merited salvation for all men and that, as far as God is concerned salvation is available for all distributively. In other words, he would say, salvation is there: not merely for all who will avail themselves of it in the way of repentance and faith, but also actually for all, including those who will not avail themselves of it. "For," says he, "availability in itself has nothing to do with ability or disability to obtain. To say something is available only to those who actually meet the conditions for obtaining it arbitrarily alters the meaning of a plain English word."⁷⁹

Again, we do not believe that what Prof. Dekker avers here is true. Neither is it necessary to hold such a view with reference to the offer of the gospel. Dr. Roger Nicole gives a very illuminating illustration of this. He writes: "It is urged that if an offer is to be sincere, a full provision must have been made for all those who the offer reaches. Otherwise, there would be an element of duplicity in the presentation.

"I have before me an offer which has been made by a large store in Boston for a brand name refrigerator at the cost of \$199.95.

"This offer appeared in the Boston Sunday Herald, a journal which has a circulation in the hundreds of thousands. Am I to understand that the store in question has made a purchase of several hundred thousand refrigerators because it has published this ad, or am I entitled to accuse them of duplicity and sharp practices if they have failed to make such provision? Certainly not. In fact, any business concern that would be run along these lines would soon be bankrupt. All that I have a right to expect is that, if I appear at the store with \$199.95 and seek to purchase a refrigerator, one such will be available to me.

"Indeed, if the firm in question published this ad with scarcely any provision for the satisfaction of the customers that might come we might feel that they have indulged in a questionable practice in producing what may be called a 'come on,' a bait to induce customers to appear at their store, without any real intention of providing what is offered.

"As long, however, as they will provide what they advertise to those who respond to the ad, one cannot raise the slightest objection, and the question of how much provision they make is purely a matter of internal administration, which is not the customer's concern.

"Now if this be so at the lowly level of human business where our grasp of principles and activities is abundantly adequate, how much will this be the case in relation to sovereign purposes and dispositions which an infinite God may be led to frame. If among men we do not demand total provision, by what right should we think that with God such a thing would suddenly become necessary? The above example points conclusively to the fact that a *coextensive provision is not an essential prerequisite for a sincere offer.*

"And now we ask, 'What then is the essential prerequisite for a sincere offer?' Simply this: that if the terms of the offer be observed, that which is offered be actually granted. In connection with the Gospel offer, the

⁷⁹The Reformed Journal, Jan. 1964.

terms are that a man should repent and believe. Whenever that occurs, salvation is actually conferred.

"There is not a single case on record in the whole history of mankind where a person came unto God in repentance and faith and was refused salvation. This our Lord specifically promised: 'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out' (John 6:37). But if the question be raised 'Who is going to come?', the answer is 'All which the Father giveth me shall come unto me' (John 6:37), and 'No man can come to me, except the Father that sent me draw him' (John 6:44)."⁸⁰

The third universal factor in the atonement Prof. Dekker finds in the divine desire that all men be saved. Here again we are at a loss to know what exactly he means with this divine desire. Does he mean to say that God does not "desire the death of the wicked; but rather that the wicked turn from his way and live." (Ezek. 33:11) and that, therefore, He can also say that He is "not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (II Peter 3:9)? If so, then we could wholly agree with him. But sometimes we fear that the professor means more than this, and that he is inclined to identify the *divine desire*, which is expressed in the gospel proclamation, with the *divine intention* or purpose which is known to God alone. As he speaks of the universal atonement, does this then also imply that "God, as far as He is concerned, has been minded to apply to all equally the benefits gained by the death of Christ"? (Canons of Dort, II, par. 6) The latter is the Arminian position which was rejected at the Synod of Dort, and which we trust our professor of missions would also reject. The fact remains that it is exactly this position which the Arminians and many other theologians who believe in a universal atonement would maintain. Hence, it is rather confusing to say that the universality of the atonement is proved by such texts as Ezek. 33:11; II Peter 3:9; and others.

We may be sure, of course, that God who is love, does not desire that any man should perish, but that all should come to repentance. He takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked. Moreover, when in spite of this He must, according to His just judgment, punish the wicked on account of their sin, we can rest assured that this grieves Him at His heart. (Gen. 6:6) Nevertheless, God was not obliged to save any one. And therefore we say that it was not the intent or purpose of His counsel to save all.

We should remember, however, that Prof. Dekker does not wish to establish the correctness of his views by logical deduction merely. He believes that he can produce stronger evidence from the Scriptures, and secondarily, also from the confessions and from Calvin.

The scriptural evidence which he has set forth in his articles consists of a number of texts which are all supposed to teach a universal atonement. They are those passages which speak of the "world," or "all men," or "every man" in relation to Christ's sacrifice. It is regrettable, however,

⁸⁰"Defense of Definite Atonement," in *Moody Student*, February 14, 1964. Bavinck in his book, *Our Reasonable Faith*, (pp. 361, 362) says: "However much we must hold to this absolute universality of the preaching of the gospel and of the offer of grace, we are not to infer from it that therefore the benefits of Christ were achieved and destined for every individual person."

that he usually only quoted these passages and made little attempt to exegete them. He simply assumed that, when, for instance, John 1:29 states that Christ is "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," then this word "world" must inevitably mean every individual in the world. And, when we read in II Cor. 5:14 that Christ "died for all," he at once draws the conclusion that Christ died for all men distributively.

This, it seems to us, is a grave weakness in Prof. Dekker's position; the more so, because he should realize that these same texts have always been used by the Arminians for their position. He reveals that same weakness also by the casual way in which he disposes of those texts which Reformed writers have always quoted to substantiate the position that the atonement is limited or definite. These texts too he does not exegete; but he simply says that, when the Bible speaks about Christ dying for "the sheep" or for "His church" or for "the elect," this does not exclude the possibility that He may have died for others also. But how shall we harmonize those two sets of texts in the Bible: the so-called universalistic passages and the particularistic?

R. S. Candlish writes: "There is this general difference between the two sets of texts—those which seem to assert a general, and those which rather point to a restricted and limited, reference in the atoning work of Christ—that while the former easily admit of a clear and consistent interpretation, such as makes them harmonize with the doctrine which, at first sight, they might be supposed to contradict, it is altogether otherwise with the latter. It is only by a process of distortion—by their being made to suffer violence—that they can be so explained away as to become even neutral in the controversy. It is remarkable, accordingly, that opponents of the Calvinistic view rarely, if ever, apply themselves to the task of showing what fair construction they may put, according to their theory, on the texts usually cited against them. They think it enough simply to collect an array of texts which, when uttered in single notes, give a sound similar to that of their own trumpet."⁸¹

Let us now consider those texts Prof. Dekker has quoted as teaching a universal atonement. First, we shall deal with the passages in which the word "world" occurs in connection with the work of Christ. John 1:29: "Behold, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world."

We believe that the word "world" here has the same meaning that it has in John 3:16, and refers to mankind in its totality. This may be deduced from the fact that this text also speaks of sin collectively. Christ came not merely to bear the sin of the Jewish nation, but of all mankind, both Jews and Gentiles. It is this fact that prompted the Samaritans to confess Him as "indeed, the Savior of the world." Thayer's

⁸¹*The Atonement*, p. 86f. What, Candlish states here is also the view of Dr. A. Kuyper. He wrote: "De gang van het onderzoek . . . zal hierin bestaan . . . om duidelijk te maken, dat de *particuliere* genade zeer beslist in de Heilige Schrift geopenbaard wordt, terwijl de Schriftwoorden die men voor het tegenovergestelde gevoelen bijbrengt, niet wel voor nauwkeuriger toetsing kunnen bestaan." (*Uit Het Woord* IV, p. 17.) Dr. Beets wrote, "Bible texts which seem to favor the general atonement view, can be explained in harmony with the particular atonement theory. . . . But the reverse of this none can succeed in doing." (*The Reformed Confession Explained*, p. 171)

Lexicon asserts that the words "taketh away the sin of the world," means that Christ came into the world "to remove the guilt and punishment of sin by expiation, or to cause that sin be neither imputed nor punished."⁸² This cannot refer to all men distributively.⁸³

I John 2:2: "My little children, these things write I unto you that ye may not sin. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world."

Before we consider the extent of the words, "the whole world," we should first take note of the meaning of the word "propitiation." "The term 'propitiation' means . . . to pacify, to conciliate, to make propitious. It presupposes that the person propitiated is angry and needs to be pacified . . . Those whom God loved with invincible love were the children of His wrath as Paul expressly says (Eph. 2:3). It is to this fact that the propitiation made by Christ is directed . . . It was Christ's to deal with the wrath so that those loved would no longer be the objects of wrath, and love would achieve its aim of making the children of wrath the children of God's good pleasure."⁸⁴

We should remember that John teaches in John 3:36 that the wrath of God abideth on those who do not believe. It has never been removed. Therefore, to say that the term the "whole world" in I John 2:2 includes each and every man would prove too much, since the wrath of God has not been removed from those who do not believe on the Son. But to say that John here again refers to the "world" in the sense of ethnic universalism fits in well with the context, with the general teaching of John, and with the Scriptures.⁸⁵

⁸²See under "airó," p. 17.

⁸³J. Van Andel remarks: "Men late hem (Johannes de Dooper) echter niet zeggen dat het Lam Gods van alle menschen, hoofd voor hoofd, de zonde wegnemen zou. De uitdrukking 'wereld' toch wijst in de taal der Schrift, die de taal des Doopers is, iets anders aan dan de som van alle menschen te samen, namelijk, het in zijne eenheid aangemerkt menschelijk geslacht." (*Johannes' Evangelie*, bl. 32).

⁸⁴J. Murray, Article on "The Atonement," in *Encyclopedia of Christianity*, p. 469.

⁸⁵Murray, however, does admit that there is perhaps "no text in the Scriptures (which) presents more plausible support to the doctrine of universal atonement than I John 2:2." He continues: "The extension of propitiation to the 'whole world' would appear to allow for no other construction than that the propitiation for sins embraces the sins of the whole world. It must be said that the language John uses here would fit in perfectly with the doctrine of universal atonement, if Scripture elsewhere demonstrated that to be a biblical doctrine. And it must also be said that this expression of *itself* would not offer any proof or support to a doctrine of limited atonement. The question, however, is: does this text prove that the atonement is universal? In other words, is the case such that canons of interpretation are violated if we interpret it in a way that is compatible with the doctrine of limited atonement? Since there are so many biblical reasons for the doctrine of a limited extent of the atonement, we are required to ask this question, and when we seek to answer it we can find several reasons why John should have said, 'for the whole world' without in the least implying that his intent was to teach what the proponents of universal atonement allege." He further mentions three reasons why John might say 'for the whole world.' He might say this:

1) to indicate Christ's propitiation was not limited in its efficacy to the immediate circle of disciples; nor yet to those who would come under their influence, but it would extend to all in every nation (ethnic universalism).

I John 4:14: "And we have beheld and bear witness that the Father hath sent the Son to be the Savior of the world."

Here again we believe that John is simply referring to Christ as the Savior of the world in its cosmic and ethnic sense. In the context John had spoken of the many false prophets and evil spirits that exert an anti-Christian influence in this world (4:1-3). But in contrast with these, the Son of man has been sent to be the Savior of the world. Here, too, as in John 3:16, the love of God for the world and the fact that the Son of God is the Savior of the world is linked with a "whosoever." ("Whosoever believeth in Him" in John 3:16 and the "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God" in I John 4:15). In other words, God saves the world in those who believe and confess. Hence the word "world" in this verse also may refer to the cosmos, mankind in general, and emphasizes ethnic universalism. To say that it must refer to all men distributively demands proof. II Cor. 5:19: "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses."

Dr. G. Vos would have us take notice here that in the original Greek the article is lacking before the word "world." This would indicate that God was reconciling to Himself the world as cosmos, or the world in its totality. He says: "The exegesis which would find here a reference to the benefits which flow from the atonement to every man as such, is open to two objections: 1) Not some lesser benefit, but actual justification is specified, as the main effect of the atonement; for Paul says here, 'Not imputing their trespasses unto them.' And 2) In the immediate context the words 'one died for all' have their correlate in 'all are dead,' which latter statement refers, if not exclusively, at least in part, to the believer's ethical death to sin. It appears therefore, that Paul's thought was dwelling here upon an efficacy of Christ's death which extends to believers only. But believers are, according to Paul, involved in the sin and guilt of the race, and consequently the reconciliation which disposes of their sin and guilt must from the nature of the case bear also a racial, cosmical aspect."⁸⁶

Let us next consider those texts which speak of Christ dying "for all" or "for all men."

II Cor. 5:14, 15: "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that one died for all, therefore all died; and he died for all,

2) He might also have meant to refer to the exclusiveness of Christ's propitiation. The whole world needs it, and can find it in Christ alone.

3) Or he might have referred to the perpetuity of Christ's propitiation. (Cf. J. Murray, *Redemption Accomplished and Applied*, pp. 72-74)

Dr. A. Kuyper favors the second possible interpretation given here by Murray. He does so on the basis of the fact that in the original Greek the preposition "for" (in the phrase "for the whole world") is not "hyper" nor "anti" but "peri," which "simply means that He (Jesus Christ) is a propitiation for sins which is needed by the whole world, as well as by us, and which it can find in Him alone. He further states that we may not conclude from this text that the reconciling sacrifice of Christ was intended and destined to be an equivalent of, or to come in the place of, the sins of the whole world." (*Uit het Woord*, p. 20)

⁸⁶*Op. cit.*, p. 30

that they that live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him who for their sakes died and rose again."

To get the drift of what Paul is saying in these verses we must see them first of all in their context. Paul in the last part of this 5th chapter of II Cor. is trying to convince his readers that he is sincere in all his labors for God and the Church. "For," says he, "the love of Christ constraineth us." Those who have experienced that love will also make the will of Christ the rule of their obedience, and the glory of Christ the great aim of their lives. Why? "Because," says Paul, "we thus judge, that one died for all, therefore all died; and he died for all, that they that live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him who for their sakes died and rose again." What he means is this, namely, that all for whom Christ died, are now also dead with him unto sin and self, in order that they may no longer live for self, but unto him who for their sakes died and rose again.⁸⁷

The question which concerns us particularly is, What does Paul mean, when he writes "one died for all"? Is this expression to be understood as distributively universal; or is the "all" found therein limited in its extent? Another way of presenting this problem is to ask: Did Christ die for all men without distinction; or only for those who are reckoned to be dead in Him, and consequently, also live for Him? Were all men somehow representatively involved in Christ's death; or was that death primarily substitutionary in character and only for those who are actually redeemed thereby?

Some argue for the former position on the basis of the fact that in this statement—"one died for all"—the preposition "for" is a translation of the Greek word "hyper," instead of "anti." The latter always has the force of "instead of," or "in the place of," while the former (hyper) often has the meaning of "for the benefit of," or "in behalf of." Yet Greek scholars agree that "hyper" as such may have either meaning, depending on the context in which it is found. Fact is, we may say that as a rule, wherever "hyper" is used in connection with such statements as "Christ dying *for* . . ." or "giving His life *for* . . ." the idea of substitution is in the foreground. Yet, although the idea of substitution is in the foreground, this does not prevent us from holding the position that in this passage Christ is also referred to as the Representative of His people in His death. For, according to Trench, the preposition "hyper" is purposely used here, in order that it may embrace both meanings (of substitution and representation) and thus express how Christ died at once *for our sakes* and *in our stead*, while "anti" would only have expressed the latter.⁸⁸

⁸⁷From the Rev. Neal Punt the committee received a detailed exegesis of this same passage, which essentially agrees with our own, except that it points up that "Paul would have been similarly 'constrained' by the love of Christ, if he had been a merchant, a farmer, a teacher. . . ."

⁸⁸R. C. Trench, *Synonyms*, par. xxxii, p. 164. Compare with this also what Dr. G. Berkouwer says in his book, *The Work of Christ*, (p. 308): "*All the passages concerning the death of Christ, whatever their context, point to the fact that it was 'for us' in the sense of 'in our stead.'*" (italics, The Comm.) The distinction has frequently been made between 'in our behalf' and 'in our stead.' Many admit,

We must observe that, when Paul says, "because we thus judge, that one died for all, therefore all died," he implies that the *all* that died are the same persons for whom He died. For Christ who died for them as their Substitute is also their Representative in His death. Being reckoned in Him, His death secured their death (unto sin). This was one of its designs or effects. And therefore the *all* in the second clause, "therefore all died," limits the *all* in the first clause, "One died for all." In other words, not all people died in and with Christ. And Christ died only for the *all* who died when He died. Moreover, those who died in and with Christ (that is, died unto sin), are also the same persons who, according to verse 15, also "no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him who for their sakes died and rose again." Hence, what Paul means to say in this passage is simply this: We judge that the death of Christ also implies the death of those for whom He died, so that they also, now being dead with Him unto sin, should no longer live unto themselves, but unto Him who for their sakes died and rose again.

This idea that those who are Christ's share in both His death and His resurrection is very common in the New Testament Scriptures. For example, we find it also in Phil. 3:10, 11; Col. 2:20; 3:1-3 (cf. I Pet. 4:1, 2); and especially in Romans 6:2-8. Fact is, Paul's teaching in Romans 6 contains an exact analogy with II Cor. 5:14, 15. "For," says the apostle there, "If we have become united with him in the likeness of his death, we shall also be in the likeness of his resurrection. . . . If we died with Christ, we believe we shall also live with Him For the death that He died, He died unto sin once: but the life that He liveth He liveth unto God. Even so reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus (vss. 5, 8, 10, 11). Both passages teach that Christ's own (those for whom He died) are reckoned to be dead in Him, namely, dead unto sin and self. Yet, at the same time, they are living too, for they live in the spirit. For the death of Christ of which they are partakers is also the source of their life. Dying with Christ to sin and self is to live with Him in the spirit. As Paul testified of himself in Gal. 2:20: "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith, the faith which is in the Son of God who loved me, and gave himself up for me." Hence, they who die with Him, who died for them, die in order to live. They live by dying. Shall they then not live unto Him who gave His life, in order to make

however, that Scripture does not warrant such a distinction. We read, for instance, that the Son of man came . . . to give His life a ransom for (anti) many' (Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45), whereas we also read that Christ 'died for (hyper) all' (II Cor. 5:15; cf. Rom. 5:6, 8; I Cor. 15:3). When Christ gives His life a ransom (lytron), then life becomes free because He gives His life. In their favor it is precisely the case that He takes their place. This correctly says that 'in the stead of' and 'in behalf of' neither contradict each other nor exclude each other. When we translate both expressions by 'for,' then this one word signifies a twofold aspect. It is exactly the uniqueness of Christ's act that makes it not impersonal substitution but one that benefits others."

It is interesting to note that Berkouwer also refers to this same text (II Cor. 5: 14, 15), which says that "Christ died for all," in order to show that it was by that death of Christ that God was reconciled to us. (Cf. *ibid.* p. 255)

their death a life? He did all for them; therefore, they will do all for Him!⁸⁹

When we turn to the Pastoral Epistles of St. Paul, we may note that in them a more pronounced universalism seems to find expression. The following are the texts which Prof. Dekker quoted, and which we wish to consider at this time.

I Tim. 2:4-6: "4. Who would have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. 5. For there is one God, one mediator also between God and men, himself man, Christ Jesus, 6. who gave himself a ransom for all; the testimony to be borne in its own times.

The question that confronts us is whether the "all men" in verse 4 and the "all" in verse 6 refer to all men individually, or to all men in the sense of all classes of men. The context must decide. In verse 1 Paul exhorts his readers to pray for all men. But that he does not mean all men individually, but rather all classes of men follows from what he says in the next verse, namely, that among all those for whom we should pray are "kings and all that are in high place." For, says he, "This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who would have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth." (vss. 3, 4) The all men in verse 4, therefore, are the same all men in verse 1, and refer to all classes of men. God does not exclude any from salvation because of rank or standing in this world. But if any are to be saved, they must come to the knowledge of the truth.

In this passage Paul exhorts his readers to avoid the narrow particularism of the Jews, who would exclude heathen and publicans from salvation, and also the exclusivism of the Greeks who under the influence of Gnostic ideas would limit salvation to an elite number.⁹⁰ But that not

⁸⁹We have given a rather extensive exegesis of this passage, because in connection therewith our committee was given a lengthy document in which, on the basis of the ideas of "human solidarity" and "corporate personality" it was proposed that all men distributively are involved in the death of Christ, as well as in His resurrection. We do not presume to evaluate this material in our report, but only mention it as a possible area of fruitful theological reflection, as we continue to articulate the biblical data regarding the universal and particularistic aspects of Christ's work. Such future reflection, however, in the judgment of your committee, must in no way obscure the unique Biblical particularism of the atonement, which has always been at the heart of the Canons of Dort and mainline Reformed Theology, and which teaches that the definite design of the atonement of Christ was to secure full redemption, eternal life for those definite ones whom the Father had given unto Him before the world began.

⁹⁰Even though the Gnostic heresy did not flourish in the Christian community before the second century, there was already an incipient Gnosticism threatening the church, since Gnosticism as a religious philosophy existed before the rise of Christianity. Dr. G. Vos holds that it was on account of this incipient Gnosticism that we find so many universalistic passages in these Pastoral Epistles. He writes: "Of a polemic against Judaistic particularistic tendencies in the ordinary sense we cannot think in this connection, for there is no further trace of such in the Pastoral Epistles. . . . The only possibility that remains, therefore, is to find in the passages under review a warning against the dualistic trend of that incipient Gnosticism, to whose early presence in the Apostolic period also the Epistles of the first captivity bear witness. In a twofold sense it might become of importance to vindicate over against this heresy the universalism of saving grace. On the one hand, in so far as Gnosticism on principle excluded from salvation those who

all men distributively are referred to in this passage, is further evident from the fact that the phrase "all men" is anarthrous (that is, without the article) in the Greek, indicating that an undifferentiated totality is intended (cf. Rom. 12:18; II Tim. 2:24). Again, that God's salvation is for all men throughout the whole world and all classes of men is brought out in verse 5, where Paul says: "There is one God, one mediator between God and man, himself man, Christ Jesus." This truth, that there is one God, is not mentioned here in order to combat polytheism, but rather to point up the unity of the human race, having been created by one God, and being subject to Him. He is the God of all men, no matter to what race or nationality or to what rank or standing they belong. Therefore He also wants all to be saved. He wills the salvation of the world, not merely because of His love for that world, but especially because as the Creator and Preserver of it He loves that which is His own (cf. John 3:16). But if that world is to be saved, it must be through that one mediator between God and men, Himself man, Christ Jesus.

Verse 6 continues to point up the universalism implied in verse 1 by stating that this mediator, Christ Jesus, in complete harmony with the will of His Father, "gave Himself a ransom for all" (cf. Matt. 20:28). Here Paul quotes one of Jesus' own sayings; but he does so freely. For while Jesus said, "The Son of man gave himself a ransom for many," Paul states, "He gave himself a ransom for all." However, Paul does so purposely, because he wishes to call the attention of his readers to the "all." Yet the "all" here means the same as the "many" in Matt. 20:28.

lacked the pneumatic character which predisposes for the reception of the truth and, on the other hand, in so far as those belonging to the pneumatic part of the human race might be considered to carry the power of salvation by nature in themselves, and consequently to stand in no absolute need of the objective saving grace of God revealed in Christ. In other words, it might become necessary to emphasize that God saves all men, in so far as no man is by his subjective condition either sunk beneath the possibility or raised above the necessity of redemption. Reading again with this theory in mind the passages already quoted, we cannot but be struck with the light it throws upon their general meaning and even upon the concrete forms of expression. God will have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth, which the Gnostics reserve for the pneumatiki. The living God is the Savior not of one class of men, but of all men, especially of those that believe, for believers do not stand in less need of His grace than others: on the contrary, they are those in whom it most fully manifests itself. . . . If this should be really the key to a correct understanding of the statements in question, it needs no lengthy argument to show that they were never intended either to affirm or deny the absolute universalism of redemptive love with reference to individuals. All they can be fairly construed to teach is, that no subjective spiritual characteristics divide the human race for God into two generations. God extends His grace to man as man; whether to all men without exception in the same manner, or to all in one sense, to some in a special sense, these are questions the answer to which would lie entirely outside the scope of the writer's intention. But whether this interpretation be adopted or not, in either case it will have to be acknowledged that the Pastoral Epistles do not identify this general love with the specific affection whose sole objects are the elect. In the midst of an apostasy which had carried away prominent members of the Church, and might well make others doubt their own power of perseverance, Paul appeals for the encouragement of believers to the sovereign principle, "The Lord knoweth them that are His." (op. cit., pp. 31-33)

Only by using the word "all" Paul would avoid all Jewish and Gnostic exclusivism.

Finally, this same universality of God's salvation and of gospel preaching is referred to in verse 7, as Paul refers to himself as a "teacher of the Gentiles."⁹¹

Titus 2:11: "For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men."

The main question in this text is, whether the word "to all men" should be connected with the verb "hath appeared," or whether they go with the verbal adjective "bringing salvation."⁹² Most commentators agree that the latter is the case. In other words, this text does not say that the grace of God hath appeared to all men; but rather, that the grace of God has the nature of bringing salvation to all men. But then there is still the question: What does this "bringing salvation" mean? Should that be taken in the sense of effectuating salvation in all men? or should it be taken in the sense of putting that salvation before them, or bringing them in contact with it, as would be implied in the translation "offering salvation to all men."?

It is certain that this text cannot teach that all members of the human race are partakers of the salvation that the grace of God works in the heart. For, if it did, it would be clearly contrary to the Word of God which teaches everywhere that not all men will be saved (cf. Luke 2:34; John 3:36). Again, it may be noted that "all men" here, too, is without the article in the Greek, and therefore, refers not to all men individually, but to the undifferentiated totality of men. As such all men may refer, just as in I Tim. 2:4, to all classes of men. And this agrees with the preceding context. For in the first ten verses of this chapter Paul had addressed the church in its variety of members, such as, aged men and women, young men and servants; and he had exhorted them all to walk in the fear of the Lord. His readers should do this, first of all, because "the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men." And, since they themselves have experienced that grace which brings salvation, they should also manifest this in their lives.

Thus this text also does not teach a salvation-bringing grace bestowed upon all men. Nor does it imply in any way that the atonement of Christ is universal. Fact is, the subsequent context teaches the opposite, since

⁹¹Calvin in his commentary on this passage writes: "The apostle simply means that there is no people and no rank in the world that is excluded from salvation; because God wishes that the gospel should be proclaimed to all without exception. Now the preaching of the gospel gives life; and hence he justly concludes that God invites all equally to partake of salvation. But the present discourse relates to classes of men, and not to individual persons; for his sole object is to include in this number princes and foreign nations." (The Pastoral Epistles), (Pringle Transl. 1948) p. 55.

⁹²Most commentators agree that the translation in the A.V., namely, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men," is incorrect; and that the above translation of the A.R. V. is to be preferred. Prof. Bandstra suggests the following translation: "For the grace of God appeared, capable of bringing salvation to all men." Still another translation is that of Falconer, namely, "For the grace of God appeared, offering salvation to all men."

we read in verse 14: "Who (that is, our Savior Jesus Christ) gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a people for His own possession, zealous of good works."

I Tim. 4:10: "For to this end we labor and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, specially of them that believe."

In this verse again the words "all men" are without the article in the Greek and refer to the unindividuated totality of men. But how are we to interpret the words: "God who is the Savior of all men, specially of them that believe"?

There have been four interpretations suggested.⁹³

1. The *universalistic* interpretation, which holds that God saves all men and none are lost. Only believers experience that salvation earlier. This interpretation is clearly contrary to the rest of Scripture.

2. The *providential* interpretation, which holds that God is the Savior of all men in the sense of being their Preserver; but that He is the Savior of believers in a higher sense. This seems to be the view of Calvin, who states: "It ought to be understood that this is an argument drawn from the less to the greater, for the word 'Soter' (Savior) is here a general term, and denotes one who defends and preserves. He means that the kindness of God extends to all men."⁹⁴

3. The *potential-actual* interpretation. God is the Savior of all men, for He desires to save all and has provided a salvation in Christ which is needed by all men. But this salvation becomes actual only in the believers. In this interpretation, however, the word "malista" (specially) offers a problem, since according to its ordinary meaning it would demand that the all men in this passage must enjoy to some degree at least what believers enjoy in the highest degree.

4. The *temporal-eternal* interpretation. God's salvation is one. As applied to all men it implies preservation and deliverance from various evils and a bestowal of many blessings in this life. To believers, however, this salvation does not end with this earthly life, but goes on throughout all eternity.

It seems to us that either the second or the fourth interpretation is to be preferred, since both give proper force to the word "specially," and since both employ the word "Savior" in a valid way.

Hebrews 2:9: "But we behold him, who hath been made a little lower than the angels, even Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God he should taste death for every man."

Again, if we allow the context to decide the meaning of these words, "every man," we shall see that they cannot be taken in a universalistic sense. For of "every man" for whom Christ tasted death He is also the

⁹³See the commentary of H. A. Kent on *The Catholic Epistles*, pp. 158-160 who refers to W. E. Purdy's *The Meaning of the Phrase 'Savior of All Men' in First Timothy 4:10* (unpublished critical monograph, Grace Theological Seminary, 1954) pp. 33-48.

⁹⁴*The Pastoral Epistles*, Pringle Transl. (1948), p. 112.

Author of their salvation (vs. 10). They are brought to glory (vs. 10); they are sanctified (vs. 11); they are His brethren (vss. 11, 12); and they are delivered from the bondage of fear and death (vs. 15). Murray remarks in connection with this passage: "This text shows how plausible off-hand quotation may be and yet how baseless is such an appeal in support of a doctrine of universal atonement."⁹⁵

II Peter 3:9: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some count slackness; but is longsuffering to youward, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

The emphasis in this passage is upon the longsuffering of God. Calvin gives the following interpretation of this text which we believe is adequate: "So wonderful is His love towards mankind, that He would have them all to be saved, and is of His own self prepared to bestow salvation on the lost. But the order is to be noticed, that God is ready to receive all to repentance, so that none may perish; for in these words the way and manner of salvation is pointed out. Every one of us, therefore, who is desirous of salvation, must learn to enter by this way But it may be asked, if God wishes none to perish, why is it that so many do perish? To this my answer is, that no mention is here made of the hidden purpose of God, according to which the reprobate are doomed to their own ruin, but only of His will as made known to us in the gospel. For God there stretches forth His hand without a difference to all, but lays hold only of those, to lead them to Himself, whom He has chosen before the foundation of the world."⁹⁶

Herewith we have concluded our exegesis of the texts to which Prof. Dekker appealed for his universalistic view of the atonement. We have found that what Candlish asserted was true, namely, that in all cases it was not too difficult to harmonize the so-called universalistic passages with the doctrine which at first sight they were supposed to contradict. At this time, however, we wish to consider those other texts which prove a limited or definite atonement, and we shall see that again it is true what Candlish avers, namely, that "only by a process of distortion . . . they can be so explained away as to become even neutral in the controversy."

Let us, therefore, consider some of these particularistic texts.

Matthew 1:21: "And thou shalt call his name JESUS, for it is he that shall save his people from their sins."

These words were spoken to Joseph, the foster-father of Jesus. We may assume that he understood the phrase "his people" as referring to Israel, God's chosen people (cf. Acts 5:31). But, although "Israel" may have been the first connotation of the words "his people" in Matthew 1:21, from further revelation we learn that Israel came to mean the whole Church of Jesus Christ, including both Jews and Gentiles. (Acts 20:28; Gal. 6:15, 16) The significance of this passage, however, is this, that Christ came to save *His people* and not all men distributively. Moreover,

⁹⁵*Op. cit.*, p. 61.

⁹⁶*Catholic Epistles*, p. 419.

the text says explicitly that He shall save His people *from their sins*. Surely, Jesus did not save all men from their sins.

John 6:39: "This is the will of him that sent me, that of all that which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day."

Murray writes in connection with this text: "Security inheres in Christ's redemptive accomplishment. And this means that, in respect of the persons contemplated, design and accomplishment and final realization have all the same extent."⁹⁷ Moreover, those whom Christ will keep are also those who were given unto Him by the Father. This fact, too, guarantees their infallible preservation. No one can snatch them out of His hand, or out of the hand of His Father (John 10:28, 29). Observe how in the 10th chapter of John Jesus calls attention to the fact that those who were given Him by the Father are also called "the sheep" for whom He, as the good shepherd, laid down His life.

John 10:11-29: "11. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep . . . 14. . . and I know mine own, and mine own know me. . . 16. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and they shall become one flock, one shepherd. . . 26. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep. 27. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28. and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand."

Certainly this passage teaches a definite atonement. For, in the first place, the metaphors, "sheep" and "shepherd" emphasize a distinctive relationship all do not share in. Again, the sheep are those who, in distinction from others, know their own shepherd and are known by him. They hear his voice, and they follow him. It is for these sheep that Jesus says He will lay down His life. On the other hand, there are also those who are not his sheep. Furthermore, although there are others who as yet are not of his fold, and who will be brought in later, these, too, are called his sheep. Considering all this, we are not permitted to maintain that, although Christ died for His sheep, this does not preclude the idea that He may have died for others also. Any one who would maintain this misses the whole point of Christ's discourse in this chapter.

John 17:2, 9, 20: "2. Even as thou gavest him authority over all flesh, that to all whom thou hast given him, he shall give eternal life. . . 9. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me: for they are thine. . . 20. Neither for those only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word; that they may all be one."

We should note again the emphasis on the "all whom thou hast given him." It is only to them that Christ gives eternal life (vs. 2) and for them He intercedes as their High Priest (vs. 9). Again, these words are limited to all believers, namely, the disciples for whom He was praying at this moment and all others who would believe on Him through their preaching. Christ did pray for others also, even for His enemies; but

⁹⁷*Op. cit.*, p. 74.

that prayer must be clearly distinguished from His High priestly prayer which was only for the elect—for those given Him of the Father.

Acts 20:28: "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood."

Note that the elders of Ephesus are here admonished to take heed unto the *flock*. This implies that the Church of Jesus Christ, which was entrusted to their care, was looked upon by Paul as a flock of sheep belonging to the Lord. It is for them that Christ shed His blood in order that they might be His purchased possession. Christ did not shed His blood for all men, neither can it be said that He purchased them to be His own possession.

Ephesians 5:25: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it."

In the concluding part of this fifth chapter of Ephesians Paul indicates that the marriage relationship between husbands and wives should reflect the union between Christ and the Church which He lived and for which He gave Himself up. The emphasis falls on the intensity of the love of Christ and on His desire to have that Church as His own exclusive possession. Furthermore, He gave Himself up for the Church, and "cleansed it by the washing of the water with the word" in order that He might present that Church to Himself "a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing: but that it should be holy and without blemish." (vss. 26, 27). Again, this passage also speaks of a unique relationship which Christ sustains to His Church through His death on the cross:—a relationship in which others do not share. Hence it is quite pointless to say that this passage does not indicate that it is only for the Church, or the elect, that Christ sacrificed Himself. For, when we say that, this implies that He also gave Himself up for others. But if that be so, then we must also conclude that He gave Himself up for them, in order that He might also sanctify them and present them to Himself glorious and holy and without blemish. This cannot refer to all men.

Romans 8:31-35: "32. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not also with him freely give us all things? . . . 33. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? . . . 34. It is Christ Jesus that died, yea rather that was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. 35. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? . . ."

Here it is specifically said that God spared not His Son, but delivered Him up for us—that is, the believers. And the "us" in verse 32 are the same who in verse 33 are called "the elect!" and they are the same "us" for whom, according to verse 34, Christ intercedes, and who cannot be separated from the love of Christ (vs. 35). This whole passage speaks of the unique relationship between Christ and His own, the elect. Again, it is quite pointless to say that this passage does not exclude the possibility that Christ also gave Himself unto death for others. For if He did, it is certain that He did not do so in the same sense in which He did it for the elect. Certainly, no one would deny that there are, indeed, certain benefits accruing from the death of Christ for all men. But this does not

imply that Christ's atonement, in its essential and primary purpose, was for all men. Why then should we stress those universal benefits so much, as to obscure the peculiar and saving benefits of the atonement for the elect? Let us beware that in this age of universalism we do not lose our distinctively scriptural and Reformed emphasis on the substitutionary character of the atonement. For, even though this scriptural view of the atonement would not then be denied, it might still be lost to us by default, since we failed to give it its proper and necessary emphasis.

Let us next consider Prof. Dekker's views on the atonement in the light of our confessional standards. He maintains that these views are in harmony with them, and to prove this he quotes from the Heidelberg Catechism (Q. 37) and from the Canons of Dort (II, 3, 4, and 8).

First, he claims that Question 37 of the Catechism teaches that Christ died for all men. This is what he wrote: "The Heidelberg Catechism . . . does not even raise the question, 'For whom did Christ die?' However, in answer to the question, 'What does it mean that He suffered?' the catechism answers, 'That all the time He lived on earth, but especially at the end of His life, He bore, in body and soul, the wrath of God against the sin of the whole human race. . . .' (Q. 37). In other words, the atonement was (deliberately, not merely as a by-product of the salvation of some) sufficient for all men. In that sense Christ died for all men."⁹⁸

We may observe, first of all, that in this Q. 37 of the Heidelberg Catechism the question of the extent of the atonement is not within its purview. Prof. Dekker himself realized this, when he began that paragraph in his article with these words, "The Heidelberg Catechism does not even raise the question, 'For whom did Christ die.' Yet at the close of that paragraph he asserts that we may conclude from this question that Christ did die for all men.

It seems to us that the catechism at this point is only interested in the question concerning the character of Christ's suffering, namely, that His suffering was not that of an ordinary man, but that He bore (or rather "sustained") the wrath of God which was kindled against the sin of the whole human race. But why did He do so? The answer of the catechism is: "in order that by His passion as the only atoning sacrifice, *He might redeem our body and soul from everlasting damnation and obtain for us the grace of God, righteousness, and eternal life.*" Hence, what this Q. 37 actually says about the intent and purpose of the *atoning sacrifice of Christ* is this, namely, that it is effective in *redeeming us* from damnation and *obtaining for us* grace, righteousness, and eternal life. This militates against the conclusion of Prof. Dekker, namely, that Christ's atonement was for all men.

There is in this question and answer of the catechism no reference to a universal sufficiency or availability of the atoning sacrifice of Christ. But, as Dr. A. Kuyper points out, in his commentary on the Heidelberg Catechism, Christ had to bear the wrath of God against the sin of the

⁹⁸The Reformed Journal, March 1964.

whole human race, because our guilt and our sin is associated with the guilt and the sin of the human race to which we belong. "No man is able to say, 'I only have to do with my own sin.' This is not true. You have to do also with the sin of your city or village; also with the sin of mankind. Thus indeed the sin of the whole human race is the only proper expression which does justice to both, our guilt in Adam, and our complicity in the guilt of others. If the mediator would pay the ransom for His own and atone for their sin, then this could not be done in any other way than that there had to be an atonement for the sin of the whole human race; for the elect are not judged in respect to any lesser sin."⁹⁹

Our professor of Missions also refers to the Canons of Dort (II, 3 and 4) as sustaining his position that the atonement of Christ is universal. These articles deal with the sufficiency of Christ's death, since they state that "the death of the Son of God . . . is of infinite worth and value, abundantly sufficient to expiate the sins of the whole world."

As we have observed previously, when we discussed this particular point, Prof. Dekker is not warranted to draw the conclusion from these articles that, because the death of Christ is of infinite worth and value, it is also universal. Something that is infinite is not necessarily universal. The sufficiency of the death of Christ should not be confused with the extent or the purpose of His death.

The Rev. T. Bos, in his commentary on the Canons of Dort, makes the following comments in this connection: "This fruit (of Christ's

⁹⁹*E Voto Dordraceno*, Vol. I, pp. 397f. The following is the complete Dutch version of the above: "De menschelijke natuur lag voor God geoordeeld van het Paradijs af, en die geoordeelde natuur nam de Zoon Gods aan. *Hij kwam in de gelijkheid des zondigen vleesches* (Rom. VIII:3). Zelf innerlijk, naar zijn wezen buiten alle aanraking zelfs met iets, dat ook maar naar zonde zweemde, maar dragende onze natuur, en dragende dus ook den toorn Gods, die op deze menschelijke natuur rustte.

"De uitdrukking van onzen Catechismus: 'de toorn Gods tegen de zonde des ganschen menschelijken geslachts' is daartoe zeer gelukkig gekozen. Niet, gelijk de Arminianen dit uitleggen, als school hierin, dat Christus voor *alle* menschen zaligmakend gestorven ware. Want Ursinus heeft zelf in zijn uitlegging deze woorden vlak omgekeerd verklaard. Maar wel gelukkig gekozen, omdat het de zaak niet zou uitdrukken, als er stond: 'de toorn Gods tegen de zonde *der uitverkorenen*.' Ook de uitverkorenen toch hebben geen zonde als uitverkorenen, maar alleen als behoorende tot een zondig geslacht en staande voor God als voortgekomen uit die menschelijke natuur, waarop zijn toorn rust. Dit is het wat de heilige apostel zegt: 'Gij waart van nature kinderen des toorns gelijk ook de anderen.'

"Onze schuld en onze zonde hangt dus saam met de schuld en zonde van het *menschelijk geslacht*, waartoe we behooren. Dat geslacht viel in Adam, en in en met Adam al wat uit dit geslacht komen zou en dus in dit geslacht besloten lag. Adams zonde, onze erfzonde en onze werkelijke zonde, het staat al in noodzakelijk verband. En geen mensch kan zeggen: 'Ik heb alleen maar te maken met mijn eigen zonde.' Dit is niet waar. Ge hebt te maken ook met de zonde van uw stad of dorp; ook met de zonde van uw volk en vaderland; ook met de zonde der menschheid. Metterdaad is dus: 'de zonde des ganschen menschelijken geslachts de eenigste juiste uitdrukking, die en onze schuld in Adam, en onze medeschuld aan de schuld van anderen tot haar recht laat komen. Zou de Middelaar het rantsoen voor de zijnen betalen en hun zonde verzoenen, dan kon dit niet anders gebeuren, of er moest plaats hebben verzoening van de zonde van heel ons menschelijk geslacht; want onder geen mindere zonde liggen de uitverkorenen geoordeeld."

atoning work) was of infinite power and worth. So much so, that the satisfaction (which Christ made) could have been sufficient for the reconciliation of the sins of the whole world. Therein something universal is expressed, without, however, teaching a universal atonement. We must not count sins one by one, and then conclude that Jesus did just so much as the sum of all the sins of the elect demanded. Sin and apostacy brought man, yea, the whole human race, in death and under the curse. On account of sin God's wrath was kindled against the whole human race. This wrath was an eternal, undivided divine wrath. This wrath the Son of God has borne. There was nothing lacking in the work of Christ. As surety he performed a perfect work. He satisfied the justice of God fully. The only question was: For whom, and on whose behalf? And this was decided by the will of God in relation to the election.

"Whosoever would accuse our fathers of narrowmindedness in regard to the doctrine of Christ's atonement judges them wrongly. With their doctrine of particular grace they did not want to detract anything from the perfection of the atoning work of the Son of God. Therefore, too, they were broad enough in their preaching of the gospel that they could comply with the command of the Lord, 'Preach the gospel to all creatures.' Since that gospel presented Christ and His sacrifice, all men could be assured that in that sacrifice there was an infinite power and worth, so that in the whole world there could not be any man so deeply sunken, or the sacrifice of Christ was abundantly sufficient to atone for him. And even though thousands have been saved already by this sacrifice, never does any one need to fear whether there is still abundantly sufficient grace present in that sacrifice of Christ.

"However, a warning should be given that no one should have this view of the matter, as if this satisfaction was made in general for all men, and as if the fruit of this sacrifice was dependent upon man himself. For the satisfaction, no matter how perfect and all-sufficient it was, has not been made without a definite purpose. This purpose was already implied in the substitutionary character of this sacrifice of the Son. Those for whom the sacrifice was brought, also were really reconciled and saved; otherwise the unwillingness of man could be the cause that the entire sacrifice was made without any fruit unto reconciliation. And this too belonged to the complete mediatorial work which was not only meriting and obtaining, but also applicatory. It was not only to deliver from the curse, but also to give eternal life, as Paul clearly teaches in Romans 5:10."¹⁰⁰

The following are some quotations from our confessional standards which contradict the views of Prof. Dekker:

In the first place, we may note that his contention that the atonement as such has no efficacy is directly controverted by the Canons of Dort, which clearly teach us in II, 8, that "it was the sovereign counsel and most gracious will and purpose of God the Father that the quickening and *saving efficacy* of the most precious death of His Son *should extend to all the elect*, for bestowing upon them alone the gift of justify-

¹⁰⁰pp. 104, 105.

ing faith, thereby to bring them infallibly to salvation; that is, it was the will of God that Christ by the blood of the cross, whereby He confirmed the new covenant, should effectually redeem out of every people, tribe, nation, and language, all those, and those only, who were from eternity chosen to salvation and given Him by the Father; that He should confer upon them faith, which together with all the other saving gifts of the Holy Spirit, He purchased for them by His death; should purge them from all sin, both original and actual, whether committed before or after believing; and having faithfully preserved them even to the end, should at last bring them, free from every spot and blemish, to the enjoyment of glory in His own presence forever."

The Canons also reject the validity of his distinction between a universal atonement and a particularistic redemption.¹⁰¹ For example, in the section dealing with the rejection of errors, under the second head of doctrine, they state that they reject the errors of those:

"Paragraph 1: Who teach: that God the Father has ordained His Son to the death of the cross without a certain definite decree to save any . . . For this doctrine tends to the despising of the wisdom of the Father and of the merits of Jesus Christ, and is contrary to the Scripture. For thus says our Savior, *I lay down my life for the sheep and I know them* (John 10:15, 27)."

(Note, how the Canons point to Christ's giving up of His life for the sheep as an evidence that His death was ordained by the Father in order to save a definite number, or the elect. Compare Canons I, 7, where election is described as "the unchangeable purpose of God, whereby . . . He has chosen . . . a certain number of persons to redemption in Christ, whom He from eternity appointed the Mediator and Head of the elect and the foundation of salvation.")

"Paragraph 3: Who teach: that Christ by His satisfaction merited neither salvation itself for anyone nor faith, whereby this satisfaction of Christ unto salvation is effectually appropriated; . . ."

(This also contradicts Prof. Dekker's contention that the atonement as such is not efficacious.)

"Paragraph 6: Who use the difference *between meriting and ap-*

¹⁰¹In this connection we wish to quote the following from the notes given the committee by Profs. Hoekema and Klooster: "There have been some who would distinguish between a *universal atonement* and a *particular redemption*. The Arminians did this with an emphasis upon the free will of man in appropriating redemption. In another sense Amyrald's distinction between an antecedent decree of hypothetical universalism and a consequent particular decree approaches the distinction between universal atonement and particular redemption. And in still another sense H. Dekker distinguishes between universal atonement (a love toward all men and a death of Christ for all men) and a particular redemption (based on a decretive will of God, to save only the elect). The question arises, however, whether this is a valid distinction. The Arminian use of this distinction . . . is certainly in conflict with Scripture and our Confessions. The same is true of the distinction as employed by Amyrald. And we are inclined to believe that Dekker's distinction between a universal atonement and a particular redemption is not one which our Confessions make, is one that does not prove helpful, and is one that opens the door for an Arminian understanding of the work of God in our salvation."

appropriating to the end that they may instill into the minds of the imprudent and inexperienced this teaching *that God, as far as He is concerned has been minded to apply to all equally the benefits gained by the death of Christ . . .*"

(This also is contrary to what Prof. Dekker wrote concerning God's desire to save all men, that which we referred to earlier in our report.)

That God gave up His only begotten Son to the death of the cross as our Substitute is also taught in Articles 15, 20, and 21 of the Belgic Confession. For example, Art. 21 states: "We believe that Jesus Christ . . . has presented Himself in our behalf before the Father, to appease His wrath by His full satisfaction, by offering Himself on the tree of the cross, and pouring out His precious blood to purge away our sins . . ." All what is said here about the mediatorial work of Christ cannot be applied to all men. (Cf. also H. Catechism: Q. 1, 18, 20, 31, 37-40; 56, 59, 60, 61, 67, 70).

VII. "GOD LOVES YOU" AND "CHRIST DIED FOR YOU"

Let us now take up the question of the well-meant offer of the gospel, and in connection therewith Prof. Dekker's claim that, since God loves all men redemptively and the atonement is universal, we may also say to every man individually "God loves you" and "Christ died for you." According to him it is the theological position, which refuses to say these things that largely accounts for the unfruitfulness of our evangelistic efforts. For he writes: "Given the common conviction in the Christian Reformed Church that God does not love all men redemptively and that Christ did not die for all men, it is really not surprising that our record in evangelism is so poor."¹⁰² And again he writes: "The conviction that God loves all men and that Christ died for all, as this truth is taught in the Scriptures, could revolutionize the missionary motivation and program of our Church and make it truly effective in the evangelization of the United States and Canada. . . Any real improvement in our missionary performance awaits a change in certain of our theological constructions."¹⁰³

Furthermore, he criticizes the Synod of 1924 for permitting the view among us that the general offer of the gospel belongs to common grace, since this offer is cited as an evidence for "a certain favor or grace of God which He shows to His creatures in general." He writes: "If one holds that the general offer of the gospel is an expression of common grace, and if one also holds that common grace is generically different from special grace, then the general offer is *rooted in and expressive of non-redemptive divine love*. Can non-redemptive love offer redemption? Is this not a sheer anomaly? Is it not, moreover, destructive of the very character of the gospel offer as sincere and well-meant to all men?"¹⁰⁴ Once more, he writes: "Can one really say that the divine love expressed in the gospel, in the good news of God's redemptive acts in Jesus Christ,

¹⁰²*The Reformed Journal*, May-June, 1964.

¹⁰³*Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴*The Reformed Journal*, March, 1963.

is a *non-redemptive love*? How can a love which offers redemption be described as non-redemptive in character? Does that really make sense? The alternatives seem clear: *either the love of God expressed in the invitation of the gospel is redemptive or it is non-redemptive*. It seems to me that if it is non-redemptive, the gospel offer has no real meaning.¹⁰⁵

Let us first consider the question of the love of God, as related to the offer of the gospel.

In the above statements, quoted from Prof. Dekker's writings, we again find a number of rhetorical questions to all of which there seems to be but one answer possible, namely, that a non-redemptive love cannot offer redemption, and that, therefore, the love of God *expressed* in the gospel offer must be a redemptive love. Furthermore, since this gospel offer, admittedly, must be made to all men without distinction, therefore also, God must love all men with a redemptive love.

The problem, as the professor presents it, may be stated in this form: What kind of love can offer redemption? And, since in some current discussions love and grace have been identified, we could perhaps also put the problem this way: What kind of grace is offered in the gospel? But put in that form this question is unanswerable. For who is able to determine what kind of grace is offered to any man in the gospel offer? As we said in our introduction, grace is never offered, but always conferred or bestowed. What the gospel does offer is not grace, but full redemption from all sin and eternal life in Jesus Christ. Fact is, it is Christ Himself in all the fulness of His grace and truth who is offered therein. Still more precisely put, it is Christ Himself who comes to men with the invitation, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." And those who do come to Christ also receive *with Him* all the graces that are found in Him: wisdom of God, righteousness, sanctification, and complete redemption. (I Cor. 1:30) As John also says, "Of his fulness we all received, and grace for grace" (or, as the margin has it, "grace upon grace"). And so there are scores of texts which speak of different graces that those obtain who by faith receive Christ as their Lord and Savior.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵*The Reformed Journal*, January, 1964.

¹⁰⁶Dr. J. Daane is correct when he states that there are no two kinds of grace in the sense of attributes of God: the one always operating in a non-saving way and the other operating in a saving way. But he was wrong, when he assumed that the Synod of 1924 taught this. All that Synod said was this, that God bestows a saving grace upon the elect and another "grace" or rather "favor" upon all His creatures. The Synod never spoke, *in the abstract*, about a saving grace that in its very nature must always save, and a non-saving grace which in its very nature cannot save. But rather the Synod spoke about two distinct graces as *gifts of God differing in regard to their objects*. The elect receive a grace that is saving, just as they also receive a grace that accomplishes their regeneration, and a grace which works their conversion, and a grace by which they are adopted as children of God, and so forth. And of the non-elect that Synod said that they receive a certain "grace" or favor of God, when they receive sunshine and rain; or when, through the influence of the Holy Spirit upon them, they are restrained from breaking out into certain sins; or when, through that same Holy Spirit's influence, they are enabled to do civil good; or even, when they are privileged to hear the gospel. All these may be called "grace" in the sense of undeserved favors. And,

But we must remember that only through an acceptance of Christ by a true faith, and thus also through a consequent union with Christ, will any one be a partaker of all the love and grace that are found in Him. This is plainly taught in the Heidelberg Catechism, when in answer to the question — “Are all men, then, saved by Christ as they perished in Adam?” — the author says: “No, but only those who by a true faith *are ingrafted into Him and receive all His benefits.*” Notice, first a person must be ingrafted into Christ by a true faith before he can be a partaker of His benefits. It is this fact that makes the offer of salvation such a rich offer. It does not speak of a general love of God for all men; but it speaks about a redeeming love of God that will “save to the uttermost all those who come unto Him in faith.”

When we say this, however, we do not deny that there are also certain benefits that come to all those who hear the gospel, benefits which flow forth from the general goodness or benevolence of God. On the contrary, we hold that the very fact that they do receive the gospel, and the message of full salvation offered therein, is already a token of God's goodness towards them. And, when the gospel is preached, these general benefits must be proclaimed and their significance made known to men. For example, that is exactly what the apostle Paul did, when he said to the idol-worshippers at Lystra: “Ye should turn from these vain things unto a living God, who made the heaven and the earth, and the sea and all that in them is: who in the generations gone by suffered all the nations to walk in their own ways, and yet he left not himself without witness, in that he did good and gave you from heaven rains and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts with food and gladness.” (Acts 14:15-17) He did the same in Athens, when he pointed the wise men of this world to that goodness of God that was manifested in this that God “giveth to all life, and breath, and all things.” (Acts 17:25) And it was only after Paul had first pointed those heathen people to the general goodness of God, manifested in His providence, that he called upon them to come to Christ in the way of repentance and faith. In other words, the proclamation concerning the general goodness of God was but introductory to his real gospel message, which was to point to Christ as the one who would judge them for their sins and to whom they should therefore flee for salvation.

Moreover, it should not be forgotten that the gospel which reveals the love of God also emphasizes God's justice and His holy wrath against sin. It is precisely this aspect which is so commonly neglected in contemporary

therefore, since God is sovereignly free in the bestowal of His grace, it is wholly in harmony with His sovereign good pleasure to confer whatever grace He wishes upon any man. For He does not owe any grace to any one. Therefore, too, if grace is looked upon, primarily, as an undeserved favor or a divine gift, freely bestowed, we may also speak of *special* and of *common* grace. God is free to bestow special gifts upon the elect, which He, in accordance with His sovereign good pleasure, is not willing to bestow upon others. The Synod of 1924 did not use the common-special grace distinction to explain the differing destinies of sinners; but rather to describe the varying love acts and love attitudes which God shows to concrete sinners in the ongoing process of history.

theology. To understand the attitude of God toward mankind as a whole, serious consideration must be given to this fact of God's wrath.

It is noteworthy that this is where Paul begins in the opening chapter of Romans (see 1:18). It is against this background that he develops his message of reconciliation. Also of particular significance is his treatment of the goodness of God in Romans 2:4, 5. Here Paul deals with the universal benevolence of God towards all, but clearly indicates that this benevolence does not necessarily lead to salvation but may be abused. For he writes: "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance, but after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up for thyself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. . . ."

To give the impression that God's general love for all men cancels His wrath against man's sin would be untrue. To say simply to any or every individual "God loves you" might easily give that impression and might actually work toward a man's damnation, rather than his salvation.

The grace which God reveals in the gospel does not in any way compromise the just and holy demands of God's law. And it is an essential part of the proclamation of the gospel to warn men of God's judgment upon sin and then to urge them to repent of their sins and to be reconciled unto God through the grace which is in Jesus Christ the Savior. It is this aspect of God's judgment and wrath which under the influence of the Holy Spirit causes men to recognize their deep need so that they become responsive to the gospel offer and invitation.

This aspect of Biblical truth is clearly underscored also in such passages as:

He that believeth on the Son hath eternal life; but he that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him. (John 3:36)

He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned. (Mark 16:16)

For the time is come for judgment to begin at the house of God: and if it begin first at us, what shall be the end of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous is scarcely saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear? (I Peter 4:17, 18).

Once again, it appears that it would be misleading and unwarranted to simply say to sinners, "God loves you." The fact is that they are the objects of God's wrath and judgment unless they repent, and it is this approach which is also used by the Spirit to lead men to penitence and faith. To present the matter otherwise would be encourage a false security.

Professor J. Murray writes in this connection: "It is not the general love of God to all mankind, that is offered to men in the gospel. As we found earlier . . . this general love is not to be discounted. It is to be proclaimed and its significance made known to men. The character of God is disclosed therein and all that God is and does is to be declared to His glory. But this love is not the love specifically overtured to men in the gospel. The love presented in the gospel is as specific as the gospel itself. Since

Christ invited men to Himself, he invites them to union and communion with Himself and with the Father and the Holy Spirit in all the particularity of grace that each Person bestows in the economy of salvation. When Christ invites us to Himself he invites us to embrace of His life on the highest level of its exercise and therefore to the love wherewith He loved the Church and gave Himself for it; the love that passeth knowledge He invites us to the love of the Father in the intensity manifested on Calvary when He spared not His Son but delivered Him up, and also the love of complacency of which Jesus spoke: 'If a man love me he will keep my words; and my Father will love him' (John 14:23). He invites likewise to the love of the Spirit and to the manifold operations of grace that the Spirit's love insures. We thus see how impoverished would be our conception of the free overture of Christ in the gospel if the appeal were simply to the undifferentiating and general love of God. It is the love of which the accursed tree is the supreme exhibition that invests the free offer of Christ in the gospel with constraining appeal."¹⁰⁷

Therefore, although the offer of the gospel, which speaks of the highest love of God in Christ, comes to all men; not all men will actually experience that highest love. As Murray states again: "It is only in Christ that this love and the riches of grace involved can be known and experienced. To this love Christ invites when He invites sinners to Himself. But only those who respond are partakers. It is not therefore a love that may be declared to be the possession of all indiscriminately, or more pointedly stated, to be a love in which all are embraced. There are various ways in which this distinction may be stated. Sinners to whom the claims of the gospel come are not asked to believe that God or Christ loves them with this differentiating love. The faith the gospel demands is not belief of the proposition that Christ loves them with this love. The gospel demands that they come to Christ and commit themselves to Him. In coming to Him they will know *His* embrace and with Him they will know His love on the highest plane of its exercise. This way of stating the case is parallel to what is true of election. Sinners do not come to Christ because they first believe that they have been elected. They come to Christ and only then may they believe that they were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world."¹⁰⁸

All that we have said about the love of God in relation to the gospel offer would also hold true in regard to the atonement. The Christ who offers Himself to sinners is the Christ who has obtained a complete redemption. It is not a Christ who only made salvation possible, or a Christ who only obtained *certain* benefits, but a Christ who imparts to those who receive Him by faith salvation in all its fulness and perfection. Therefore, as Murray says again: "The only doctrine of the atonement that will ground and warrant this overture [namely, the gospel offer of Christ and salvation] is that of salvation wrought and atonement accomplished. And the only atonement that measures up to such conditions is a definite atonement. In other words, an atonement construed as

¹⁰⁷*Torch and Trumpet*, Nov., 1965.

¹⁰⁸*Ibid.*

providing the possibility of salvation or the opportunity of salvation does not supply the basis required for what constitutes the gospel offer. It is not the *opportunity* of salvation that is offered; it is salvation. And it is salvation because Christ is offered and Christ does not invite us to mere opportunity but to Himself.¹⁰⁹

In view of the foregoing we may well conclude that it is not proper to say to all men without distinction "Christ died for you." For such a statement is not verifiable, and may be untrue of many who hear the gospel. Therefore, as Murray writes: "It cannot be declared to men indiscriminately that, in the proper sense of the term, Christ died for them. The belief of this proposition is not the primary act of faith. Only in commitment to Christ as freely offered may we come to know that He died for our sins unto our redemption. It should be seen that not only are the doctrines of the love of God and of the atonement involved but also a proper conception of the gospel offer and of the faith that responds to it. Christ is offered and faith is first of all commitment to Him. It is receiving and resting upon Him alone for salvation."¹¹⁰

J. I. Packer makes some pertinent observations in this connection. He writes: "It is obvious that if a preacher thought that the statement, 'Christ died for every one of you,' made to any congregation, would be unverifiable, and probably not true, he would take care not to make it in his gospel preaching. You do not find such statements in the sermons of, for instance, George Whitefield and Charles Spurgeon. But now, my point is that, even if a man thinks that this statement would be true if he made it, it is not a thing that he ever needs to say, or ever has reason to say, when preaching the gospel. For preaching the gospel . . . means inviting sinners to come to Jesus Christ, the living Savior, who, by virtue of His atoning death, is able to forgive and save all those who put their trust in Him. What has to be said about the cross when preaching the gospel is simply that Christ's death is the ground on which Christ's forgiveness is given. And this is all that has to be said. The question of the designed extent of the atonement does not come into the story at all."¹¹¹

But again, when we maintain that Christ died only for those who will actually be saved by His death, we do not thereby deny that there are not also other benefits accruing from His death for all men. On the contrary, we would hold that the non-elect also receive many blessings, which are dispensed to them within the mediatorial dominion of Christ, which dominion He has been given as a reward for His obedience unto the death of the cross. (Phil. 2:8, 9) Thus the good that the world receives is also a result of Christ's death. As Murray says: "It was designed to accrue from the death of Christ. Since many of these blessings fall short of salvation and are enjoyed by many who never become the possessors of salvation, we must say that the design of Christ's death is more inclusive than the blessings that belong specifically to the atonement. This is to say that even the non-elect are embraced in the design of the atonement in respect of those blessings falling short of salvation which

¹⁰⁹*Torch and Trumpet*, Nov., 1965.

¹¹⁰*Ibid.*

¹¹¹*Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*, p. 67f.

they enjoy in this life. This is equivalent to saying that the atonement sustains this reference to the non-elect and it would not be improper to say that, in respect of what is entailed for the non-elect, Christ died for them."¹¹²

We might even go further and state that the non-elect not only receive many natural blessings, but those who receive the gospel are even partakers of special blessings. In Hebrews we read of those who were "once enlightened, who tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and tasted of the good word of God, and the powers of the age to come;" (6:4, 5; 10:29) and in II Peter we are told of those who have "escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior," and who have "known the way of righteousness." (2:20, 21) But, although the gospel had all these influences upon them, yet they missed the benefits of the atonement of Christ which they possess who are truly and finally saved. Again, Murray states: "The non-elect do not participate in the benefits of the atonement, and the elect do. The non-elect enjoy many benefits that accrue *from* the atonement but they do not partake *of* the atonement. It is here that the precise *meaning* of the categories is bound up strictly with the extent. The non-elect are not partakers of the obedience of Christ, nor of the expiation Christ accomplished by His sacrifice, nor of the propitiation, reconciliation, and redemption Christ wrought. . . . This is but to say that the atonement is limited in its extent. The atonement was designed for those and for those only who are ultimately the beneficiaries of what is its proper connotation. And likewise, when we think of Christ's 'dying for' in the substitutionary terms which are its proper import, we must say that He did not die for those who never become the beneficiaries of that substitution; he did not 'die for' the non-elect. . . . To sum up, there is radical differentiation between the benefits accruing from Christ's death for the non-elect and the benefits accruing for the elect, and it is the latter that belong to the atonement in its biblical definition."¹¹³

In a communication to our committee, Prof. Dekker wrote: "When I say 'Christ died for you' to any man, I mean to say that Christ has actually suffered for his sins and has in that sense expiated his guilt. If, however, the word 'expiate' is intended by definition to include the idea of *effectuation*, which to my mind it need not include, I would not want to use the word *expiation* to describe what Christ has done for all men.

¹¹²*Torch and Trumpet*, March, 1965.

¹¹³*Torch and Trumpet*, March, 1965. Dr. G. Berkouwer in his book, *The Work of Christ*, p. 292, writes: "Those who deny this correlation, making reconciliation an objective fact which is merely announced — Christ died for all and all are elect in Christ — change the *kerygma* into a mere declaration and rob preaching of its urgency. . . . The message comes to mankind not to 'announce' a certain 'truth' (namely that Christ died for all) but as a ministry of reconciliation, a proclamation which urges men to the reality of peace through faith in the blood of the cross. The doctrine of *apokatastasis*, as even Barth's doctrine of reconciliation, threatens the *kerygma*." Berkouwer wrote this in connection with the Barthian view of the atonement. But insofar as the statement "Christ died for all" is concerned, what he writes there would also apply to the Arminian position, and possibly also to the view held by Prof. Dekker.

Question 6 [of the committee] further asks whether such statement as 'Christ died for you' can be found in the preaching of Christ or the apostles, or anywhere in the Bible.¹¹⁴ No it can not. However it should be noted that this is hardly an argument against the validity of making such a statement to unbelievers. For, as a matter of fact, such a statement is not even used in the Bible as an address to believers. Yet does anyone question that it may be properly so used? The Bible is not a textbook in missions or a manual for evangelism. The Bible gives us general principles which must be applied to the life and work of the Church. If then the Bible teaches that God loves all men and that Christ died for all, this teaching must be articulated in a message which may be properly directed to individuals. In fact, without this content what is the gospel? It seems to me that there is no real good news without it — nothing essential to be believed or disbelieved, accepted or rejected, by the sinner as it applies to him.¹¹⁵

There are three things to be noted in this quotation.

First of all, Professor Dekker states that Christ died for the sins of the non-elect and thus expiated their guilt. But he does not wish to maintain that this expiation also includes the idea of effectuation, so that all men are actually saved from their sins and freed from their guilt. But we may well ask, What difference is there then between this view and the view of those who teach that Christ only made the salvation of all men possible?¹¹⁶ Again there appears in this view of the professor that disjunction between the work of Christ and that of the Holy Spirit. Christ by His death did not actually obtain redemption for those for whom He died. That redemption is only the work of the Holy Spirit.¹¹⁷ This we believe is a faulty conception and directly contrary to the Canons of Dort which reject the teaching of those who say, "That Christ by His satisfaction

¹¹⁴An analysis of all the New Testament sermons will prove this. It is not found in Peter's sermons (Acts 2:14ff; 3:11-25; 4:9-12; 5:29-32; 10:9-26; 34-43), nor in Paul's (Acts 13:16-42; 17:22-32; 22:26) nor in Stephen's (Acts 7:2-53).

¹¹⁵Letter to the Committee, Jan. 28, 1966.

¹¹⁶For example, Article XX of *The Methodist Articles of Religion*, 1784 states: "The offering of Christ once made is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual." (Quoted from Philip Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom*, Vol. III, p. 812f.) Compare with this also Article VII of the *Symbola Evangelica* of the Free Will Baptists, which reads as follows: "Christ gave Himself a sacrifice for the sins of the world, and thus made salvation possible for all men." (*Ibid.*, p. 752.)

¹¹⁷It is interesting to note that Barth makes this same disjunction. He writes: It is the Holy Spirit, the being and work of the one eternal God in this special form that is still lacking in the world at large. That God did not owe His Son, and in that Son Himself, to the world, is revealed by the fact that He gives His Spirit to whom He will. The hand of God the Reconciler is over all men. Jesus Christ was born and died and rose again for all. The work of atonement, the conversion of men to God, was done for all. . . . To that extent, objectively, all are justified, sanctified and called. But the hand of God has not touched all in such a way that they can see and hear, perceive and accept and receive all that God is for all and therefore for them. . . . But the hand of God has touched and seized Christians in this way—which means the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit. (Quoted from Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, IV/1, 148 [K. D., p. 163] by Prof. A. Hoekema in his inaugural address on *Karl Barth's Doctrine of Sanctification*, p. 21.)

merited neither salvation itself for anyone, nor faith, whereby this satisfaction of Christ unto salvation is *effectually appropriated*; . . ." (II, par. 3). It also is contrary to another statement in the Canons, when they reject the error of those "who teach that all men have been accepted unto the state of reconciliation and unto the grace of the covenant, so that no one is worthy of condemnation on account of original sin, and that no one shall be condemned because of it, but that all are free from the guilt of original sin" (II, par. 5).

It is our conviction that the Holy Spirit will apply to men only that which Christ has merited for them. As Jesus Himself said: "He [the Holy Spirit] will take of mine, and shall declare it unto you." (John 16:14)

Secondly, when your committee pointed out that the Bible never used this phrase, "Christ died for you" with reference to unbelievers, Prof. Dekker tried to minimize the weight of this observation by stating that such a statement is not even used in the Bible as an address to believers. But how can he maintain this, when Christ Himself said to His disciples, at the time that He instituted the Lord's Supper, "This is my body which is given for you," and "this cup is the new covenant in my blood, even that which is poured out for you"? (Luke 22:19, 20) Certainly Christ would not have said those words to the chief priests who were even then plotting His death.

Finally, in the quotation we are dealing with, Prof. Dekker claims that, unless one can say that Christ died for all, there can be no proper gospel preaching, "no real good news without it, — nothing essential to be believed or disbelieved, accepted or rejected, by the sinner as it applies to him." In other words, here he seems to bring forward the same charge that the Arminians had against the Reformed position. They also said that, if Christ did not die for all, there can be no sincere offer of the gospel. True, there is a difference between him and the Arminians. The latter said that the free will of man would have to make the death of Christ effectual in the believers, while Prof. Dekker holds that it is the Holy Spirit who must make that death effectual. Yet both are agreed on this point that the well-meant offer cannot be sincere on the part of God unless Christ actually died for all. The Reformed position, however, maintains that, even though we may not be able to find a completely logical harmony between the doctrine of the definite and particular atonement and the position that the offer of salvation in the gospel is well-meant and sincere to all men, yet we should cling to both these truths. The atonement is indeed definite and limited in its design; but the offer of salvation is universal.

After all, let us remember that the same difficulty that meets us in regard to the gospel offer also meets us in connection with the law of God. In respect to His law also God still holds men responsible for the keeping thereof, even though He knows that no man by himself is able to keep His law. In both cases, however, we confess that the difficulty does not lie in God, nor in the law, nor in the gospel, nor in Christ whose death was sufficient in value; but must be sought in man himself, who made it impossible for himself either to keep the law or to accept the gospel. Just as God, after man's fall into sin, did not abrogate His

law, so too He may still come to man with His offer of salvation. Just as sinful man is still confronted with God's law, so he is also confronted with the gospel. It is not God's fault that man of himself is unable to fulfil the conditions laid down therein. The fact remains that God's offer is sincere, namely, that any man who meets the conditions of repentance and faith will indeed receive rest of soul and eternal life. Here we must be willing to accept the paradox we are faced with.

Moreover, we should realize also that, essentially, the gospel message is *not that Christ died for all men, but that Christ died for sinners*. In other words, the well-meant offer of salvation comes to men in the historical situation in which they are found here and now. This means that when we preach and confront men with the Christ of the Scriptures, we are not dealing with them as elect and non-elect, nor yet as those whose eternal destiny is already an accomplished fact; but we are dealing with them as sinners who must be pleaded with to be reconciled to God, and whose eternal destiny is going to be determined, at least in part, by their response to the gospel invitation. In other words, the offer of the gospel is made to them with the intention that it might bring about the ultimate differentiation between them. It is by the hearing of the Word preached that believers are brought to Christ; and it is by the hearing of the Word that unbelievers are held responsible for their rejection of the Christ. All are sinners by nature, and to all comes the challenge, "What think ye of the Christ?"

Prof. Dekker gives a caricature of the Christian Reformed position when in one of his articles he states that we would have to refer a person to the doctrine of election first before we could answer his question whether God loved him. This is not true. All we need to tell such a person is this, that God loves sinners and that Christ died for sinners; and that, therefore, if he feels himself to be a sinner and is truly repentant, he can have the full assurance that he too is the object of God's love and that Christ died for him. "For," as the Rev. Henry Baker brought out so clearly in his article in *The Banner*,¹¹⁸ "before he [the unbeliever] can appreciate God's love, he must be convicted of his sin and guilt. . . . No person is prepared for a message of love until he is convicted of sin, guilt, and judgment. Neither we nor anyone else can appreciate what and how great God's love is except against the dark, black, frightening background of merited damnation."

In this connection we also wish to quote from the book, *The Well-meant Gospel Offer*, written by Dr. A. C. De Jong, a member of our committee. He writes: "No sinner accosted by God in Christ through the *kerygma* can really know whether Christ died for him except in the constancy of believing commitment to the spoken word of God. In proclaiming the good news the herald *may not* presume to administer as Christ but only in His name, upon His commission, and in submission to that which is revealed. Thus he is kept from saying too much, namely, that Christ acted as Substitute for every individual sinner of the human race. And he is kept from saying too little, namely, that God only wants

¹¹⁸Dec. 3, 1965.

to save some in the way of repentance and faith. He addresses sinners and declares to them *all* that God in Christ will save them if they turn from self to the Savior in faith. He leaves the final results safely in the hands of his Sender."

VIII. LIMITED ATONEMENT AND MISSIONARY SPIRIT AND ACTIVITY

Finally, let us briefly consider Prof. Dekker's judgment that "the doctrine of limited atonement, as commonly understood and observed in the Christian Reformed Church, impairs the principle of the universal love of God and tends to inhibit missionary spirit and activity."¹¹⁹

What shall we say about this? First of all, we wish to observe that the phrase "as commonly understood" in the above quotation eludes definition. It may be true that some people in their zeal to maintain the doctrine of a limited atonement have failed to realize that the offer of salvation in the preaching of the gospel is a universal offer; and consequently may have been insufficiently concerned about the salvation of their unbelieving neighbors. But such an abuse in nowise inheres in the doctrine as such. Hence we do not believe that the allegation made is valid. Theologically speaking, the doctrine of a limited or definite atonement does not obscure the fact of God's concern for all men. Neither does it tend to inhibit missionary spirit and activity. On the contrary, the knowledge that God has chosen a definite number of persons to eternal life, and that for those same persons Christ paid the full price of their redemption, may well tend to inspire missionary zeal and activity. For, when we realize that Christ's death is truly efficacious and will actually result in the salvation of all those who were given Him by the Father, then we know that our preaching will never be in vain, but will surely bear fruit. As in the days of the apostles, it is still true today that "as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." (Acts 13:48) Moreover, since we do not know who those persons are who are ordained to eternal life, we must never write off any one from the hope of salvation. For the Scriptures teach us that even the most hardened sinners may still be added to the church.

Suppose we would assume with our professor of missions that God loves all men redemptively and that Christ died for all. Would this solve the problem that he seems to find in the evangelistic approach of our church? He writes: "Our doctrine affects our missions especially by the particularism of our conception of the covenant and election, due recognition not being given to the universalism of divine love; and by our conception of the atonement as limited, due recognition not being given to its aspects of universalism." And he continues, "We often rationalize our failures in evangelism by disparaging results and laying responsibility for the lack of them upon God. How often have we not said that our duty is merely to preach the gospel and that we must leave the rest to God."¹²⁰

¹¹⁹Most critics of Prof. Dekker have interpreted the above quotation as a charge against the Christian Reformed Church. He himself, however, in the May-June, 1964 issue of *The Reformed Journal*, assures us that it was not intended as a charge, but rather as a judgment requiring practical demonstration.

¹²⁰*The Reformed Journal*, May-June, 1964.

But supposing that this were true, would we not still be able to excuse our failures, if we were inclined to do so? For even if we accepted Prof. Dekker's assumptions that God loves all men, and Christ died for all, we might still want to blame our failures on the Holy Spirit and on the fact that the grace of God does not get through to all men. In other words, the professor has not really solved the difficulty that faces every one who seeks to *rationalize* these things. If one wishes to exonerate himself for his lack of success in his evangelistic efforts, he could still do so on Prof. Dekker's basis.

The fact remains, however, that all such rationalizations are illegitimate. Lack of missionary zeal and activity can never be excused. But the question remains, is it our doctrine of "limited" or definite atonement that causes this lack of our missionary enthusiasm and activity? This we deny. Belief in this doctrine need no more hinder our missionary approach than Prof. Dekker's belief in the necessity of the Holy Spirit's sovereign operation would tend to do so. After all, if we follow that line of reasoning to its logical conclusion, we would be forced to adopt the Arminian position, and claim that the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit should also be universal. Only then all such rationalizations would be impossible, and we would have to say that the blame lies with ourselves alone. Prof. Dekker, however, realizes with us that this would imply a rejection of the Biblical doctrine that salvation is solely by grace. Only he should also realize that his contention that the atonement is universal and that only the Holy Spirit makes redemption definite and particular detracts from the perfect work of Christ's atonement, and would rob our Savior of His glory. Fact is, if we would detract from the efficacy of Christ's atonement to impart salvation, the next step might be to minimize the need of the Holy Spirit's work in the application of salvation.

Therefore, the doctrines of election and limited atonement need not in any way dampen our zeal for missions.¹²¹ For we have always realized that in preaching to unbelievers, we are not going to make these doctrines our starting-point. We agree with Prof. L. Berkhof, who himself was a staunch defender of the doctrine of definite atonement, but yet

¹²¹In this connection we wish to present the following quotation from a document presented to Classis Grand Rapids South by the Rev. V. Licates: Actually, the Doctrine of Limited Atonement, the truth of Divine Election and Reprobation, and the conception of the Covenantal relationships affected by the presentation of the Gospel SHOULD PROVIDE THE DYNAMICS OF EVANGELISM:

1. Christ died for the sheep . . . all of them and each of them. We must so preach this that His sheep will hear His voice, they will follow Him and they will be saved. Those who do not hear, will not believe, and will not turn and follow Him will ultimately prove that they are not His sheep. We do not know who these sheep are or where they are found . . . so we must preach the Gospel universally (without universalizing the love of God or broadening the atonement's design). While we go out we must understand that these sheep must be found and will be found. John 10:9, 11, 14-16. cf. Canons (ch. II, art. 5)

2. The truth of Divine Election and Reprobation does not stifle the message . . . but rather it energizes evangelism with a view both to the elect and to the reprobate . . . Mark 16:16b . . . Saved and condemned. cf. Canons (ch. I Art. 3)

He further quotes Acts 13:48; John 6:37; II Cor. 2:14-16; and Canons III & IV, 8, 9.

wrote these words: "The Bible does not teach that the preacher of the gospel should take his starting-point in these doctrines [of predestination and particular atonement; — and we might add, of the necessity of the Spirit's regenerating work] however important they may be. His starting-point and warrant lie in the commission of his King: 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature: He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.' (Mark 16:16)¹²² After all, as we said before in our report, we are not preaching to the elect, nor to those whose eternal destiny is already settled; but to men in the historical situation in which we find them. We can never look at those to whom we preach in any other way but as lost sinners all, and yet saveable; all needing Christ as their Savior, and all not without hope as long as they are in this life. If we are only truly concerned about the lost, we shall never cease to plead with them, "Be ye reconciled to God." We, too, may freely say to every man, "Who-soever will, let him come"; and we may quote to him the words of Jesus, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." (John 6:37b) Yes, and we may say all these things with greater assurance, because we know that our preaching will not be in vain. For that same Jesus who said, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out," had just previously made that other statement, "All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me." (John 6:37a) Therefore a belief in the doctrine of particular atonement does not tend to inhibit missionary spirit and activity.

But shall we then be complacent, and say that there is no lack of missionary spirit and activity in our church? Is there not an element of truth in Prof. Dekker's observation that the results of our missionary endeavors have been too meager, even though we would not, as he does, attribute this to our so-called theological misconstructions? Certainly, we may admit that our church, especially in the past did lack missionary zeal and activity. On the other hand, let us not fail to appreciate the great strides forward which have been made in the last two decades. Both our Home and our Foreign mission work has greatly expanded. And let us be thankful especially for the interest which our covenant youth is showing in the S.W.I.M. program. But, even though we may take heart, when we consider these things it remains true that much more zeal and much more effort should characterize our missionary program.

Where then lies the blame? Not in our thoroughly scriptural doctrines of the saving and irresistible grace of God and the particular atonement; but in many other things which have tended to impair our missionary spirit and activity. Let us just mention a few of these. It seems to us that the main cause of our lack of missionary zeal is no doubt the spiritual apathy and the low level of sanctification of many of our church members. In this time of unparalleled material prosperity many have become too preoccupied with secondary values. Our church also has not escaped the influence of its environment. Then, too, there are those

¹²²Quoted from Prof. Berkhof's class notes on The Atonement.

who have a feeling of inferiority and fear to speak to others, because they are not sufficiently informed due to their lack of Scripture knowledge and understanding of the Reformed faith. Again, we are as a church not yet fully delivered from our immigrant mentality which tended to keep us aloof from our neighbors. Then, too, the paucity of results may itself have produced a feeling of weariness and ennui. It may also be that as individual Christians we are not praying enough for those who are still unconverted. And finally, it may be admitted that especially during the twenties we were perhaps too excessively preoccupied with details of theological correctness that we failed to have a genuine and compassionate interest in people outside of our church. At this time, however, the pendulum is swinging the other way, so that it may rather be a general doctrinal indifference that may tend to hinder our missionary zeal. For it is a patent fact that the more doctrinally unsound and the more ecumenical churches become, the less interested they are in missions. Statistics prove that church union and theological latitudinarianism have not produced a greater number of missionaries, but has greatly reduced their number.

Therefore there is no warrant for Prof. Dekker's statement that "The doctrine of limited atonement as commonly understood and observed in the Christian Reformed Church impairs the principle of the universal love of God and tends to inhibit missionary spirit and activity." It is unwarranted, first of all, because the doctrine of the limited or definite atonement is thoroughly scriptural and taught by the Confession. And secondly, the words, "the principle of the universal love of God," in the above statement are ambiguous. If Prof. Dekker means to infer that God loves all men with the same love they would not be true.

IX. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It would seem to your committee that this discussion which has engaged the church the last three years points up the need of stating a problem the way in which the Scriptures state it. To get the right answers we shall have to ask the right questions, and to get a sound solution we must be as sure as we possibly can that the way in which we state the problem will set us in the right direction. The genius of sound confessionalism and valid theologizing, as the Heidelberg Catechism eloquently indicates, is our readiness to allow Scripture to shape and mold the questions we ask and the problems we formulate. When the disciples of Jesus asked on one occasion, "Lord, are there few that be saved?" He redirected their perspective and indicated the proper approach when He answered them: "Strive to enter in at the narrow gate" (Luke 13:23, 24). And although our professor of Missions was motivated by the lofty and laudable goal of making our missionary program effective, it is open to serious question whether he stated his case in a way that Scripture warrants. It seems to us that the Bible consistently addresses the gospel to us on the level of our responsibility. It comes to us a mandate, a claim and a command as well as an offer and invitation but all the while beamed to us in terms of "repent and believe." To go beyond that would seem to presuppose some sort of ultimate knowledge of God's

mind and intentions. And it would be going beyond the Bible's intent and purpose. We must be concerned that the problems we raise are true to Scripture's way of raising the issues.

It is very true, as we stated in the introduction, that many attendant difficulties remain which are deserving of further reflection and discussion in the Reformed community. There are, however, certain affirmations which should be made in connection with the issues that have been raised so that we may avoid an undue universalism which repudiates definite atonement and an undue particularism whereby mission spirit and activity are inhibited. The confusion and unrest which have arisen in the churches must and can be allayed, and the theological problems that have arisen can be resolved to a great extent if Synod will address itself to the present situation.

We therefore propose that Synod do not make isolated extra-creedal statements, but that it deal with the theological problems involved, by adopting the following recommendations:

I. In the light of Scripture and the Confessions a distinction must be maintained between God's general benevolence toward all His creatures; His love of compassion for every sinner; and His unique love for His own (the elect). It is therefore unwarranted to speak of one love of God which is redemptive in nature for all men distributively.

Grounds:

A. *Scriptural.*—The Scriptures plainly reveal there is a unique love of God for the elect which may not be confused with His love of compassion for the sinner or His general benevolence toward all His creatures.

Gen. 18:19—"For I have known him, to the end that he may command his children and his household after him, that they may keep the way of Jehovah, to do righteousness and justice; to the end that Jehovah may bring upon Abraham, that which he hath spoken of him."

Deut. 7:6-8—"For thou art a holy people unto Jehovah thy God: Jehovah thy God hath chosen thee to be a people for his own possession, above all peoples that are upon the face of the earth. Jehovah did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all peoples: but because Jehovah loveth you, and because he would keep the oath which he swore unto your fathers, hath Jehovah brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage from the hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt."

Psalms 147:19, 20—"He showeth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his ordinances unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation."

Isaiah 63:7-9—"I will make mention of the lovingkindnesses of Jehovah, and the praises of Jehovah, according to all that Jehovah hath bestowed upon us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies." (Cf. Deut. 10:15; Isa. 1:2; 63:16; 64:8; 54:5; Jer. 3:14, 20.)

John 17:23—"I in them, and thou in me, that they may be perfected into one; that the world may know that thou didst send me, and lovest them, even as thou lovedst me."

Romans 8:28, 29—"And we know that to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to his purpose, For whom he foreknew [loved beforehand] he also foreordained to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren."

Eph. 1:4-6—"Even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blemish in love: having foreordained us [margin: having in love foreordained us] unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved."

Eph. 5:25b, 26—"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it; that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word."

II Thess. 2:13, 14—"But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, for that God chose you from the beginning unto salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you through our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Cf. Matt. 11:25, 26; 13:11; II Tim. 1:9; John 5:21; 14:17; 17:9; 12:39, 40; Tit. 1:1)

B. Confessional.—The Confessions plainly teach a unique love of God toward the elect.

Confession of Faith:

"Art. 20: We believe that God . . . poured forth His mercy and goodness on us, who were guilty and worthy of damnation, *out of mere and perfect love*, giving His Son unto death for us, and raising Him for our justification, that through Him we might obtain immortality and life eternal."

Heidelberg Catechism:

"37. A. That . . . He might redeem our body and soul from everlasting damnation and *obtain for us the grace of God*, righteousness, and eternal life."

"70. Q. What is it to be washed with the blood and Spirit of Christ?

A. It is to have the forgiveness of sins from God, *through grace* for the sake of Christ's blood, which He shed for us in His sacrifice on the cross." (Cf. Q. 28, 56, 60.)

Canons of Dort:

"II, 9: This purpose, proceeding from *everlasting love toward the elect*.

III & IV, 7: The cause of this dispensation is not to be ascribed to the superior worth of one nation above another, nor to their better use of the light of nature, but results wholly from the sovereign good pleasure and *unmerited love of God*.

III & IV, 16: This grace of regeneration . . .

V. 6: This grace of adoption . . .

I. 15: Eternal and unmerited grace of election."

C. Synodical Decisions.—This distinction between God's general benevolence toward all His creatures; His love of compassion for every

sinner; and His unique love for His own (the elect) is consonant with the statement of the Synod of 1924 and its re-affirmation by the Synod of 1959, namely, that "according to Scripture and the Confession it is evident that there is, besides the saving grace of God shown only to the elect unto eternal life, also a certain favor or grace of God, which He manifests toward His creatures in general" (*Acts of Synod, 1924, Art. 132; 1959, Art. 196.*)

II. In the light of Scripture and the Confessions it must be maintained that, although there are certain universal and undeserved benefits accruing to all men from the death of Christ, the atonement of Christ, as expressed by the Biblical terms: obedience, expiation, satisfaction, propitiation, reconciliation, and redemption, is definite and particular (limited). It is therefore unwarranted to state that "the atonement itself is inherently universal" and "there is neither need nor warrant for retaining the concept of limited atonement, as it has been traditionally used among us."

Grounds:

A. *Scriptural*.—The Scriptures speak unambiguously of a definite and particular (limited) atonement.

1. Isaiah 53:5, 10b, 11—"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by the knowledge of himself shall my righteous servants justify many; and he shall bear their iniquities."

John 6:39, 44—"And this is the will of him that sent me, that of all that which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day No man can come to me, except the Father that sent me draw him: and I will raise him up in the last day."

John 10:28, 29—"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand. My Father who hath given them unto me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand."

John 17:2, 9—"Even as thou gavest him authority over all flesh, that to all whom thou hast given him, he should give eternal life. . . . I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for those who thou hast given me; for they are thine."

Gal. 1:3, 4—"Grace to you and peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us out of this present world according to the will of our God and Father." (Cf. II Cor. 5:21; Rev. 5:9; I Peter 2:24; Titus 2:14; I Peter 1:18, 19.)

2. The particularistic terms used in Scripture, such as "sheep" (John 10:27), "His people" (Matt. 1:21), "Church" (Acts 20:29), etc., are intended to speak exclusively.

3. The word "world" in John 3:16 and related passages is to be in-

terpreted not distributively, but as referring to an undifferentiated totality. Also the words "all" and "all men" used in such passages as II Cor. 5:14, 15; I Tim. 2:4-6; Titus 2:11; Heb. 2:9; II Peter 3:9; should be interpreted in the light of the delimitations evident in the context.

B. *Confessional*.—The Confessions speak unambiguously of a definite and particular (limited) atonement.

Confession of Faith:

"Art. 21: We believe that Jesus Christ . . . has presented Himself in our behalf before the Father, to appease His wrath by His full satisfaction, by offering Himself on the tree of the cross, and pouring out His precious blood to purge away our sins . . ." (Cf. Art. 15, 20.)

Heidelberg Catechism:

"40. Q. Why was it necessary for Christ to humble Himself even unto death?"

A. Because, by reason of the justice and truth of God, *satisfaction for our sins* could be made no otherwise than by the death of the Son of God."

"67. A. . . . The Holy Spirit teaches us in the gospel and assures us by the sacraments that the *whole of our salvation stands in the one sacrifice of Christ* made for us on the cross." (Cf. Q. 1, 18, 20, 31, 37-40, 56, 59, 60, 70.)

Canons of Dort:

"I. 7. Election is the unchangeable purpose of God, whereby, before the foundation of the world, He has out of mere grace, according to the sovereign good pleasure of His own will, *chosen from the whole human race*, which had fallen through their own fault from their primitive state of rectitude into sin and destruction, *a certain number of persons to redemption in Christ*, whom He from eternity appointed *the Mediator* and Head of the elect and the foundation of salvation. This elect number, though by nature neither better nor more deserving than others, but with them involved in one common misery, *God has decreed to give to Christ to be saved by Him*, and effectually to call and draw them to His communion by His Word and Spirit; *to bestow upon them true faith, justification, and sanctification*; and having powerfully preserved them in the fellowship of His Son, *finally to glorify them* for the demonstration of His mercy, and for the praise of the riches of His glorious grace; . . ." (Cf. II, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8; Rej. of Errors II, par. 1, 3, 6.)

III. In the light of Scripture and the Confessions it must be maintained that the atonement is efficacious and that there is no disjunction, but essential unity in the work of the Triune God concerning our salvation. What God the Father willed in sovereign love for the salvation of those elected in Christ; was effectually merited by Christ through His death on the cross; and is being savingly applied through the work of Holy Spirit. It is therefore unwarranted to state, "Redeeming efficacy lies neither in the love of God nor in the atonement as such, but rather in the redeeming work of the Holy Spirit."

Grounds:

A. *Scriptural*.—The Scriptures plainly teach that our salvation is the efficacious work of the Triune God.

Acts 20:28—"Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood."

Eph. 1:3-14—"He chose us in him . . . in whom we have redemption through his blood . . . in whom, having also believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise."

Hebrews 9:12—" . . . nor yet through the blood of goats and calves, but through his own blood, entered in once for all into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption."

I Peter 1:2—"According to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in the sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." (Cf. Rom. 8:29, 30; 16:25-27; II Cor. 13:14; I Cor. 1:3-9; Gal. 1:3-5; Heb. 13:20, 21; Jude 24, 25; Rev. 1:5.)

B. *Confessional*.—The Confessions plainly teach that our salvation is the efficacious work of the Triune God.

Confession of Faith:

"Art. 20: We believe that God, who is perfectly merciful and just, sent His Son to assume that nature in which the disobedience was committed, to make satisfaction in the same, and to bear the punishment of sin by His most bitter passion and death. God therefore manifested His justice against His Son when *He laid our iniquities upon Him*, and poured forth *His mercy and goodness on us*, who were guilty and worthy of damnation, out of mere and perfect love, giving His Son unto death for us, and raising Him for our justification, that through Him we might obtain immortality and life eternal." (Cf. Art. 21, 26, 37.)

Heidelberg Catechism:

"1. A. That I . . . belong unto my faithful Savior Jesus Christ; who with His precious blood has fully satisfied for all my sins, and delivered me from all the power of the devil, and so preserves me that without the will of my heavenly Father not a hair can fall from my head; yea, that all things must be subservient to my salvation, wherefore by His Holy Spirit He also assures me of eternal life, and makes me heartily willing and ready, henceforth to live unto Him."

"54. A. That the Son of God, out of the whole human race, from the beginning to the end of the world, gathers, defends, and preserves for Himself, by His Word and Spirit, . . . a Church chosen to everlasting life; . . ." (Cf. Q. 37, 70.)

Canons of Dort:

"II, 8: For this was the sovereign counsel and most gracious will and purpose of God the Father that the quickening and saving efficacy of the most precious death of His Son should extend to all the elect, for bestowing upon them alone the gift of justifying faith, thereby to bring them infallibly to salvation; that is, it was the will of God that Christ by the blood of the cross . . . should effectually redeem . . . all those, and

those only, who were from eternity chosen to salvation and given Him by the Father; that He should confer upon them faith, which, together with all the other saving gifts of the Holy Spirit, He purchased for them by His death." (Cf. I, 7; II, 3; III & IV, 10; V, 1; Rej. of Errors, II, par. 1, 2.)

IV. In the light of Scripture and the Confessions it must be maintained that the particularism of redemption, historically applied in the lives of believers, is the fruit of a definite and particular (limited) atonement, since the Holy Spirit Himself, who applies that redemption, is a gift which Christ has merited for His people through His death. It is *therefore unwarranted to "insist on a universal atonement, in the sense that . . . Christ died for all, and a particular redemption based on God's decree to save only the elect," and incompatible with the statement: "At the same time I recognize . . . that the redeeming work of the Holy Spirit is a fruit of and is dependent upon Christ's atonement."*

Grounds:

A. *Scriptural.*—The Scriptures plainly teach that the death of Christ was ordained by God *to redeem a certain number of persons.*

Romans 5:10, 11—"For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by his life; and not only so, but we rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation."

II Cor. 5:21—"Him who knew no sin he made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in him."

I Pet. 1:18, 19—"Knowing that ye were redeemed, not with corruptible things, silver or gold, from your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers; but with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ."

I Pet. 2:24—"Who his own self bare our sins in his body upon the tree, that we, having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed." (Cf. John 6:37, 39, 44; 10:28, 29; Matt. 20:28; Heb. 9:12; Gal. 4:4; Rev. 5:9.)

B. *Confessional.*—The Confessions plainly teach that the death of Christ was ordained by God *to redeem a certain number of persons.*

Confession of Faith:

"Art. 16: . . . merciful, since He delivers and preserves from this perdition all whom He in His eternal and unchangeable counsel of mere goodness has elected in Christ Jesus our Lord."

"Art. 21: . . . Neither is it necessary to seek or invent any other means of being reconciled to God than this only sacrifice, once offered, by which *he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.* This is also the reason why He was called by the angel of God, JESUS, that is to say, SAVIOUR, because He would *save his people from their sins.*"

Heidelberg Catechism:

"31. Q. Why is He called Christ, that is, Anointed?"

A. Because He is ordained of God the Father, and anointed with the

Holy Spirit, to be our chief Prophet and Teacher, who has fully revealed to us the secret counsel and will of God concerning our redemption, and our only High Priest, who *by the one sacrifice of His body has redeemed us*, and makes continual intercession for us with the Father; and our eternal King, who governs us by His Word and Spirit, and defends and preserves us in the salvation obtained for us." (Cf. Q. 37, 45, 60.)

Canons of Dort:

"II, 8: . . . that the quickening and saving efficacy of the most precious death of His Son should extend to all the elect . . ."

"I, 7: Election is the unchangeable purpose of God whereby, . . . He has out of mere grace, . . . chosen . . . *a certain number of persons to redemption in Christ.*"

V. In the light of Scripture and the Confessions it must be maintained that when we preach and confront men with the Christ of the Scriptures we are not dealing with them as elect or non-elect, nor yet as those whose eternal destiny is an accomplished fact; but we are dealing with them as sinners who must be pleaded with to be reconciled to God in the way of repentance and faith. It is therefore unwarranted to state: "We may say to every man individually . . . 'Christ died for you'"; or to state: "When I say 'Christ died for you' to any man, I mean to say that Christ has actually suffered for his sins and has in that sense expiated his guilt. If, however, the word 'expiate' is intended by definition to include the idea of *effectuation*, . . . I would not want to use the word *expiation* to describe what Christ has done for all men."

Grounds:

A. *Scriptural.*—The Scriptural approach, in the kerygmatic situation, is to call men to Christ by way of repentance and faith.

Acts 2:37, 38—"Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brethren, what shall we do? And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Acts 16: 30, 31—" . . . Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house."

Acts 20:21—"Testifying both to Jews and to Greeks repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." (Cf. Acts 3:19, 20; 14:15-17; 17:30, 31; Matt. 3:12; 4:17; 11:28-30; Rom. 10:8-11; II Cor. 5:20.)

B. *Confessional.*—The confessional approach, in the kerygmatic situation, is to call men to Christ by the way of repentance and faith.

Confession of Faith:

"Art. 29: . . . With respect to those who are members of the Church, they may be known by the marks of Christians; namely, by faith, and when, having received Jesus Christ the only Saviour, they avoid sin, follow after righteousness, love the true God and their neighbor, neither turn aside to the right or left, and crucify the flesh with the works

thereof. . . . As for the false Church, it ascribes more power and authority to itself and its ordinances than the Word of God, and will not submit itself to the yoke of Christ . . . and persecutes those who live holily according to the Word of God and rebuke it for its errors, covetousness, and idolatry." (Cf. Art. 26.)

Heidelberg Catechism:

"84.Q. How is the kingdom of heaven opened and shut by the preaching of the holy gospel?

A. By proclaiming and openly witnessing, according to the command of Christ, *to believers*, one and all, that, *whenever they receive the promise of the gospel by a true faith*, all their sins are really forgiven them of God for the sake of Christ's merits; and on the contrary, by proclaiming and witnessing *to all unbelievers and such as do not sincerely repent that the wrath of God and eternal condemnation abide on them so long as they are not converted*. According to this witness of the gospel God will judge, both in this life and in that which to come."

Canons of Dort:

"II, 5: The promise of the gospel is that whosoever believes in Christ crucified shall not perish, but have everlasting life. This promise, together with the *command to repent and believe*, ought to be declared and published to all nations, and to all persons promiscuously and without distinction, to whom God out of His good pleasure sends the gospel."

"III & IV, 8: As many as are called by the gospel are unfeignedly called. For God has most earnestly and truly declared in His Word what is acceptable to Him, namely, that those who are called should come unto Him. He also seriously promises rest of soul and eternal life to all who come to Him and believe."

VI. In the light of Scripture and the Confessions the Church must maintain that the atoning work of Christ is the basis for the universal and well-meant offer of the gospel in missionary preaching, the heart of its message, and the guarantee of its fruitfulness. And this is an incentive to mission spirit and activity. It is, therefore, unwarranted to state that "the doctrine of limited atonement, as commonly understood and observed in the Christian Reformed Church . . . tends to inhibit missionary spirit and activity."

Grounds:

A. *Scriptural*.—The Scriptures teach this:

Isaiah 55:11—"So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

Matt. 28:19, 20—"Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

Mark 16:15, 16—"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned."

John 6:37—"All that which the Father giveth me shall come unto me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

John 10:11, 16, 27, 28—"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and they shall become one flock, one shepherd My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of my hand."

Acts 13:48—"And as the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of God: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."

Acts 16:14—"And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, one that worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened to give heed unto the things which were spoken by Paul." (Cf. John 6:39; Acts 2:47; 18:9, 10; Romans 1:16.)

B. *Confessional*.—The Confessions plainly teach this:

Heidelberg Catechism:

"54. Q. What do you believe concerning the *holy catholic Church*?

A. That the Son of God, out of the whole human race, from the beginning to the end of the world, gathers, defends, and preserves for Himself, by His Spirit and Word in the unity of the true faith, a Church chosen to everlasting life"

Canons of Dort:

"II, 9: This purpose, proceeding from everlasting love towards the elect, has from the beginning of the world to this day been powerfully accomplished, and will henceforward still continue to be accomplished, notwithstanding all the ineffectual opposition of the gates of hell; so that the elect in due time may be gathered together into one, and that there never may be wanting a Church composed of believers, the foundation of which is laid in the blood of Christ; which may stedfastly love and faithfully serve Him as its Saviour (who, as a bridegroom for his bride, laid down His life for them upon the cross); and which may celebrate His praises here and through all eternity." (Cf. I, 7; II, 7, 8.)

Respectfully submitted,

The Doctrinal Committee,

Dr. J. H. Bratt, Chairman

Rev. A. Persenaire, Sec'y

Mr. J. W. Borst

Mr. J. De Jager

Dr. A. C. De Jong

Rev. G. Gritter

Rev. J. Medendorp

APPENDIX

Related Problems

As to the "related problems" which the Advisory committee of the Synod of 1966 spoke of, we believe that, although they are indeed related to the current discussion, they do not touch the heart of the matter. That they do not deal directly with the main issues was also the opinion of many of the consistories and classes which sent their responses to the committee. Nevertheless, since our mandate stated that we were to take these problems into account, and that they needed to be articulated, we shall give them our attention. But, lest they might be considered as matters which Synod should deal with at this present time, we have not included the material about these problems in the body of the report, but rather in the appendix.

The first problem which we are to consider is "the relationship and distinction between the love of God and the grace of God." It seems that this problem presented itself to the advisory committee because both Prof. Dekker and the Doctrinal Committee ostensibly had used these terms interchangeably. The former had written "that I presupposed in my articles that the term 'grace' is understood to be synonymous with redemptive love." But the latter also at times used these terms interchangeably, as for example, when it spoke about "a saving love or grace (of God) which He bestows only upon the elect" in Recommendation I, A. The advisory committee, however, desired that our committee should show what is the *relationship and distinction* between these two: the love of God and the grace of God.

We must admit that it was impossible to cope with this problem *adequately* in the time allotted to us. It seems to us that here is one problem the church may well be discussing openly and freely for the next ten or twenty years. Note, however, that we do not suggest that all that time and study is needed before the church can say anything about the love of God as such, or about the grace of God as such. On the contrary, we believe that in our report we have given a rather detailed account of what the Scriptures teach us about the love of God, both in the Old and in the New Testaments. And from these scriptural data we have concluded that a clearcut distinction must be made between the love of God for all men and His unique and saving love for the elect. Moreover, we have also maintained that the Synods of 1924 and 1959 were in harmony with the Scripture and the Confessions when they stated that there is "besides the saving grace of God shown only to the elect unto eternal life, also a certain favor or grace of God which He manifests towards His creatures in general." But, having maintained these clearcut scriptural and creedal distinctions about God's love and His grace, we have not entered into the question concerning the *relationship and distinction* between these two. And frankly, we do not see why this needs to be done at this time.

Let us next take up the problem concerning "the relationship between election and the sincere offer of salvation." The advisory committee

stated that this problem also needs "theological clarification and precise statement." As far as the former (theological clarification) is concerned, we shall attempt to give this. But we cannot promise to give a precise statement of the problem, since we are convinced that this is an impossible task. When we deal with such things as election in its relationship to the sincere offer of salvation, we shall never be able to fully comprehend their interrelationship. But that there is no conflict between the two is evident from the fact that both are clearly taught in the Scriptures. However, any attempt on our part to solve the mysteries presented to us in the Scriptures by mere logic is in itself a denial of the faith that God's revelation requires. We should always remember that what God has revealed to us in his Word is meant to be accepted by faith, and not because it can satisfy our curiosity or logical reasonings. It is by faith that we must accept both, namely, election and the sincere offer of salvation. And we may do so the more readily, because also our sanctified Christian experience corroborates the truth of them both. When by faith we have received Christ as our Savior, we know that this salvation which we have in Him did not come to us by works, but by grace alone. The cause of our salvation cannot be sought in ourselves, but must be sought in God's sovereign good pleasure, according to which He has elected us in Christ Jesus from before the foundation of the world. But we also know that when Christ was presented to us in the gospel, and we received the invitation to come unto Him and to find rest for our souls, that then, too, we accepted this invitation willingly and voluntarily. The fact is that we were overwhelmed by the goodness and mercy of the Lord who was willing to receive us just as we were, by grace and through faith. When we received Christ, we did so, not against our will, but with all our heart, because we felt the need of Him. Our faith did not merely accept a certain proposition about what Christ was supposed to have done for us; but, if it were true faith, it put its trust in Christ himself.

To find the true relationship between election and the sincere offer of salvation, we must realize, first of all, that in both of them Christ has the central place. Our election is in Christ; and it is also Christ who confronts us in the message of the gospel. God's sovereign election in Christ and man's responsibility to make the proper response to Christ's invitation in the gospel cannot be divorced from one another. God elects his people in Christ; but it is also the same Christ who by his Word and Spirit gathers his elect out of this world (H. Cat. Q. 54). The same God who from before the foundation of the world has chosen us in Christ Jesus also sends forth his messengers "by whose ministry men are called to repentance and faith in Christ crucified" (C. of D., I, 3), and who through these messengers pleads with men, "Be ye reconciled to God." Election therefore in no way detracts from the sincerity of the gospel offer. However, if we are to see their interrelationship properly we must begin by rejecting some erroneous views of election.

The first of these erroneous views is the notion that God's sovereignty in election is akin to the arbitrariness that characterizes the rule of some absolute monarch. Just as the latter can make decrees without reference

to any constitution or law, so, according to this view God also, not being subject to any law, in an arbitrary way decides whom He wishes to save and whom He wishes to reject. They, however, who have such a conception of God, forget what Calvin said, namely that God is a law unto Himself and that therefore He cannot deny Himself. This means that whatever God wills is in perfect harmony with his justice and holiness; yes also with his wisdom and love. Therefore, even though *we* may not be able to say why God was pleased to elect some and to leave others "in the fall and perdition wherein they have involved themselves" (Conf., Art. 16), this is certain that on God's part this choosing was not arbitrary. There is a freedom in his choice, but not the freedom of some unknown "higher power." It is the freedom of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. As Dr. H. Bavinck put it: "It is the will, not of a blind fate, nor of an irresponsible chance, nor of an obscure, natural force, but the will of an almighty God and a merciful Father, His sovereignty is not only a sovereignty of unlimited power, but also a sovereignty of wisdom and grace. He is God and Father at the same time."¹

Another fallacy in regard to the doctrine of election is the idea that this election is hidden, so that one can never know whether he is elect, unless this is revealed to him by some special message or sign from heaven. Again, nothing is farther from the truth. For, if our election is in Christ, then all those who have embraced Him by a true faith may also be assured of their election. As Calvin said, "If we are elected in Him (that is Christ), then we cannot find the certainty of our election in ourselves; and not even in God the Father, if we look at Him apart from the Son, . . . But Christ alone is the mirror in which we ought and in which, without deception, we may contemplate our election."²

Therefore, the key to the true understanding of the doctrine of election is found in Ephesians 1:4-6. There we read:

"Even as He that is, [God the Father] chose us in Him [Christ] before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blemish before Him; having in love foreordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved." (A.R.V., margin.)

God has chosen us *in Christ*. This means that election cannot be separated from Christ. He is "the Mediator and Head of the elect and the foundation of their salvation" (C. of D., I, 7). This, however, should not be understood in an Arminian sense, as if Christ were the moving cause of our election. It is not so that God elected us because Christ by his sacrifice persuaded Him to do so. On the contrary, God himself "in love foreordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ unto himself." Since Christ himself is the object of election, he cannot be its moving cause. That which moved God to choose us was solely his love, which He had for us in accordance with the good pleasure of his will. "For God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son."

¹ Quoted by Dr. G. C. Berkouwer in *Divine Election*, p. 82

² *Institutes* III, xxiv, 4.

Therefore, when God chose us in Christ, this also means that He did so only by grace. There was nothing in ourselves that made us worthy of this choice. Election in Christ is election by grace. It is well that we remember this also, lest we get the impression that election is some abstract, merciless, and loveless, sovereign decree. On the contrary, the Canons speak of "a gracious election" (I, 10); and again, "of the eternal and unmerited grace of election" (I, 15). Also the fact that "the quickening and saving efficacy of the most precious death of his Son should extend to all the elect" is called the purpose of God which proceeds "from everlasting love towards the elect" (II, 8). In other words, also the grace of election, as every other grace of God, comes to us in Christ Jesus.

But, if God's election is in Christ, and a manifestation of his grace in Him, then it must also follow that this election must be associated with faith. Therefore the Scriptures always identify the elect with the believers. For this reason Paul also addresses those to whom he writes his epistles as "the elect of God." This does not imply, of course, that this correlation between election and faith makes God's election dependent on our act of faith. Over against this Arminian position, the Canons warn us repeatedly that election is based solely on God's sovereign grace and not on some so-called foreseen faith. Nevertheless this grace of election does leave room for man's activity. For, when Jesus said, "All that which the Father giveth me shall come unto me"; He added in the same breath, "and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37). Dr. G. C. Berkouwer writes in this connection:

"This is indeed the marvelous and inscrutable work of the Holy Spirit that in and through this [divine] superiority man really comes, is placed in the realm of possibility, in this freedom. "The drawing of the Father" is not at all an act that rules out human activity, rather, says Kittel, it rules out all that is coercive and magical. It is the profound reality described in the joyful words of Jeremiah: "O Jehovah, thou hast persuaded me, and I was persuaded; thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed" (20:7) . . . There is a superiority which is not that of mechanical causality or of a coercion that obstructs man's activity; it is the personal superiority of love and grace, which in man's experience is making room for him to act, by not destroying his freedom. And within this "room" the "thou" of Jeremiah is understood as the exclusive and profound source of all salvation."³

If, as Ephesians 1:4 teaches us, election in Christ is unto faith and good works, then we can see also why the doctrine of election never needs to hinder us from preaching the free and sincere offer of salvation. This could only be so if that doctrine were explained in an unscriptural manner. In the Bible itself there is no such conflict between election and the well-meant offer. The same apostle Paul, who more than any other New Testament writer emphasized the sovereignty of God's election, was also the greatest missionary who ever lived. Exactly in the context of the doctrine of election (Romans 9-11), he stressed the necessity and importance of preaching the gospel. For says he:

³ *Divine Election*, p. 49.

"How then shall they call on him, in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent? even as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of good things! . . . So belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." (Romans 10:14, 15, 17)

And when during his stay in the city of Corinth, the apostle Paul was about to give up his missionary labors there, it was the Lord Himself who appeared to him and urged him to persevere in his preaching, "for," said He, "I have much people in this city." It was this truth that the Lord had His elect in Corinth that inspired Paul with renewed evangelistic zeal and fervor.

Also in the Canons there is nothing strange about this correlation between election and the sincere offer of salvation. They, too, tell us that those "who are called by the gospel are unfeignedly called. For God has most earnestly and truly declared in his Word what is acceptable to Him, namely, that those who are called should come unto Him. He also seriously promises rest of soul and eternal life to all who come to Him and believe. It is not the fault of the gospel, nor of Christ offered therein, nor of God, who calls men by the gospel and confers upon them various gifts, that those who are called by the ministry of the Word refuse to come and be converted" (III & IV, 8, 9; cf. II, 5). Dr. H. Bavinck also emphasizes the fact that the gospel holds out hope even to the most miserable sinner. This is what he wrote:

"No one *may* believe that he is a reprobate, for every one is sincerely and urgently called, and is duty bound to believe in Christ unto salvation. No one *can* believe this, for his life itself and all that he enjoys is an evidence that God has no delight in his death. No one really *does believe* this either, for if he did, he would already have a hell on earth. But election is a source of comfort and strength, of humility and meekness, of trust and certainty. The salvation of man is unshakably secure in the gracious and almighty goodness of God."⁴

Bavinck, of course, did not intend to give a logically perspicuous solution to the problem of the relation between election and the sincere offer of salvation, since he also realized that any solution to that problem must be found in the way of faith alone.

There have been those who have denied that there is in the gospel preaching a real offer of salvation to all men indiscriminately. They say this promise is meant only for the elect. We believe this is an error, plainly contradicted by the Canons. Yet, if we reject this error, we are not compelled to accept the opposite error (of universalism) which holds that the decision regarding the gospel offer rests entirely with the free will of man. For in that case God would become an impotent, waiting God, who in his powerlessness is actually humanized. If that were true, that God is impotent, election could never be free and sovereign. Then God would have to wait upon man's decision before He could elect anyone. And this is exactly what Arminianism teaches.

⁴ *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek*, II, p. 366.

Today, however, it is not so much the Arminian type of universalism that we should beware of; but rather the Barthian type. Karl Barth teaches that in the death of Christ God has reconciled all men unto himself; and that, therefore, all men are elect in Christ. Barth does not feel the need of trying to harmonize the universal message in the *kerygma* with the doctrine of election, because for him election itself is universal. The only difference between believers and unbelievers is this, that believers know they are elect, while unbelievers must still be told that their reprobation in Adam has been overcome by their election in Christ. But, although Barth's universalism cannot be identified with the Arminian type, yet both teach that Christ died for all. Over against this, however, the Canons teach that, although election and Christ's atonement are particular, since both have reference to a definite number of persons, yet the *kerygma* is universal. On the one hand, the Canons maintain that in election appears the freedom of God's mercy, and that salvation is solely by grace; while, on the other hand, they also hold that the sincere offer of salvation comes to all men distributively. For they teach, on the basis of the sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice on the cross, that it is possible to say to any and every man that in the death of Christ there is an infinite power and worthiness, so that in all the world there is no one, so sinful or so lost, for whom that sacrifice of Christ would not be sufficient to atone for all his sins. But again, it is only by faith that both these truths—election and the sincere offer—can be understood and experienced.

When preaching the gospel, we are not required to say, "Christ died for all"; but we may say to every sinner (and sinners are the only people we address in the gospel) that he need not despair of God's mercy and grace. As long as he but realizes that there is nothing in himself that makes him worthy of the grace of salvation, he may freely come and be assured that God is ready to receive him. As the well-known hymn puts it so aptly:

"All the fitness He requireth
Is to feel your need of Him."

Hence the doctrine of election in no way needs to stand in the way of preaching a free offer of salvation in Christ to everyone. We should not try to construct a logical equilibrium between the doctrine of election and the sincere offer of salvation. But with the Canons, while we reject the teachings of those who hold to an indefinite election and a universal atonement, we should open wide the gate to a universal *kerygma*. It is not given to us to see through God's work; for it is a mystery that can only be comprehended by faith. Those who believe may have the witness in them that they have Christ as their Savior, and that therefore they are elect. As the apostle John says:

"He that believeth on the Son hath the witness in him: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he hath not believed in the witness that God hath borne concerning his Son. And the witness is this, that God gave unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." (I John 5:10-12.)

And finally, when we realize that we can never speak about election except as election in Christ, then we shall also see that we should never deduce an explanation for the unbelief of those who are lost from the doctrine of election. We refuse to admit that either the Reformed doctrine of election or the doctrine of particular or limited atonement accounts for the unbelief of those who will ultimately be lost. For both the Scriptures and our creeds plainly teach us that the cause of unbelief must always be sought in man himself. Man, fallen in sin, and having a nature that is totally depraved, will always of himself be a rebel against God. There is no need to seek any other explanation for his unbelief. For, as the Canons state, "Whereas many who are called by the gospel do not repent nor believe in Christ, but perish in unbelief, this is not owing to any defect or insufficiency in the sacrifice offered by Christ upon the cross, but is wholly to be imputed to themselves" (II, 6). And again, "It is not the fault of the gospel, nor of Christ offered therein, nor of God, who calls men by the gospel and confers upon them various gifts, that those who are called by the ministry of the Word refuse to come and be converted. The fault lies in themselves . . ." (III & IV, 9). Thus, we need not seek for an explanation for unbelief. It is in the heart of man by nature, and in no way a result of God's decree of election, or of Christ's definite atonement. But what we *do* need an explanation for is the faith that is found in those who do heed the gospel and come to Christ. Their faith finds its foundation in God's elective grace and in Christ's efficacious atonement. For the Canons state:

"Election is the unchangeable purpose of God, whereby, before the foundation of the world, He has out of mere grace, according to the sovereign good pleasure of his own will, chosen from the whole human race, which had fallen through their own fault from their primitive state of rectitude into sin and destruction, a certain number of persons to redemption in Christ, whom He from eternity appointed the Mediator and Head of the elect and the foundation of salvation." (I, 7.)

In the same way also the death of Christ explains the faith of the elect only and not the unbelief of the reprobate. As the Canons state once more:

"This was the sovereign counsel and most gracious will and purpose of God the Father that the quickening and saving efficacy of the most precious death of his Son should extend to all the elect for bestowing upon them alone the gift of justifying faith, thereby to bring them infallibly to salvation." (II, 8.)

And finally, let us note that in the Conclusion of the Canons, it is stated that "the Reformed Churches not only do not acknowledge, but even detest with their whole soul" the accusation of those who wish

"to persuade the public: That the doctrine of the Reformed Churches concerning predestination . . . makes God the author of sin, unjust, tyrannical, hypocritical; . . . that the same doctrine teaches that God, by a mere arbitrary act of his will, without the least respect or view to any sin, has predestinated the greatest part of the world to eternal damnation, and has created them for this very purpose; that in the same man-

ner in which the election is the fountain and cause of faith and good works, reprobation is the cause of unbelief and impiety."

The third problem concerning which the advisory committee stated that it needs "clarification and precise statement" was formulated as follows: "The specific role which each Person of the Trinity has in the atonement and its effectuation in the lives of men."

As we reflected upon this formulation, we became convinced that this problem was stated so ambiguously, that it was impossible for us to deal with it. For, in the first place, it must be noted that, strictly speaking, the atonement was actually made by only one Person of the Trinity, namely, Christ, or the Son. Furthermore, the word "effectuation," as it is used with reference to the atonement in the above formulation, is also ambiguous. For the atonement as such needs no effectuation, but is itself efficacious. The only thing that needs effectuation in the lives of men is the ability to appropriate by faith that which Christ has merited for His own through His atoning sacrifice. And the latter is the work of the Holy Spirit, or the third Person of the Trinity.

Finally, the last problem which the advisory committee posed concerns "the universal implications of the atonement." Here again we are somewhat at a loss to know what the committee had in mind when it formulated the problem in this way. For example, what does it refer to when it speaks about "universal implications of the atonement"? Does it mean to suggest that the atonement, which Christ made by His death, has implications which concern the whole universe? If so, we readily admit that the atonement has, indeed, those universal implications. Colossians 1:19, 20 tells us. "For it was the good pleasure of the Father, that in Him [Christ] should all the fulness dwell; and through him to reconcile all things unto himself, having made peace through the blood of the cross; through him, I say, whether things upon earth, or things in heaven." (Cf. Ephesians 1:10.) Professor L. Berkhof also wrote about these "universal implications," as follows: "The final result of the atoning work of Christ will be a new heaven and a new earth in which dwelleth righteousness, a fit dwelling-place for the new and glorified humanity, in the glorious liberty in which the lower creation will also share." Romans 8:19-22.⁵

It may also be, however, that the committee had in mind the so-called universal benefits which accrue from the death of Christ, benefits which all men share in, and especially those who are privileged to have the gospel preached unto them. If this is what the committee had in mind when it referred to the "universal implications of the atonement," then we wish to state that we have already often mentioned these in the body of the report.

We should remember, however, that the word "atonement," strictly speaking, refers to the substitutionary, vicarious, propitiatory, reconciling, and redeeming work of Christ, which is not universal, but for His people only. In other words, by the atonement we usually mean that which

⁵ *Reformed Dogmatics*, I, p. 426. (Also found in *Systematic Theology*, p. 399.)

Christ has actually accomplished by His death on the cross, namely, the reconciliation of God and the redemption of man.⁶

Respectfully submitted,

The Doctrinal Committee,

Dr. J. H. Bratt, Chairman

Rev. A. Persenaire, Sec'y

Mr. J. W. Borst

Mr. J. De Jager

Dr. A. C. De Jong

Rev. G. Gritter

Rev. J. Medendorp

⁶ On the 10th of March the secretary of our committee received a letter from Professor Dekker. But, since our report was already in the hands of the typist, in preparation of the March 15 deadline, we had no time to consider this communication. Therefore we decided simply to reproduce the same and to append it to our report.

"With reference to my letter of February 28, I have made a slight refinement in wording in my communication to Synod which has been mailed to the Stated Clerk. I wish to give you the benefit of this final wording even though the substance is unchanged.

"I would suggest that 'atonement' is best used as a comprehensive term to designate the whole of God's redemptive work in Christ. In this connection I wish to revise what I stated to the committee a year ago when these matters were under discussion. I then suggested that direct efficaciousness is not in the atonement *as such* but rather in the work of the Holy Spirit (p. 463). At that time discussion in the committee centered only on the death of Christ as atonement.

"I wish now to alter and hopefully clarify this matter by saying that as far as my view is concerned, the death of Christ has efficacy in the same way and to the same extent that any part of Christ's redemptive work has efficacy, that is as a part of the whole. In this connection Christ's work through the Spirit has efficacy to the same extent and in the same way as any other part of Christ's work has efficacy. It is noteworthy that the Canons of Dort lay stress upon the efficacy of Christ's death (III-IV/11, 12). In this sense, as the totality of Christ's work, the atonement has efficacy.

I regret that a year ago, under the pressures of discussions with the study committee, I attempted to articulate my view of the atonement in the way I did. The committee has judged on the basis of that statement that I "introduce a disjunction between the work of Christ and that of the Holy Spirit" and that I seem to "drive a wedge between the work of the Father and that of the Son" (p. 473). I hereby wish to remove whatever justification there may have been for that criticism.

I have not yet been able to decide in what form and when to supply the committee with a copy of my communication. In view of uncertainties about your recommendations and the date on which I will be receiving them, I wish to give this matter a little further reflection. I will write you next week after returning from Makurdi, where we are making a weekend visit.

Fraternally,

Harold Dekker

Bukuru, Northern Nigeria

March 2, 1967

REPORT 42

UNITED CALVINIST YOUTH

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

In last year's report we stated that the unification of our denomination's three youth divisions—the Calvinettes, the Calvinist Cadet Corps, and the Young Calvinist Federation—was an accomplished fact. Now, after its first year of existence, we may report that the UNITED CALVINIST YOUTH has successfully passed its first trial run and is well on the way to becoming a vital, dynamic force in the lives of our denomination's children and young people.

The UNITED CALVINIST YOUTH board, composed of nineteen voting members—four from each division, four members-at-large, and the three Synodical delegates—has met twice, once last fall and again in March. Rev. James Lont, divisional director of the Young Calvinist Federation, was unanimously elected to also serve as director of the UNITED CALVINIST YOUTH and we are very grateful for his enthusiastic, talented leadership.

Also much appreciated is the fact that in the past Synod has seen fit to recommend our causes to the churches for one or more offerings, and we would request that Synod again do so. We would ask that the following four causes be listed:

Denominational Related Youth Causes

1. Calvinettes (a division of United Calvinist Youth)
2. Calvinist Cadet Corps (a division of United Calvinist Youth)
3. Young Calvinist Federation (a division of United Calvinist Youth)
4. Young Calvinist Servicemen's Ministry (a Young Calvinist Federation service)

All four areas are making legitimate and increasing demands upon their respective organizations, and in our attempt to meet these expectations it is necessary that we continue to receive the financial as well as moral support of our churches. Financial reports are submitted annually to the Standing Advisory Budget Committee of Synod and are available to the churches upon request.

We also note with appreciation the granting of our request that three Synodical representatives be appointed, each to take a continuing interest in one of the divisions. Once again we ask Synod to do the same.

The remainder of this report consists of a brief resumé of each division's activities during the past year.

CALVINETTES

Under the capable leadership of our director, Mrs. Donald Lautenbach, and our board president, Mrs. Thomas Yff, and her eleven board members Calvinettes

has had a successful year of expansion and growth. We are thankful to God for this and continue to look to Him for guidance and direction in the future.

To date our total membership is 477 clubs. We have 358 clubs in the United States, 110 in Canada and nine in Australia.

We have had five areas organize Calvinette Councils in the past year. This brings our total of organized Calvinette Councils to twenty-four.

In September of 1966 the Calvinette Executive Committee instituted an Open Book Exam for Calvinette Counselors. This is particularly designed to help new Counselors and is based on the Calvinette Handbook and the Counselor Manual. Upon the completion of the test, a Counselor will become a registered Calvinette counselor. This exam seeks to assure the church and the Calvinette organization that there are qualified Counselors working with our girls.

Our various Merit Badge Committees continue to re-evaluate, revise, and prepare new Merit Badges. We are hoping within the coming year to prepare specific material for use in chapels and inner city churches.

Mrs. Jerrien Gunnink, Synodical Representative

CALVINIST CADET CORPS

It was in 1951 that Synod mandated the Synodical Youth Committee to work toward the establishment of boy's clubs. This mandate was affected in 1952 with a beginning of 18 clubs and 28 counselors. In 1958 when Calvinist Cadets last reported to Synod there were 125 clubs and 300 counselors. Today we number 364 clubs, 31 councils, 1700 counselors, and 6713 cadets. Not only are we firmly established in the United States but in Canada we find clubs in the provinces of Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, British Columbia and Alberta. In New Zealand we have seven clubs and 250 cadets. Korea has its cadet program. Rev. Van Groningen is doing a most commendable job in organizing the Cadet operation in Australia.

The present executive director of the Calvinist Cadet Corps is Mr. Martin Keuning, who continues to do a most credible work, ably assisted by Mr. Henry Driesenga, as executive secretary. This year the new president of the governing body of Cadets is Mr. Irv Lundell, who at the recent Congress meeting in London, Ontario and at the monthly executive committee meetings has exhibited a sensitive concern for the needs of cadeting. However, we have not only been blessed with excellent leadership and counselors but the prayers and support of the church and its governing bodies has been most helpful and appreciated. Last year our budget was over \$50,000 of which a considerable part was earned by the Cadets in their fair-share program. The monthly publication of the CRUSADER (for the Cadets) and the CLARION (for the counselors) keeps our clubs informed regarding Bible studies, crafts, congress and committee meetings and general news of cadeting.

The program of the Calvinist Cadet Corps is committed to training our boys to live for Jesus; helping the church to reach boys for Christ; and sharing in the total program of molding boys for Christian leadership. This is not only a statement but the deep concern for the spiritual as well as the physical welfare of the boy was evidenced at the Cadet Convention in Grand Rapids, the Congress meeting in London, Ontario, and again at one of the great highpoints of 1966, the first International Camporee in the Pike's Peak National Forest near Denver. We continue to look forward to this coming season as a part of the UCY program in developing the youth of our church in dedicated service to our God.

Rev. Paul Vermaire, Synodical Representative

YOUNG CALVINIST FEDERATION

During the past year the Young Calvinist Federation has been able to concentrate its efforts on the work for our young people, since the Calvinettes are now a separate organization. While the Federation was happy to be of service to our girls, and while we experienced nothing but the most harmonious relationships in working together, it is appreciated that now we are free to center all our efforts upon our young people only.

Blessings again have been many: our membership has increased from 616 to 632 youth groups. An excellent convention was sponsored in Chicago last summer

and we are eagerly looking forward to helping Canada observe her centennial by meeting in Edmonton, Alberta, this coming August. The *Young Calvinist* continues to be published, with our young people again taking part in our all-important campaign in the late winter. Our ministry to the servicemen continues to grow in importance; during the last year alone the number of Christian Reformed young people in service has increased from 1637 to 2629. In addition Spires, a monthly devotional guide, which is sent free of charge to all servicemen, they also receive free copies of the *Young Calvinist*, listing of all other Christian Reformed servicemen stationed at their particular camp, and a booklet, *Welcome, Serviceman*, issued bi-monthly and containing a listing of all Christian Reformed chaplains, service homes, and invitations from our churches or individuals located near our various military bases. Help is also given in establishing Servicemen's Clubs wherever possible.

Our biggest problem right now is still the lack of adequate office space. A committee has been appointed to study this matter further.

Once again we extend our thanks to your body for the interest and help given us, and we would ask for your continued interest and prayers. Stop in and see us sometime at 2365 Nelson Ave. S.E.!

Miss Hester Monsma, Synodical Representative

REPORT 43

CHRISTIAN REFORMED BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

The Christian Reformed board of Foreign Missions is pleased once again to submit its annual report providing Synod with a brief summary of the major field activities and experiences, and supplying the proposed budget that will be necessary for the continued mission ministry in our various fields of service. A brief statistical commentary is probably in order that all may have an appreciation of the considerable scope of work being done and the range of Gospel outreach that is being conducted. There are at the present time 128 missionaries under direct appointment, including ordained and lay workers. Of these 48 are ordained ministers; 8 doctors; 15 nurses; 30 teachers; and the remaining serve in the sustaining ministries that make it possible to keep the entire body in operation. There are at present 6 men serving in the home office 2 of whom are ordained ministers. There are 4 women serving as staff secretaries. The number of fields being served currently comes to 12. Our Board of Foreign Missions consists of 34 classical representatives plus 4 members at large, and Rev. Henry J. Evenhouse continues to serve as the executive secretary of foreign missions.

Section One

Organization and Personnel

A. Board

The board met in annual session on February 7-9, 1967, at the Brookside Christian Reformed Church. The Executive Committee met regularly on the second Thursday of each month, excepting February when the full board was in session.

The officers of the board are as follows: Rev. Henry N. Erffmeyer, president; Dr. R. O. De Groot, vice-president; Mr. Sidney De Young, treasurer, Rev. John L. Meppelink, minute clerk; Rev. Henry J. Evenhouse, executive secretary; Mr. Alvin W. Huibregtse, assistant secretary.

B. Board Members

As standing procedure we ask that Synod consider for approval the following delegates representing the various classes of our denomination:

Classis	Member	Alternate
Alberta North.....	Rev. Nicholas Beute.....	Rev. Peter Sluys
Alberta South.....	Rev. Cornelius De Bree.....	Rev. Arie Van Eek
British Columbia.....	Rev. Cecil Tuininga.....	Rev. John Boonstra
Cadillac.....	Rev. Vernon F. Geurkink.....	Rev. Bernard Fynaardt

Classis	Member	Alternate
California Central.....	Rev. Harold Petroelje.....	Rev. Louis Voskuil
California South.....	Rev. William Van Peurse.....	Rev. Fred Diemer
Chatham.....	Rev. Hilbert Vander Plaats.....	Rev. Jacob Vos
Chicago North.....	Rev. Fred Van Houten.....	Rev. John Morren
Chicago South.....	Rev. John Bylsma.....	Rev. Charles Terpstra
Eastern Ontario.....	Rev. Nicholas B. Knoppers.....	Rev. Repko W. Popma
Florida.....	Rev. Andrew R. Rienstra.....	Rev. Clarence Nyenhuis
Grand Rapids East.....	Rev. Henry N. Erffmeyer.....	
Grand Rapids South.....	Rev. Edward F. Visser.....	Dr. Richard De Mol
Grand Rapids West.....	Rev. Gerald F. Van Oyen.....	Rev. Cecil Van Dalfsen
Grandville.....	Rev. John L. Meppelink.....	Rev. Allan H. Jongsma
Hackensack.....	Rev. Paul Szto.....	Rev. Julius Vanden Hoek
Hamilton.....	Rev. Henry W. Kroeze.....	Rev. Martin D. Geleynse
Holland.....	Rev. Garrett H. Stoutmeyer.....	Rev. Dewey Hoitenga
Hudson.....	Rev. John C. Verbrugge.....	Rev. Robert W. De Vries
Illiana.....	Rev. Marvin Doornbos.....	Rev. Enno L. Haan
Kalamazoo.....	Dr. Renze O. De Groot.....	
Lake Erie.....	Rev. David Muir.....	
Minnesota North.....	Rev. Willard Van Antwerpen.....	
Minnesota South.....	Rev. Maynard Keuning.....	Rev. Walter DuBois
Muskegon.....	Rev. Jerrien Gunnink.....	Rev. Christian Vanden Heuvel
Northcentral Iowa.....	Rev. Peter Honderd.....	Rev. Albert Walma
Orange City.....	Rev. John C. Wiegiers.....	Rev. Henry Baak
Pacific Northwest.....	Rev. John A. Hoeksema.....	Rev. John Fondse
Pella.....	Rev. William Dryfhout.....	Rev. Bernard A. Van Someren
Rocky Mountain.....	Rev. Edward C. Cooke.....	Rev. Gerrit Boerfyn
Sioux Center.....	Rev. Gysbert Rozenboom.....	Rev. Richard De Ridder
Toronto.....	Rev. Henry De Moor.....	Rev. Gerard Nonnekes
Wisconsin.....	Rev. Leonard Stockmeier.....	
Zeeland.....	Rev. John Blankespoor.....	Rev. Fred Huizenga
Member-at-large.....	Mr. John Colenbrander.....	Mr. Ray Koning
Member-at-large.....	Mr. Sidney De Young.....	
Member-at-large.....	Mr. Jan S. Vander Heide.....	
Member-at-large.....	Dr. G. Arthur Mulder.....	Mr. Abe Stroo

Members-at-large. Since Dr. G. Arthur Mulder has completed his second term of service it is necessary to elect a replacement and we submit for Synod's consideration the following names: Dr. John Vroon and Dr. Bernard Veenstra.

Dr. G. Arthur Mulder served our Board with faithfulness and much profit to our cause. The suggested nominees have indicated their willingness to serve if elected by Synod.

C. Organization of the Executive Committee

In order to carry on the vast amount of work relating to mission administration the executive committee has the following committees which report monthly to the executive committee and the Board: Officers Finance, Recruiting and Personnel, Promotion; and the following area committees: Far East, Japan, Latin America, Nigeria.

D. Field Personnel

Argentina

- Rev. Raymond Brinks
- Rev. W. Thomas De Vries
- Rev. G. Bernard Dokter
- Rev. Edward Meyer

- Dr. Sidney Rooy
- Rev. Arnold Rumph
- Mr. Louis Wagenveld

- Australia**
Rev. Gerard Van Groningen
- Brazil**
Rev. William V. Muller
- Ceylon**
Rev. John Van Ens
- Cuba**
Cuban Pastors
- Guam**
Rev. Henry Dykema
Mr. Jay Poel
- Japan**
Rev. Henry Bruinooge
Rev. Michiel De Berdt
Mr. Martin Essenburg
Rev. Gerrit Koedoot
Rev. William La Fleur
Dr. Harvey Smit
Rev. William Stob
Rev. Richard Sytsma
Mr. Harold Terpstra
Rev. John Timmer
Rev. Edward Van Baak
Rev. Maas Vander Bilt
- Korea**
Dr. Peter Boelens
- Mexico**
Rev. Roger Greenway
Mr. Abe Marcus
Rev. Gerald Nyenhuis
Rev. J. Jerry Potts
Rev. J. Larry Roberts
Rev. Robert Ruis
Rev. Chester Schemper
Rev. Hans Weerstra
- Nigeria**
Mr. LeRoy Baas
Rev. Ralph Baker
Miss Laura Beelen
Mr. Harold Bergsma
Mr. Albert Bierling
Dr. Harry Boer
Rev. John Boer
Mr. Reanard Bouma
Mr. Donald Branderhorst
Mr. Norman Brouwer
Mr. Raymond Browneye
Mr. Gordon Buys
Miss Nancy Chapel
Mr. Ralph Cok
Miss Cloe Ann Danford
Rev. Harold De Groot
Miss Jessie De Jong
Miss Neva De Vries
Mr. Richard De Vries
Miss Emily Duyst
Miss Margaret Dykstra
Mr. William Evenhouse
Mr. Fred Feikema
Mr. Allen Flietstra
Miss Marjorie Franz
Miss Nancy Friend
Miss Geraldine Geleyne
Dr. Herman Gray
Dr. G. Paul Groen
Mr. Terry Hammink*
Rev. Gilbert Holkeboer
Miss Angie Hoolsema
Rev. Peter Ipema
Mr. Charles Jansen
Miss Frances Karnemaat
Rev. Harvey Kiekover
Dr. Stuart Kingma
Miss Bena Kok
Dr. Suzanne Kok
Miss Margaret Kooiman
Mr. Gordon Kooistra
Mr. Robert Koops
Mr. Cornelius Korhorn
Mr. Paul Kortenhoven
Mr. Johannes Kotze
Miss Carolyn Kredit
Mr. Gordon Kuik
Mr. Gordon Kuipers
Mr. William Lemcke
Mr. Bauke Lodewyk
Miss Mae Mast
Mr. Harry Meyer
Rev. Timothy Monsma
Miss Rachel Moolman
Mr. Harold Padding
Rev. Cornelius Persenaire
Dr. Keith Plate
Miss Lois Pothoven
Rev. Eugene Rubingh
Mr. Herman Scholten
Mr. George Schutt
Dr. Henry Smit
Rev. and Mrs. Edgar H. Smith
Rev. George Spee
Dr. Edward Stehouwer
Miss Dorothy Sytsma
Rev. Gerard Terpstra
Miss M. A. Thirion
Miss Jean Van Beek
Miss Geraldine Vanden Berg
Rev. Harry Vanderaa
Mr. Gordon Vander Bie
Miss Ruth Vander Meulen
Mr. Dick Vander Steen
Miss Frances Vander Zwaag
Rev. Lester Van Essen
Miss Gertrude Van Haitsma
Mr. Avert Vannette
Miss Martina Van Staalduinen
Mr. Gerrit Van Vugt

Mr. Henry Visser
 Mr. Thomas Visser
 Miss Anita Vissia
 Miss Evelyn Vredevoogd
 Miss Anna Wybenga
 Nigeria (continued)
 Nigeria (continued)

Philippine Islands
 Mr. Vicente Apostol

Rev. Barry B. Blankers

Taiwan
 Miss Winabelle Gritter
 Rev. Isaac I. C. Jen
 Rev. William Koston
 Rev. Peter Tong
 Rev. Mike Vander Pol

*short term

CALLING AND/OR SUPPORTING CHURCHES BY CLASSES

Alberta South
 Calgary I, Alta.
 Classis Alberta South
 Granum, Alta.
 Nobleford, Alta.

Cadillac
 Cadillac, Mich.
 Prosper, Falmouth, Mich.
 Lucas, Mich.
 Rudyard, Mich. SS
 Vogel Center, Mich.

California South
 Artesia I, Cal.
 Bellflower I, Cal.
 Bellflower III, Cal.
 Ontario, Cal.
 Redlands I, Cal.

Central California
 Hanford, Cal.
 Ripon I, Cal.

Chatham
 Rehoboth, Sarnia, Ont.

Chicago North
 Ebenezer, Berwyn, Ill.
 Cicero I, Ill.
 Morrison, Ill. SS
 Oak Lawn I, Ill.
 Calvin, Oak Lawn, Ill.
 Kedvale, Oak Lawn, Ill.
 Western Springs, Ill.

Chicago South
 Roseland I, Ill.
 Roseland II, Ill.
 Roseland III, Ill.
 De Motte, Ind.
 Evergreen Park, Ill.
 Park Lane, Evergreen Park, Ill.
 Highland II, Ind.
 Bethel, Lansing, Ill.
 Oak Glen, Lansing, Ill.
 Palos Heights, Ill.
 Munster, Ind.
 South Holland I, Ill.

Bethany, South Holland, Ill.
 Cottage Grove, South Holland, Ill.
 Peace, South Holland, Ill.

Eastern Ontario
 Rehoboth, Bowmanville, Ont.
 Calvin, Ottawa, Ont.

Grand Rapids East
 Dutton, Mich.
 Boston Square, Grand Rapids
 Brookside, Grand Rapids
 Calvin, Grand Rapids
 Eastern Avenue, Grand Rapids
 East Paris, Grand Rapids
 Faith, Grand Rapids
 First, Grand Rapids
 Fuller, Grand Rapids
 Mayfair, Grand Rapids, SS
 Millbrook, Grand Rapids
 Neland Avenue, Grand Rapids
 Plymouth Heights, Grand Rapids
 Princeton, Grand Rapids
 Seymour, Grand Rapids
 Shawnee Park, Grand Rapids
 Shawnee Park, Grand Rapids SS
 Sherman St., Grand Rapids
 Sherman St., Grand Rapids SS

Grand Rapids South
 Cutlerville I, Mich.
 Covenant, Cutlerville, Mich.
 East, Cutlerville, Mich.
 Alger Park, Grand Rapids
 Bethel, Grand Rapids
 Burton Heights, Grand Rapids
 Burton Heights, Grand Rapids, SS
 Godwin Heights, Grand Rapids
 Grandville Ave., Grand Rapids
 Kelloggsville, Grand Rapids
 Lagrave Ave., Grand Rapids
 Moline, Mich.

Grand Rapids West
 Coopersville, Mich.
 Alpine Ave., Grand Rapids
 Arcadia, Grand Rapids
 Beckwith Hills, Grand Rapids
 East Leonard, Grand Rapids
 Riverside, Grand Rapids

Westview, Grand Rapids
Lamont, Mich.

Grandville

Byron Center I, Mich.
Hope, Grandville, Mich.
South, Grandville, Mich.
Beverly, Wyoming, Mich.
Calvary, Wyoming, Mich.
Lee St., Wyoming, Mich.
Lee St., Wyoming, Mich. SS
Rogers Heights, Wyoming, Mich.
Wyoming Park, Wyoming, Mich.
Trinity, Jenison, Mich.
12th Ave., Jenison, Mich.

Hackensack

Richfield, Clifton, N.J.
Lodi, N.J.
Newton, N.J.
Bethel, Paterson, N.J. SS
Pompton Plains, N.J. SS

Holland

East Saugatuck, Mich.
Graafschap, Mich.
Hamilton, Mich.
Harderwyk, Mich.
Bethany, Holland, Mich.
Calvin, Holland, Mich.
Central Ave., Holland, Mich.
Faith, Holland, Mich.
14th St., Holland, Mich.
Holland Heights, Holland, Mich.
Maple Ave., Holland, Mich.
Montello Park, Holland, Mich.
Ninth St., Holland, Mich.
Pine Creek, Holland, Mich.
Prospect Park, Holland, Mich.
Niekerk, Mich.
South Olive, Mich.

Hudson

Midland Park, N.J.
Irving Park, Midland Park, N.J.
Ridgewood, N.J.
Rochester, N.Y.
Pleasant St., Whitinsville, Mass.
Calvin, Wyckoff, N.J.

Kalamazoo

Battle Creek, Mich.
Kalamazoo I, Mich.
Kalamazoo III, Mich.
Prairie Edge, Kalamazoo, Mich.

Lake Erie

Ann Arbor, Mich.
Dearborn, Mich. SS
Lansing, Mich.
Willard, Ohio

Minnesota North

Bunde, Minn.
Prinsburg, Minn.
Emden, Renville, Minn.

Minnesota South

Chandler, Minn.
Edgerton I, Minn.
Leota, Minn.
Volga, S.D.

Muskegon

Ferrysburg, Mich.
Fremont I, Mich. SS
Fremont II, Mich.
Trinity, Fremont, Mich.
Grand Haven I, Mich., SS
Allen Ave., Muskegon, Mich.
Bethany, Muskegon, Mich.
East Muskegon, Muskegon, Mich.
Green Ridge, Muskegon, Mich. SS
New Era, Mich. SS
Reeman, Mich.
Spring Lake, Mich.
Spring Lake, Mich. SS

Northcentral Iowa

Kanawha, Iowa
Wellsburg I, Iowa
Woden, Iowa

Orange City

Bigelow, Minn.
Ireton, Iowa
Ocheyedan, Iowa
Orange City I, Iowa
Orange City II, Iowa
Sheldon, Iowa
Worthington, Minn.

Pacific Northwest

Bozeman, Mont.
Everett, Wash.
Bethel, Lynden, Wash.
Lynden II, Wash.
Lynden III, Wash.
Manhattan I, Mont.
Bethel, Manhattan, Mont.

Pella

Pella I, Iowa
Pella II, Iowa
Calvary, Pella, Iowa

Rocky Mountain

Denver I, Colo.
Denver II, Colo.
Trinity, Denver, Colo.

Sioux Center

Holland Center, S.D.
 Hull I, Iowa
 Hope, Hull, Iowa
 Rock Valley I, Iowa
 Calvin, Rock Valley, Iowa
 Bethel, Sioux Center, Iowa SS

Wisconsin

Birnamwood, Wis.
 Delavan, Wis.
 Kenosha, Wis.
 Milwaukee, Wis.
 Calvin, Sheboygan, Wis. SS
 Waupun, Wis.

Zeeland

Allendale I, Mich.
 Allendale II, Mich.
 Borculo, Mich.
 Drenthe, Mich.
 Hudsonville I, Mich.
 Hillcrest, Hudsonville, Mich.
 Immanuel, Hudsonville, Mich.
 Overisel, Mich.
 Zeeland I, Mich. SS
 Zeeland III, Mich.
 Bethel, Zeeland, Mich.
 Zutphen, Mich.

E. Representation at Synod

The board respectfully requests that Rev. Henry N. Erffmeyer, the chairman of the board; Mr. Sidney De Young, treasurer of the board; and the executive secretary, Rev. Henry J. Evenhouse, be permitted to represent the board on all matters relating to foreign missions.

Section Two**General Matters***A. Recruitment and Orientation Program*

1. The Synod of last year authorized a new program of recruitment and orientation and consented to the appointment of someone to serve with specific responsibilities relating to this phase of our foreign mission work. We are grateful to have been able to have the services of the Rev. Robert Recker on a half time basis, sharing him with Calvin Seminary where he has been serving as interim professor of Missions. Although only half time service was available we can report that the matter of recruitment and specific contact with candidates for service gives promise for much good. Especially the immediate contact between our office and the student body of Calvin Seminary served to keep the prospective seminary graduates in close contact with our work. The matter of candidate orientation has been under study for particular implementation but this still calls for considerable more reflection and discussion. However, we may say that all new personnel entering into our work have been given careful commentary concerning their new role as missionaries, and have been provided with important reading material to prepare them for their missionary careers.

Since the Rev. Recker's services will still be needed at Calvin Seminary in the forthcoming year it was decided to appoint him for one more year on the same basis as this past year, allowing him to divide his time equally between Calvin Seminary and our Board of Foreign Missions. We ask that Synod indicate its approval of this arrangement.

2. In view of the fact that the appointee designated to serve as secretary of recruitment and orientation is to be an ordained man, Synod instructed us to incorporate his role and position into its proper place in

our Mission Order. With this in mind the board recommends to Synod that the following addition be made to our Mission Order:

Art. V, Section 11. The Secretary of Recruitment and Orientation is to be an ordained man appointed by Synod. His work shall be in the area of recruitment and orientation of missionary personnel. (See Acts of Synod 1966, Art. 100, I). He shall be responsible to the Executive Secretary in carrying out his work.

B. Missionary Expansion

During the past few years there has been a program of planned re-trenchment of missions with reference to especially the areas of foreign missions in which we have had pastors loaned to Reformed Church bodies. Last year we reported that our work in New Zealand had, as far as missionary personnel was concerned, been discontinued. We also indicated that when the Rev. John Van Ens would conclude his current term of service in Ceylon we would not replace him with another Christian Reformed Church missionary. Our former staff of four missionaries to Australia has now been reduced to one, with the Rev. Gerard Van Groningen serving as professor at the Geelong Theological College. With reference to Brazil we find ourselves in somewhat a similar situation since the Rev. William Muller will be closing his missionary career this year, and we are not planning to replace him with another missionary to work in conjunction with the Reformed Church of Brazil.

All this withdrawal of personnel and the decisions not to replace them is in a genuine sense progress. It speaks of the fulfillment of original intention to provide for a limited number of years pastors on loan to newly developing Reformed churches. The time has come to consider this arrangement as having been completed, and the national churches in the respective areas have risen to the strength and maturity making our continued supply of personnel unnecessary. We may therefore consider the withdrawal of men as token of "mission accomplished."

However, this does not mean that there are not further fields to be considered. The closing of some fields, the large supply of seminary students and interested aspirants for missions, and the sustained generosity of our people towards missions as evident by their giving, leads the board to believe that the Holy Spirit is calling us to think of new areas for work and challenging our church to extend its stakes.

With this in mind the board is making careful study of new fields to be served. By counsel from our various mission conferences, by official correspondence with mission leadership of other missions and churches, and by study on the part of our several board areas committees we are hoping to come to some clarity as to new fields to be opened.

We may mention that expansion of our work in Mexico and Japan and Taiwan is in evidence. It is quite likely that the Philippines will call for further increase in staff. However, new areas for work are under study by the board and commentary concerning these will appear later in this report.

C. Dentistry in Missions

For several years Christian Reformed dentists have given short term service to our Nigerian missions in behalf of our mission staff and the

Nigerian people who might be served within the brackets of time available. This ministry was occasioned to meet the needs of our missionaries and their families who during the terms of service were often unable to secure the dental care needed. However, this restricted service raised the question whether dentistry should not enter as a more permanent and steady missionary provision on the field, meeting the needs not only of expatriate but serving also as a ministry for Nigerians with the goal of being a specific avenue of Christian witness. This led to the decision of Synod at its 1966 session to instruct our Board of Foreign Missions to make a study of the role of dentistry in missions, particularly to indicate whether dentistry as such should be an integral part of missionary service. With this in mind a board committee was appointed and a report made to our board at its last session. We present to Synod the report of our committee which was adopted by the board and is forwarded to Synod with recommendation that it be approved, and that the projected role of dentistry be recognized as being a legitimate phase of foreign missions. It should be observed that the reference of the report is general whereas the recommendations focus primarily on Nigeria. This was done because general principle had to be established first, and the application would relate only to the field in which we have a medical ministry at the present time.

"Place of Dental Care in Our Foreign Mission Program. Acts of Synod 1966, Art. 100, II, B, 3, page 74.

I. THE LEGITIMACY OF DENTISTRY IN MISSIONS

The mandate of Synod specifies that a study be made of the proper place of dental care in missions. Already in 1950 Synod appointed a special study committee "to formulate the principles of indigenous mission work based on a thorough exegetical study of all relevant Scripture passages; and in the light of our distinctively Reformed doctrines of church, covenant, etc." and "to formulate the regulations governing the applications of such principles to the church and her board; the church and her missionaries; the church and her duties to the native population; with special reference to finances, educational institutions, and medical work on the mission fields, and the church and her obligations to the native converts. . . ." (Acts of Synod 1950, pages 79-80). In 1952 this special study committee on mission principles reported to Synod and set forth the Biblical basis and the legitimacy of medical work in missions (cf. Acts of Synod 1952, pages 203-207). In the light of these principles we recommend that the board of Foreign Missions reply to Synod that dentistry is a legitimate phase of medical outreach in missions.

Grounds:

1. Synod has declared that medical work may play a legitimate role in the work of missions. Medical missions is defined as "the use of medical knowledge and skills in Christ's name for alleviating sufferings in the mission area to promote the Gospel" (Acts of Synod 1953, page 86). Dentistry is using medical knowledge and skills to alleviate suffering.

2. Synod has declared that the Biblical basis for medical missions is "to

be found not in a specific injunction, but in what may be inferred from the Bible on the score of mercy and compassion as peculiar properties of Christ's ambassadors" (Acts of Synod 1953, page 86). Dentistry is a concrete manifestation of the law of love as commanded by Christ.

3. A greater evangelistic outreach can be realized by the presence of the dentist meeting the needs of the total person in the name of Jesus Christ.

4. Historically the witness of the church has not been confined to the preaching of the Word. The church has addressed itself to the whole man in all his needs. Thus the church has initiated agencies for mercy such as medical work, agencies for social advance such as classes in child care, family care, hygiene, etc., and agencies for economic betterment such as the agriculture program. In this context, dentistry also finds a place.

II. DENTISTRY IN NIGERIA

We recommend that the board of Foreign Missions provide a dental program in Nigeria as a part of our mission outreach.

Grounds:

1. The Nigeria General Conference has requested a full time dentist (NGC 5356).

2. A spiritual witness can be given to a large number of people through such a ministry.

3. There are no dental facilities for Nigerians in our area of work.

4. The Nigerians have responded favorably to the limited short-term dental service provided in the dental clinic.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE FACTORS

A. *Qualifications.* The approach of our mission is one of coordination and cooperation of the various mission agencies in order to accomplish one end namely, confronting men with the claims of Christ. Dentistry must fit into this pattern. The dentist must be fully committed to being first of all a witness for Jesus Christ and motivated to present the claims of Christ to his patients. The dentist should engage in language study to be an effective witness.

B. *Jurisdiction.* The dentist will be in the employ and under the jurisdiction of the board of Foreign Missions. The same relationship that presently exists between the medical doctors, teachers, etc., and the board will obtain for the dentist.

C. Recommendations:

1. We recommend that the board of Foreign Missions seek to implement this dental program in Nigeria with the assistance of the Luke Society in the procurement of personnel and finances for supplies and equipment.

2. It was decided that the administration of the dental program be referred to Nigeria General Conference for study and recommendation.

3. We recommend that the budgetary needs of this program be incorporated in the annual Foreign Mission budget to Synod.

D. Medical Health Officer

Dr. Richard De Mol has for many years served our board as medical examiner for all missionary candidates and for missionaries home on furlough. At the same time Dr. Henry Kreulen served as medical advisor, interpreting all medical reports and advising concerning them. Both these medical doctors served our board with fine satisfaction and with great interest in our work. During this past year it was decided to combine these two functions, and Dr. Arthur De Boer, formerly a medical missionary to Nigeria, has been asked to serve us in this way. He has accepted the assignment and he also, besides attending to physical examinations and advising on medical reports, keeps close touch with the medical personnel on the Nigerian field so that he may always have close supervision over all the medical concerns relating to our board. Dr. De Boer has his office in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Section Three

Far East

Australia

Ten years ago the Christian Reformed Church sent Rev. G. Van Groningen to aid the Reformed Church of Australia in its mission outreach and preparation of ministers. This was in response to a request from the young Reformed denomination in that country for several men to serve a five-year term. Three other men have completed such a five-year term with distinction and have returned to the United States. After his first five-year period of service Rev. Van Groningen returned for a second term of service in the Geelong Theological College. It is expected that he will return to this country for a short furlough during the summer and then will return to Australia and conclude his work in 1970.

For a time consideration was also given to returning other men for a second term of service. However, after a thorough study it was decided to provide a subsidy for support of some of their young ministers who are ready to assume a pastorate. The denomination is only 15 years old and the congregations are small. In proportion to their size the churches are contributing generously but it is difficult to completely maintain a pastor. This subsidy will be given on a decreasing schedule over a five year period, in lieu of returning men for further service.

Assistance has also been given to students who need financial aid while studying in the Geelong Theological College. A total of \$7200.00 was budgeted for this cause, but it is likely that not all of this will be needed. The board approved sending the entire amount to Australia in 1967, the balance to be used for their evangelistic training program.

Ceylon

When the Rev. John Van Ens returns to the United States at the close of 1967 the Christian Reformed Church will conclude its official aid to the Dutch Reformed Church of Ceylon which was begun in 1948 when the Rev. John O. Schuring went to Ceylon to serve on a loan basis, just as our missionaries were sent to South America.

Twenty years ago it evidently was not planned that the period of service would extend to 1967. In correspondence the Dutch Reformed Church made this statement: "The Consistory will meet the full cost of the passages of Rev. and Mrs.— to Ceylon and back, if they stay five years. Should the period of stay be shorter, the consistory bears only a proportionate share of the travel expenses. The committee feels that the consistory cannot in the present state of its finances, promise to pay even a part of the travelling expenses of the children."

The following ministers have served in Ceylon during this period: Rev. J. O. Schuring, Rev. C. Van Ens, Rev. J. Van Ens, Rev. R. De Ridder and Rev. R. Greenway. Sincere expressions of appreciation have been received from the General Consistory of the Reformed Church of Ceylon, and we believe the men who have served on the island have contributed to the revitalizing of the church and its mission on the island of Ceylon.

Guam

Your missionaries in Guam have made great strides forward since Synod met a year ago. An important achievement on the island was the completion of the chapel. On December 11 the first meeting was held in the building for the purpose of dedicating it to the service of God. A notable fact is that this chapel will eventually be completely paid for by the income from the bookstore and the offerings on Sunday. This indicates the great interest of those who attend and their willingness to assume responsibility also.

The church activities consist of two worship services on Sunday, Sunday School, a mid-week Bible Class, catechetical instruction on Saturday, and a Youth Fellowship every other Friday. The radio ministry continues to be a very effective arm of our outreach to the surrounding islands.

Although many people leave Guam for other places, your missionaries also have the joy of welcoming new faces to their worship services and midweek activities. Those who attend are Filipino members, Trust Territory students, and Statesiders.

Korea

At the time of this report the Board of Foreign Missions has no missionary in Korea. Dr. Peter Boelens has just returned for furlough and during an extended leave of absence will take up further residence work in a hospital in Minneapolis. The services of Dr. Boelens for two terms are gratefully appreciated. He gave unstintingly of his time and strength not only to give medical aid in destitute areas but he was equally interested in bringing the Gospel. Much of his work was concentrated in areas where there was neither medical care nor Christian witness. Under the blessings of the Spirit he was used to organize a number of groups who met faithfully to hear the Word proclaimed, for study and prayer, and are now congregations of the Hapdong Presbyterian Church of Korea.

The board is seeking an ordained man who can be sent to Korea according to the decision of the board in 1965 to send "someone who can

be a missionary but also be ready to teach in the seminary of the Hapdong Church." Thus far no one has accepted a call to fulfil this assignment.

The Philippine Islands

The important development in the work on the Philippine Islands was the arrival of Rev. and Mrs. Barry Blankers to take up their work in fellowship with Mr. and Mrs. Vicente Apostol. Of immediate concern is the study of the language which will occupy most of their time and effort during the next year or two.

Mr. and Mrs. Apostol have been invited to return to the United States for a visit and possibly some deputation work during the summer of 1967. They are graduates of the Reformed Bible Institute, and while in Grand Rapids were members of the Faith Christian Reformed Church. This congregation has continued her deep interest in the Apostols and is also financing the short furlough visit to the United States.

Several years ago when the Philippines were approved as a new mission field of the church, the Synod approved two ordained men for this field. (Acts, 1962, p. 38) Due to financial restrictions only one man was called. The board has now decided that finances are available for two men and therefore has decided to proceed with the calling of another ordained man. There are yet many unreached areas and such possibilities will be investigated thoroughly.

Taiwan

During 1966 the staff in Taiwan was increased by two ordained men. Both Rev. M. Vander Pol and Rev. Peter Tong began their missionary service in the area of Taipei. Rev. Vander Pol will spend the usual time in language study, but Rev. Tong knows the Mandarin language so he was able to enter immediately into the work. Our staff in Taiwan now consists of Rev. and Mrs. Isaac Jen, Rev. and Mrs. William Kosten, Rev. and Mrs. Peter Tong, Rev. and Mrs. Mike Vander Pol, and Miss Winabelle Gritter. The work is varied in nature—chapel work and local evangelism, radio programs, and teaching in the Calvin United Theological College.

As reported last year, Miss Lillian Bode concluded her mission service at the close of 1966. She is one of the veteran missionaries of the Christian Reformed Church, having begun her missionary service in China in 1926. When the work in China was disrupted by the political situation she was repatriated with others and taught for several years in the Zuni school. However, since the greater part of the last 40 years have been spent in the Orient, Miss Bode desired to remain in Taiwan after her retirement. She is still giving some part time assistance to the work in Taiwan, although officially retired.

Miss Bode has been a zealous missionary, eager to bring the Gospel to those who had not heard the Word. Her interest in people and her concern for their salvation enabled her to speak easily with people, and many heard the Word through her efforts. As a result worship centers sprang up and regular meetings were held. As she now lays aside her work, having passed the normal retirement age, the board and the church

must indeed pause to recognize all that Miss Bode has done, and praise God for her work in the Orient.

For several years the missionaries of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and our missionaries have studied the possibility of establishing a united seminary in Taiwan. Numerous meetings were held and such progress was made that the Calvin United Theological College is now a reality. In addition to the two churches mentioned, the Reformed Church of New Zealand and the Korea Presbyterian Mission will join in this venture. A three-year curriculum has been set up and the teaching load has been distributed among the missionaries. Classes are held in a building owned by the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Hsin-chu. Although the initial enrollment is small, we believe this seminary will develop into a strong seminary for the orthodox faith in Taiwan.

During the year the Taiwan missionaries requested the board to send a business manager to Taiwan. Grounds for such a request were that with the expansion of the work, the burden of financial and secretarial matters are becoming too great to be handled by the missionaries on a part time basis. The board, after serious study, decided that the scope of the work in Taiwan does not warrant the appointment of a full-time business manager and instructed the missionaries to divide the work as they are doing at the present time.

The Reformed and Presbyterian Council of Taiwan met regularly during the year to carry on business of mutual concern. Some of the items of business were: printing of a new Psalter-Hymnal, Theological College matters, summer conferences, meetings of Chinese workers of council chapels, relief work, questions of sending students abroad for theological training, ecclesiastic matters.

In response to a request of the Taiwan General Conference, the board decided to seek an additional ordained man in 1968. This has been included in the 1968 budget as submitted.

Section Four

Japan

Japan is a nation of approximately 100,000,000 people, living on islands that are mainly rugged and mountainous. Because of the concern for food Japan has been historically an agricultural nation, but during the last twenty years it has developed into an industrial and economic power. Today there is a vast movement to the cities and employment in business and industry. In order to provide housing for this rapid change the government has taken the lead in developing suburban areas, called a danchi.

Surveys have indicated that in Japan today about 65 percent of the people claim no religious affiliation of any kind, and less than 1 percent of the people are Christian. In fact, about 50 million Japanese could not find a Christian church in their area if they should seek one.

Since 1951 your missionaries have been working in this country with its rapidly changing cultural and economic patterns. The work is carried on in conjunction with the Reformed Church of Japan, a small but

faithful and energetic denomination which was organized after World War II. In recent years our work has focussed in the new danchi areas, and the Lord has blessed the witness of your missionaries so that great interest has been shown and small congregations have been organized. In many of these danchies our mission is the only Christian witness. One of our missionaries reported that it is possible to reach 45,000 people within a fifteen minute walk of the location of the chapel.

For the reasons stated above the board has approved this challenging work of locating in a new danchi in order to reach as many people as possible. Although property costs in these areas are greater, the number of people reached is so great, that the proportionate cost is far lower than in other less densely populated areas. Thus our evangelistic outreach is enlarged.

The Lord has richly blessed our witness in Japan. Beginning with two ordained men in 1951, the staff has increased to ten ordained men, one ordained man on call, and two teachers in the Japan Christian Academy. Because opportunities abound the board at its annual meeting in February decided to approve three additional ordained men in the next two or three years, as men become available and finances allow.

The new radio project, approved by the Synod of 1966, was begun on January 9, 1967, with a ten-minute broadcast over Radio Tokyo, the most powerful and popular station in Tokyo with a coverage of 150 miles and a potential listening audience of 30 million. The radio program, under the title "A Word for Today" is on the air from 6:10 to 6:20 Monday through Saturday. This is a favorable time in Japan since most people are up and preparing for the day's work and very likely are listening to the radio. The average Japanese family devotes about 5 hours per day to the radio, television, newspapers, films and magazines.

The radio program begins each morning with theme music from Bach's "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring," and is followed by a hymn tune. Then follows a brief 2½ minute message—terse, to-the-point, challenging—urging the listener to begin the day with God's Word. This is followed by another hymn tune and the program is concluded with "God's Word for Today," a Scripture memory verse. A New Testament is offered to those who respond, supplied by the World Home Bible League, and in the future a Bible Correspondence Course will be offered. The first seven days' response was very encouraging and the mail brought in over 150 cards and letters.

A new opportunity for service has arisen in another area of Japan. One of the pastors of the Reformed Church in Takahara City has initiated a project of rehabilitation of handicapped people. This pastor is crippled by an arrested case of muscular dystrophy and has become intensely interested in helping others who are handicapped. His program is closely integrated with a clear witness in the name of Christ. He has already given assistance to 67 individuals and as his work becomes known he has many other requests for help. However, larger quarters are needed if he is to expand his work. The board endorsed this project, at the recommendation of Japan General Conference and the Reformed Church

of Japan, and is seeking the support of the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee for this project.

Section Five

Latin America

A. Argentina

Our missionary staff assigned to Argentina now number seven missionary families, five of whom are in Argentina, and two of whom are still engaged in language studies. One more minister is to be called to join the Argentina mission staff during the course of this year. Our missionaries serve in close association with the Reformed Church of Argentina (Iglesias Reformadas de la Argentina). This small denomination has its roots in the Holland immigrant settlements that started early in this century. Thanks be to God these Hollanders brought with them from the Netherlands their Reformed faith and their desire for continuing church life. The entire denomination numbers about 2,000 members and consists of five established congregations. Both the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands (De Gereformeerde Kerken) and the Christian Reformed Church have sent ministers and missionaries to work in Argentina. In both instances the work is conducted in direct association with the established Argentine Reformed Church. The representatives of the Netherlands' churches serve largely in the Buenos Aires area, whereas those of the Christian Reformed Church are serving in the church and mission centers south of Buenos Aires.

As the membership of the Reformed Church of Argentina became more and more Argentine in interest and concern, and the cultural and language ties with the Netherlands decreased there has been a decided increase in missionary interest directed towards the nationals of the land. Our missionaries serving in Argentina are seeking, in their cooperation with the established church, to give accent to this phase of the church life, and are serving to help the church become a vital and worthy part of the Argentine world.

Tres Arroyos. This city has a population of about 40,000. The Rev. J. VanderVelde is the resident pastor of the local Reformed Church and the Rev. Edward Meyer of the Christian Reformed Church is serving as the local missionary, having the use of a well built chapel as the center of his activities. The Lord has richly blessed his work. Through regular worship services and through catechism and Sunday school work and through personal evangelism many are being led to the Lord. Recently two of the young men attending his chapel have commenced their studies for the Gospel ministry.

Mar del Plata. For seven years the Rev. Angus MacLeod served in this city as local pastor and missionary. Through his labors a new missionary center was established in La Juanita, a community immediately adjacent to Mar del Plata. During this past year Rev. MacLeod terminated his missionary service returning to a local pastorate in the United States. The Rev. Bernard Dokter now serves in this place seeking to

gather believers and to establish the church. Through visiting and personal witnessing and through Bible training programs he is working to gather in adult and young to become part of the body of Christ.

Comodoro Rivadavia. This city of 60,000 people is located about 1,000 miles south of Mar del Plata. A small congregation has been located in this city for a long time but recently during a period of being without a resident pastor, the group dropped their congregational status and once again became a mission station. However, with the coming of the Rev. Dr. Sidney Rooy there has been a renewed spiritual life, and once again the believers are organized as a congregation. A church building located in the heart of the city means that contact with the entire community is available to our missionary, and every effort is being made to make the entire city keenly conscious of the presence of this witness for Christ and for the Reformed faith.

Sarmiento. The Rev. Thomas De Vries has served in this outlying city for what is now his third term. A well established and organized congregation is being served. During his residence there a fine church building and parsonage have been erected. The community is growing and with it the outreach of the church. As young men come forward prepared to serve as pastors to the local congregation the Rev. De Vries will turn his attentions toward direct missionary service, although his present work is also largely a missionary service as well as pastoral.

Tandil. The Rev. Raymond Brinks serves in Tandil. A fine church building has been erected, and by means of radio, local press and extensive personal work the Gospel message is being brought to the 50,000 residents of the city. Although not yet organized as a church the work in Tandil is fast coming to this point. Here also it is expected that a son of the denomination may soon take over as local pastor, leaving Rev. Brink to move to a new location for a new beginning.

At the time of this writing Rev. Arnold Rumph is attending language school in Costa Rica. He will, after approximately one year of language study, leave Costa Rica to enter into his work in Argentina. Mr. Louis Wagenveld, a recent graduate of Calvin Seminary, will also soon commence his language study in Costa Rica with a view to missionary service in Argentina.

The need for theological training of young men has led the Reformed Church of Argentina to ask Rev. H. W. van Halsema of the Netherlands to serve as professor of theology, and it is expected that the Rev. Dr. S. Rooy, now serving in Comodoro Rivadavia, will join him in this program of theological education. Presently the theological program in behalf of the Reformed Church of Argentina is conducted in conjunction with the interchurch theological seminary in Buenos Aires. During the course of this next year there will probably be five young men of the Reformed Church of Argentina available as candidates for the ministry. As these young men enter the pulpits our Christian Reformed Church men will be free for further missionary outreach.

B. Brazil

Rev. and Mrs. William Muller have been the single missionary family

of our church serving in Brazil. They have worked there since 1934 and will conclude their final term of service at the end of June this year. During this final year of missionary service time and energy have largely gone into the development and direction of the Instituto Cristao, a training school for youth. It serves the Reformed Church of Brazil for its own youth and as an agency for missionary service as well. During the course of the past year a few new teachers have come from the Netherlands to assist in the work, which explains why it will not be necessary to replace the Rev. Muller with someone from the Christian Reformed Church for the work that Rev. Muller is now doing.

Brazil, nevertheless, continues in the spot light of attention for our Board of Foreign Missions. The established Reformed Church is relatively small and pretty well situated in the southern part of the land. But Brazil is an immense country with a population of some fifty million which is growing rapidly, keeping pace with the recognized population growth of Latin America. Besides, it is a well known fact that the opportunity for evangelism is open to Protestant churches and that Brazil is one of the places in the world where the Christian faith is taking hold in a remarkable way. For this reason the Board of Foreign Missions has called on the experience of Rev. Muller to seek new areas of work in that land, and has asked him to consult with missionary leadership in other church bodies to learn where the fields are open and the doors of opportunity can be entered. The secretary of the board has been called upon to visit with the Rev. Muller in the hope that by the time Synod meets a specific recommendation on location and type of work to be done might be ready for Synod.

With reference to new work in Brazil we received earlier word from Rev. Muller reiterating the great need for men to meet the challenge of Brazil. It was decided by the Board to retain Brazil as a field for active missionary outreach.

Grounds:

1. There is a large unevangelized population in Brazil.
2. The doors are open to mission expansion in Brazil.
3. The Christian Reformed Church has carried on work in Brazil.

In view of the above our Board requests Synod to authorize the calling of an additional man for Brazil. It is understood that a replacement for Rev. Muller would also be called. Both then would be assigned to an initial period of language study and the task of pioneering new territory for mission outreach.

C. Cuba

We continue to have a measure of contact with the Cuban Christians who remain as part of the mission-church fellowship with which we worked when Cuba was a free country. The Gospel work still is being carried on through the few missionary workers, all Cubans, who continue to the remain at their posts. The work is hard and discouraging because of the hostile attitude of the government and the sense of spiritual isolation and the spiritual loneliness that exists. During the past

year the leader of the Cuban work, Mr. Ramon Borrego, came to the USA by way of Spain. He and his family felt it necessary to flee Cuba, and they came to the USA from Spain through the assistance of our board. They are expecting to remain in the USA for the present, and will in all likelihood enter the service of our board of Home Missions as missionaries to other Cubans who have come to this country.

Since no personal contact can be maintained between the Cuban workers and our board, and since the lot of the Christians in Cuba remains so difficult, we trust this land and the work in that country will be particularly remembered in the prayers of our people.

D. *Mexico*

Our Mexico mission is relatively new but it is wonderfully active with diverse ministries reaching out to many people and demonstrating the power of God's Word and the progress of the Gospel. We may speak of at least four specific yet diverse types of ministry—the teaching program in the seminary and Bible school; the literature outreach through the bookstores and the growing tract and book ministry; the evangelization program through the visiting outreach to many villages; and, a ministry through the "Mexico Boat Mission." We may also speak of the varied communities of people among whom work is done. Our missionaries are active among the general Mexican public and the Masawa and the Maya Indians.

At the present time five of our missionary families are located in Coyoacan in the vicinity of Mexico City. All of these are directly associated with the seminary or Bible school teaching program while also conducting either a special service in literature or evangelization. One of our missionary families, Rev. and Mrs. Hans Weerstra, is located far to the south of Mexico City in the Yucatan and have their home in Merida, in the heart of the Maya Indian country. Another missionary family, Rev. and Mrs. Robert Ruis, are situated in Southern California, and Rev. Ruis supervises the mission activities being conducted in Tijuana where Mr. Isaias Bernáldez serves as evangelist, and is himself primarily engaged in Tecate.

It is good to observe the keen interest of our churches in Southern California in this particular area of our Mexico mission.

The seminary and Bible school have an enrollment of about 37 students and on July 7, 1966, the seminary had its first graduating class, enabling five men to become available to the church for the Gospel ministry. We have six ordained Christian Reformed ministers on our Mexico staff, and they all carry on their work in evangelism with the assistance of Mexican pastors or students. A committee of the Independent Presbyterian Church and three delegated members of our mission staff serve as a Joint Mission Committee to direct the missionary program. In this manner we work cooperatively with the indigenous church.

Appointment of Mr. Jack Roeda: The literature program and the opening of new bookstores as significant areas of mission outreach made it necessary for the board to appoint someone to focus specifically on this area of work. With this in mind the board has appointed Mr. Jack

Roeda to enter the Mexico mission work and give his attention to the developing and expanding literature and bookstore program. His many years of service for the Christian Literature Crusade and his decade of residence in South America equip him with experience which is of great value to us. He is a graduate of Calvin College and a member of the Christian Reformed Church.

Mexico Boat Mission: Tampico is the headquarters for the Mexico Boat Mission. This operation is conducted through the use of a river boat, and contact is made with villagers living along the rivers which fan out from Tampico. This work was originally established by others but has now been united with our work and is proving to be a meaningful and promising outreach for Christ. Several meeting places have been established and the Lord is giving fruit on the labors of Mr. Abe Marcus, our missionary in Tampico. Mr. Marcus is a member of the Mexico General Conference and the work he does is part of the total ministry under the care of the Joint Committee of the Independent Presbyterian Church and our mission. Ordained ministers of the Independent Presbyterian Church or one of the ordained missionaries are assigned from time to time to join Mr. Marcus to attend to the baptisms that are called for. We are happy to report that many of the original donors to the Mexico Boat Mission are continuing their support for this particular missionary service.

E. Puerto Rico

Puerto Rico has for many years been under discussion as an open mission field which our board should enter. Several committees have reported on the needs and opportunities of that country and some board delegations have also visited Puerto Rico.

In 1963, a board committee which had visited the field recommended that the board ask Synod for authorization to open Puerto Rico as a new field for missionary labors. Although the board did not proceed to ask Synod as proposed, the reasoning for not doing so is of interest today. The observation was then made that "in the light of the report Puerto Rico is undoubtedly a promising field and in need of a Reformed witness." The reason given for not proceeding at that time was "unfulfilled commitments of our present fields."

Once again (February 1967) the matter of Puerto Rico has been on the board agenda. The Rev. J. Jerry Pott had been asked to make a special visit to Puerto Rico prior to the board meeting and subsequent to his report the following decision was taken:

It was decided to request Synod's permission to begin work in Puerto Rico in 1968 with two missionaries.

Grounds:

1. There is urgent need for a Reformed witness.
2. The sustained interest of Dr. Lebron and the challenge presented by him repeatedly over a period of several years.
3. The challenge of the large urbanizations.
4. The strategic position of Puerto Rico for all of Latin America.

5. The proximity of Puerto Rico to the USA.
6. The great response to La Hora de Reforma.

It was decided that \$40,000 be included in the budget of 1968 for Puerto Rico. We therefore request Synod for favorable action on this board recommendation.

F. Guatemala

This country lies immediately south of the Mexican border and many of its people are Maya Indians, the same tribe of people with which our missionaries are working in the Yucatan. During the past year the opportunities for work and the needs in this country have come to the attention of our missionaries with the result that our board has asked the Rev. J. Jerry Pott to investigate mission possibilities in Guatemala. This remains a matter under study by both the Mexico General Conference and the board of Foreign Missions.

Section Six

Nigeria

No doubt the year 1966 will go down in history as one of the most tragic in Nigerian history. Internal problems came to such proportions that the continuance of the national government was in jeopardy and the endurance of the nation was seriously in question. At the present time the government leadership of the nation is doing all within its powers to continue the life and the unity of the nation and to reestablish good will between the several regions. At the root of the problem lies the rivalries, suspicions, and misunderstandings between some of the larger tribes. The future of Nigeria will probably only be promising if this profound matter of intertribal difficulties can be resolved. It would certainly be warranted that Synod in special prayers remember this nation, and ask God to favor it with the gift of restored unity and renewed status as a significant and leading nation on the African continent.

The church in Nigeria experienced great pain during this fearful national crisis. Thanks be to God, the Christian people and the churches within our mission fellowship sought to be influences for good, and we may trust that in the days to come the Lord will qualify the church through His Spirit to be a power for justice and goodwill. Our missionaries also went through deep waters as the nation to which they would be a blessing went through the ordeal of internal strife. But today they along with the church look forward in the hope and with the prayer that God may lead the nation to favored days. In the meantime our missionary labors continue without interruption.

Mkar Hospital. For many years the question has been before us as to the future development of the Mkar Hospital. This hospital is in the heart of Tiv country and serves a vast population, ministering often in one day to some seven or eight hundred outpatients and at the same time attending to the needs of the seventy or more inpatients. The physical conditions of the hospital have been admittedly inadequate for good medical care, and plans had been prepared for a completely new facility.

However, these plans had to be turned aside and a new study had to be made of the hospital situation. The medical personnel of the Nigerian mission along with others appointed to assist them reviewed the entire matter. Finally the committee presented to the Nigeria General Conference a plan for major renewal of the old hospital on the original site. This proposal was approved by the Nigeria General Conference. With plans which give promise for adequate water and with endorsement of the plans by the church, the board of Foreign Missions, by action of its Executive Committee, has authorized the Nigeria General Conference to proceed and have the building department on the field commence with the building of some new buildings and the reconstruction of others. The work is now already underway. The total cost for the new program will run to about \$198,000, a figure already introduced into our proposed budget for Nigeria. With a view to the urgent need and previous endorsement of a new hospital the go-ahead sign was given. It should be observed that already \$106,000 is on hand for the Mkar Hospital building program. An earlier figure of \$229,000 for a new hospital has now been scaled down to the lower figure of \$198,000.

TCNN. Theological College of Northern Nigeria. Synod of 1966 instructed the board "to review the church's policy on the matter of seminary training in Nigeria that will maintain the demand for a consistently Reformed training of pastors and present to the Synod of 1967 a statement of policy that will meet the needs of the field" (Acts of Synod 1966, pages 18, 19).

"Grounds:

"a. At present a difference of opinion exists between the board and N.G.C. on this matter.

"b. It appears that the present policy of seeking to establish a separate Reformed seminary in Nigeria may be unrealistic.

"c. Ecclesiastical and cultural developments require a re-evaluation of our policy.

"2. That Synod not accede to the request of Overture 29 of Minnesota South.

"Grounds:

"a. The immediate need for financial assistance has been met by private donation.

"b. Synod is referring the policy of financial assistance to TCNN to the board for review."

The board of Foreign Missions in accordance with the decision of the Synod has reviewed the church's policy on the matter of seminary training in Nigeria. It was the expectation of the board that it would complete its work and submit its report to Synod as instructed. However, in view of recent developments within the Nigeria church the board requests Synod for an additional year to complete its work.

We ask for this delay in reply since the Nigeria General Conference has received new material from the Tiv Synod relative to this matter and asked that the board withhold final comment until the Nigerian

Conference has had opportunity to consider the communication from the Tiv church.

Once again it is the happy privilege of our board to report that the work on the Nigerian field has progressed with wonderful favor of the Lord. The medical and the educational work has been effective in furthering the cause of Christ. Statistics in these areas are impressive. We mention here only a few of the statistics that relate immediately to the church. These figures were dated December 31, 1966:

1. Total number of places where services are held each Sunday: 1,687
2. Total average attendance at principal Sunday service for above: 180,537
3. Number of Ordained Ministers: European, 13; African, 38; Total: 51
4. Number of Evangelists: 183
5. Number of new communicant church members accepted during year: 3,468
6. Number of communicant church members in full communion at end of year: 18,289

Section Seven

Financial Matters

A. Treasurer's Report

The following are concise statements of balance sheets and receipts and disbursements of the various funds at the close of December 31, 1966, as prepared by our auditor. A detailed account of all transactions will be presented to the budget committees of Synod.

Christian Reformed Board of Foreign Missions
Grand Rapids, Michigan

March 13, 1967

Gentlemen:

We have made an examination of the books and accounting records of the Christian Reformed Board of Foreign Missions for the year ended December 31, 1966 and have prepared there from the following concise statements:

General

Operating Fund:

Balance Sheet

Statement of Revenues and Expenses

Plant Fund:

Balances and Changes in Fund Balances

Statement of Annuity, Pension and Relief Funds

Balance Sheet

Statement of Fund Balances

Statement of Revenues and Expenditures

Our examination was made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and, accordingly, included such other auditing procedures as we considered possible in each circumstance.

Respectfully submitted,
Dwight D. Ferris
Certified Public Accountant

**Balance Sheet
Operating Fund
December 31, 1966**

Assets

Current Assets

Operating Cash	\$362,757.08	
Accounts Receivable	191,016.31	
Prepayments	156,908.63	
Total Current Assets		\$ 710,682.02

Other Assets

Notes Receivable	\$ 35,849.27	
Bonds and Investments	16,482.24	
Total		52,331.51

Reserved Assets

Cash Reserved for approved projects from prior budgets	\$208,800.00	
Special Projects	\$76,792.22	
Less 1966 Prepayments	28,815.08	47,977.14
Mission Home	1,457.09	
Liability Insurance	21,766.00	
Emergency Relief	566.59	
Cuba Mission Funds	28,105.25	
1967 Budget	210,280.00	\$ 518,952.07
Total Assets		\$1,281,965.60

Liabilities, Reserves and Fund Balance

Current Liabilities

Accounts Payable	\$289.86	
Accrued Payroll Taxes	819.75	
Total Current Liabilities		\$ 1,109.61

Other Liabilities

Beets Memorial	5,961.20	
Reserves for Approved Projects	547,767.15	
Net Worth	727,127.64	
Total Liabilities, Reserves and Fund Balance		\$1,281,965.60

**Statement of Receipts and Expenditures
Operating Fund
December 31, 1966**

Receipts

Classical Quotas	\$ 974,660.81
Missionary Support	432,440.54
Gifts and Offerings	
Designated Gifts	197,648.02
Non-Designated Gifts	70,812.29
General Missions	57,731.99
Legacies	40,484.82
Above Quota Offerings	56,879.64
Second Protestant Reformed Church Receipts	288.64
Field Receipts	363,935.61
Other Operating Income	5,020.55
Interest and Dividends	35,167.23
Sale of Assets	8,618.94
Total Receipts	\$2,243,689.08

Expenditures

	Operating Expenditures	Capital Expenditures	Total
Administrative	\$ 66,494.45	\$ 4,437.81	\$ 70,932.26
General	70,640.68	—	70,640.68
Promotion	28,990.44	350.00	29,340.44
Australia	36,963.60	—	36,963.60
Ceylon	16,652.76	—	16,652.76
Cuba	25,167.35	—	25,167.35
Guam	21,874.36	40,852.50	62,726.86
Japan	170,316.32	108,636.74	278,953.06
Korea	7,595.75	—	7,595.75
Mexico	137,895.60	56,801.38	194,696.98
New Zealand	11,658.18	—	11,658.18
Nigeria	938,014.64	56,681.92	994,696.56
Philippine Islands	12,310.15	308.54	12,618.69
South America	104,186.34	15,276.31	119,462.65
Taiwan	65,424.24	14,769.82	80,194.06
Total Expenditures	\$1,714,184.86	\$298,115.02	2,012,299.88

Excess of Current Receipts over Expenditures\$ 231,389.20

**Plant Fund
December 31, 1966**

Plant Fund

Land, Buildings, Furniture and Equipment	\$1,749,540.92
Less Accumulated Depreciation	405,612.83
Plant Fund Balance	\$1,343,928.09

Changes in Plant Fund Balance

Balance - January 1, 1966	\$1,129,167.21
Additions - 1966 Capital Expenditures	298,115.02
Total	\$1,427,282.23
Deductions - 1966 Depreciation	83,354.14
Balance - December 31, 1966	\$1,343,928.09

**Statement of Annuity, Pension and Relief Fund
December 31, 1966**

**Balance Sheet
December 31, 1966**

Assets			
	Annuity Fund	Pension Fund	Relief Fund
Cash in Bank	\$ 979.38	\$ 31,450.02	\$14,630.05
Accounts Receivable and Accruals	—	968.29	147.00
Investments in Savings	28,187.45	36,222.79	8,400.00
Investments	—	136,000.00	68,500.00
Total Assets	\$29,166.83	\$204,641.10	\$91,677.05
Liabilities and Fund Balances			
Accounts Payable	\$ —	\$ 34.50	\$ 54.79
Annuities Payable	26,500.00	—	—
Employee Equity	—	69,763.69	—
Fund Balance	2,666.83	134,842.91	91,622.26
Total Liabilities and Fund Balances	\$29,166.83	\$204,641.10	\$91,677.05

Statement of Fund Balances			
Fund Balance — January 1, 1966	\$1,236.77	\$126,627.86	\$90,317.71
Additions			
Interest	1,129.26	6,342.36	2,684.55
Contributions		9,174.53	
Cancellation of annuities	1,700.00		
Totals	\$4,066.03	\$142,144.75	\$93,002.26
Deductions	1,399.20	7,301.84	1,380.00
Fund Balance — December 31, 1966	\$2,666.83	\$134,842.91	\$91,622.26

Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for the Year ended December 31, 1966			
Revenues	\$1,129.26	\$ 15,516.89	\$ 2,684.55
Expenditures	1,399.20	7,301.84	1,380.00
Excess Revenues over Expenditures (Excess Expenditures)	\$ (269.94)	\$ 8,215.05	\$ 1,304.55

B. *Budget for 1968* — A complete list of budget requests for 1968 will be submitted to officers of Synod and to members of its advisory committee when Synod meets. A summary of these requests follows:

BUDGET 1968

Budget Expenditures

Administration	\$ 80,500
General Expenses	125,300
Promotion	31,000
Field Operation:	
Salaries	\$790,460
Field Expenses	887,598
Missionary Medical Expense	20,240
Travel and Freight	131,716
Total Field Operation	1,830,014
Capital Expenditures	347,666
Field Expansion:	
Present Fields:	
Japan	\$ 24,300
Mexico	40,000
Nigeria	10,000
Philippines	15,000
South America	20,000
Taiwan	10,000
New Fields:	
Puerto Rico	40,000
Brazil	20,000
Total Field Expansion	179,300
Total Budget Expenditures	\$2,593,780

Estimated Receipts

Missionary Support	\$ 475,000
Gifts and Offerings	450,000
Field Receipts	450,000
From Fund Balance	200,000
Quota Receipts	1,018,780
Total Amount Needed for 1968 Budget	\$2,593,780

C. Request for Special Offerings:

We are requesting approval of a \$2,593,780 budget for 1968, and a quota amounting to \$1,018,780 (39% of the total amount needed). The remaining \$1,575,000 must be financed through Gifts and Offerings, Missionary Support, and income derived on the foreign fields. To meet this financial need above quota receipts, it is urgently necessary that the Board of Foreign Missions be recommended for one or more special offerings. Praise God for the prayerful support of our people. We are confident our people will continue to give for the propagation of the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Therefore, we respectfully request the Synod to continue the Board of Foreign Missions on the list of denomination causes recommended for one or more offerings in 1968.

D. Request for Quota

The board is asking for approval of a quota of \$20.00 per family for 1968.

Section Eight**Summary of Items on which We Request Synodical Action**

1. Approval of board members and alternates. Section One, B.
2. Election of members-at-large. Section One, B.
3. Representation at Synod. Section One, E.
4. Recruitment and Orientation Secretary, addition to Mission Order. Section Two, A.
5. Dentistry in Missions. Section Two, C.
6. Approval of plans for additional missionaries.
7. Puerto Rico, New Mission Field. Section Five, E.
8. Nigeria, TCNN Delay. Section Six.
9. Financial Matters, Treasurer's Report for 1966. Section Seven, A.
10. Financial Matters, Budget Requests for 1968. Section Seven, B.
11. Financial Matters, Request for Special Offerings in 1968. Section Seven, C.
12. Financial Matters, Request for Quota. Section Seven, D.

Respectfully submitted,

Board of Foreign Missions

Henry J. Evenhouse, *executive secretary*

REPORT 44

INTER-CHURCH RELATIONS

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

The Inter-Church Relations Committee, composed of Dr. Jacob T. Hoogstra, Chairman, Dr. Ralph J. Danhof, Dr. John H. Kromminga, Rev. Lawrence Veltkamp, and Rev. Clarence Boomsma, Secretary, has only a few matters to report to Synod this year.

1. The Synod of last year assigned to our committee the responsibility to appoint fraternal delegates to the ecclesiastical meetings of denominations with whom we have fraternal relations. Dr. Danhof, as stated clerk, agreed to keep us informed of invitations to such meetings and the following two appointments were made: Dr. John Kromminga, who was in South Africa on behalf of committee work for the Reformed Ecumenical Synod, was asked to represent our church at the Synod of the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk, now known as the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa. Rev. William Van Peursem was asked to bring fraternal greetings to the General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church which is meeting in Long Beach, California.

2. The annual meeting of the North American Council of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and the meeting of its Theological Committee were held January 10-12 in Memphis, Tennessee. Dr. John Kromminga who has been assigned to attend these meetings as observer was unable to attend and therefore the secretary attended in his place.

3. We are not able to report any progress in our contacts with the Gereformeerde Kerken, D.K.O. Art. 31. Your committee will continue to make further contacts as such are possible.

4. The Synod of 1966 referred to our committee two requests presented to Synod by the Rev. Chun Il Cho when he addressed the Church as a fraternal delegate from the Hapdong Presbyterian Church of Korea. The first request was for a professor of theology and two teachers of English to serve in the Hapdong Seminary, and the second request was for books for the Korean Seminary Library (Acts, Art. 98, p. 70). Your committee has been in contact with a private fund which is arranging to send needed books to the Korean Seminary Library. The matter of faculty for the Seminary has been referred to the Foreign Mission Board for their consideration.

5. We call the attention of Synod to the forthcoming meeting of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod in Amsterdam in August 1968. We recommend that Synod appoint our delegates in this session so they will have ample time to familiarize themselves with the matters involved and make

preparations for their travel. We are entitled to three delegates and three alternates who if present are seated for full participation in the Synod except for voting rights. One professor, one minister, and one elder are to be chosen according to previous decisions. In the past the expenses of the three voting delegates have been paid by our Synod but not the expenses of alternates. We propose the following nominations: for professor delegate—F.Klooster and J. H. Stek; for minister delegate—Wm. Haverkamp and J. Vriend; for elder delegate—John Geels, Ray Holwerda, George Monsma, and Robert Van Dyken. We would call to the attention of Synod that Professor J. H. Kromminga expects to be on leave in the Netherlands at the time of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod, Dr. Ralph J. Danhof expects to be in Europe on behalf of the International Reformed Association for Migration, and the Rev. Robert Recker will be in the Netherlands for the Missionary Conference to be held in connection with the Reformed Ecumenical Synod. Should Synod decide to choose alternates from among these and others whom Synod may know to be available, we can be assured of a full representation at the 1968 assembly.

6. An invitation was received from Eugene L. Smith, Executive Secretary of the U.S.A. Staff of the World Council of Churches, to be represented as a non-member church at the Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Churches to be held at Uppsala, Sweden, July 4-20, 1968. Two different categories are open to us. One is that of "Observer-Consultants." These are persons named by some official agency in a non-member church to be present and have the right of participation in the Assembly and its sections, but do not have any vote. The other category is that of "Observers." These are persons from non-member churches who are not named officially and are welcomed at the meetings of the Assembly and its sections, but do not have the right either of discussion or of vote. We recommend that our committee be authorized to make arrangements for someone who may be available to represent our church as an Observer-Consultant.

7. The Synod of 1966 instructed our committee to continue discussions with the Reformed Church in America. On December 14, 1966, another joint meeting of the Inter-Church Relations Committees was held on the campus of Hope College in Holland, Michigan. In addition to the members of our committee we had invited the following as guests to participate in the informal discussions: Rev. Arnold Brink, Rev. Leonard Greenway, Rev. William Haverkamp, Mr. James Hoekenga, Dr. Carl Kromminga, Rev. John Mulder, Rev. John Pott, Dr. Henry Stob, Rev. Edward Van Baak, Rev. John Vander Ploeg, and Rev. Nelson Vanderzee. The agenda for the day that had been previously prepared by sub-committees raised the question: If meaningful conversations between our two churches are to continue, should not our two denominations consider the advisability of discussing church union? In the morning session it was readily agreed that in view of the Reformed Church in America's 1966 statement on Ecumenicity and the 1944 statement of the Christian Reformed Church on Ecumenicity, it is certainly appropriate to raise this question. The discussion then proceeded to deter-

mine whether both churches affirm the authority of the Bible so that it would be the norm in such discussions, and whether our common Reformed standards are considered normative by both churches to the extent that they would be a basis for such exploration. The consensus was that whatever differences do exist in emphasis and interpretation, both the Bible and our Reformed Creeds could be appealed to as normative for further discussions. The delegates of the Reformed Church, however, felt that it would not be proper for them to engage in further conversations exploring the possibilities of church union in the light of their present ecumenical commitments, particularly the proposed merger of their denomination with the Presbyterian Church US. It was the consensus of those present therefore that this was not the time to explore further the possibility of union discussions. At the end of the day those present recommended to the respective Inter-Church Relations Committees that further conversations should be held to explore various avenues to closer unity and cooperation. Your committee has no recommendations to bring to Synod at this time.

8. The term of Dr. Jacob T. Hoogstra expires this year and having served two terms he is not eligible for re-election. We propose the nomination of Rev. Arnold Brink and Dr. John Primus.

Matters requiring synodical action are:

1. Election of delegates to the 1968 meeting of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod.
2. Election of one member for three years to membership on the Inter-Church Relations Committee.

Respectfully submitted,

C. Boomsma

REPORT 45

NATIONAL CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

Although the Association is no longer on the list of synodically approved causes, a number of our Christian Reformed churches continue to show interest in the work of the Association in counteracting the influence of secret societies. For prayer and financial support on the part of our congregations, the Association is grateful.

The "Christian Cynosure" published monthly, continues to be chief spokesman for the Association. There are 1800 names on the mailing list. Some 700 ministers receive the magazine free of charge each month, since ministers as the spiritual leaders of their people, are in a position to give guidance on the matter of lodge membership in relation to the Church of Christ.

During the year 1966 the following literature was sent out by the Association. Books sent to Bible schools and seminaries, 1,150 gratis. Complimentary copies of the Cynosure to schools and seminaries, 68. Cynosure exchanged for other church publications, 19. Copies of the Cynosure sold from the office, 1,555. Complimentary copies of the monthly magazine, 760. The office received 1,876 inquiries from interested persons. 1,937 packages of information on the Lodge were mailed out. These included 4,000 books and 16,000 tracts.

The Association continues to operate out of its office at 850 West Madison St., Chicago. Many years ago, Mr. Milo Carpenter, a devout Christian, donated the Carpenter Building to the Association as long as the Association continues anti-secret work. Part of this building now houses the Helping Hand Mission.

The Financial Report for 1966 shows the following:

Balance on hand, December 31, 1965	\$1,758.23
Receipts 1966	7,431.71
Withholding tax	109.71
Total	\$9,299.65

DISBURSEMENTS

Printing and office expenses	\$6,735.70
Insurance	33.00
Social Security	211.00
Total	\$6,979.70

Total Receipts	\$9,299.65
Total Disbursements	6,979.70
Balance, December 31, 1966	\$2,319.95

Respectfully submitted,
 Oliver Breen, Synodical Representative

OVERTURES

Overture 1 — Use of the name “Christian Reformed”

Classis Hudson overtures the Synod of 1967 to take the necessary legal steps to prevent the use of the name “Christian Reformed” by unauthorized agencies.

Grounds:

Our church currently is being misrepresented by the Association of Christian Reformed Laymen.

Classis Hudson

J. P. Smith, S.C.

Overture 2 — Quota for Church Help Fund

Classis Lake Erie overtures the Synod of 1967 to establish a \$2.00 per family quota for a three year period, which money is to be used by the Church Help Fund in granting loans to the churches of our denomination. The need for extending the quota beyond three years is to be re-evaluated after the second year.

Grounds:

1. The \$20,000.00 loan limit which is now in force is not as realistic as it was some years ago.

2. Additional funds will enable the Church Help Fund to grant larger loans where necessary.

3. Additional funds will enable the Church Help Fund to assist more needy churches in the building programs.

Classis Lake Erie,

Sidney Draayer, S.C.

Overture 3 — Church Libraries

Classis Pacific Northwest overtures Synod to instruct its Committee on Education to provide guidance to our local congregations in the area of church libraries.

Grounds:

1. Many of our churches have no library due to lack of guidance.

2. Many church libraries are inadequate both in quantity and quality of books, as well as in organization and handling of materials.

3. Many church librarians have inadequate library training to do the work assigned to them.

4. Many excellent Christian books, especially those written by members of the Reformed faith, are not circulating, or being promoted among our people due to lack of adequate church libraries.

5. Many, if not most, of our churches do not have a formulated philosophy expressing the place and purpose of the church library.

Classis Pacific Northwest,

Howard B. Spaan, S.C.

Overture 4 — World Council of Churches

Classis Wisconsin respectfully overtures the Synod of 1967 to advise the Gereformeerde Kerken of the Netherlands not to join the World Council of Churches, for the following considerations:

Background

The action and request of the Gereformeerde Kerken of the Netherlands.
The action taken by the Christian Reformed Synod of 1966.

Introduction

In order to adequately approach the large subject before us we should first of all set forth in brief compass the basics of the doctrine of the church as it is most surely believed among us. For this purpose we would set forth what the late Prof. Louis Berkhof has said on the subject:

"The essence of the Church is not found in the external organization of the Church, but in the church as the *communio sanctorum*. For Luther and Calvin the Church was simply the community of saints, that is the community of those who believe and are sanctified in Christ, and who are joined to Him as their Head. This is the position taken in the Reformed confessional standards. Thus the Belgic Confession says: 'We believe and profess one catholic or universal Church, which is a holy congregation of true Christian believers, all expecting their salvation in Jesus Christ, being washed by His blood, sanctified and sealed by the Holy Spirit.' . . . This may and always does contain some who are not yet regenerated — there may be chaff among the wheat —, but may not tolerate public unbelievers and wicked persons. Paul addresses his Epistles to empirical churches, and does not hesitate to address them as "saints," but also insists on the necessity of putting away the wicked and those who give offense from among them (I Cor. 5; II Thess. 3:6, 14; Titus 3:10). The Church forms a spiritual unity of which Christ is the divine Head. It is animated by one Spirit, the Spirit of Christ; it professes one faith, shares one hope and serves one King. It is the citadel of the truth and God's agency in communicating to believers all spiritual blessings." Systematic Theology by L. Berkhof, 4th Ed. 1962, p. 564.

In his monumental work on "*The Scripture Doctrine of the Church*," D. D. Bannerman says:

"In its first and highest aspect the Church comprehends all who have been given to Christ by the Father, viewed as forming one great whole . . . This is the first and Divinest aspect of the Church . . . In a second and lower aspect the Church comprehends all professing believers on earth at any given time, together with their infant seed . . . Here we have the outward and visible answer to Christ's call in the Gospel, men and families gathered together in His name, separating themselves so far from the world by a profession of faith in Christ and obedience to Him."

Question 54 of the *Heidelberg Catechism* asks:

"What do you believe concerning the Holy Catholic Church? Answer: That the Son of God, out of the whole human race, from the beginning to the end of the world, gathers, defends, and preserves for Himself, by His Spirit and Word, in the unity of the true faith, a Church chosen to everlasting life; and that I am, and forever shall remain, a living member thereof."

We would also remind ourselves of the marks of the true church as we have traditionally set them forth in our teaching and preaching, namely:

1. The true preaching of the Word. This is the most important mark of the Church. That this is one of the characteristics of the true Church, is evident from such passages as John 8:31, 32, 47; 14:23; I John 4:1-3; II John 9.

2. The right administration of the sacraments. The sacraments should never be divorced from the Word, for they have no content of their own but derive their content from the Word of God. The right administration of the sacraments coupled with the preaching of the Word derives from such passages as Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:15; Acts 2:42; I Cor. 11:23-30.

3. The faithful exercise of discipline. This is essential for maintaining the purity of doctrine and guarding the holiness of the sacraments. The Word of God insists on proper discipline in the Church of Christ (Matt. 18: 18; I Cor. 5:1-5, 13; 14:33; Rev. 2:14, 15, 20) of Article 29 Belgic Confession.

Ecumenicity

The Church as the body of believers, the bride of Christ on earth, has as her principal task an obligation to be obedient to her Master and Lord. Obedience demands that she bring into her perview the ecumenical demands of the Gospel as well as all its other demands. The Church must be ecumenical minded. She must be striving for oneness and unity, but always in Christ Jesus, her Savior and Lord. She must also be subservient to His Word the Holy Scriptures. She can never, not even for one moment depart from the teachings of the Word. In considering the teachings of the Word the Church must take into consideration the whole Word, not just isolate directives and admonitions. In other words, while the church endeavors to be ecumenical she must also heed the warnings to be separate. The leading thoughts in such a study as is ours are the demands for ecumenicity, or fellowship and the insistence on separation.

In the life of every Christian and in the life of the Church of Christ, fellowship is an essential element, in fact, indispensable. All cooperation in the functions Christ has assigned to his Church are based upon fellowship. Extending the "Right hand of Christian fellowship" was often practiced in the New Testament Church, cf. Acts 2:42, Gal. 2:7-9. In Acts 2:42 fellowship and adherence to the message and teaching of the apostles go hand in hand. In II John 10 the Apostle says, "If any one comes unto you and brings not this teaching receive him not into your house and give him no greeting." The basis upon which we may then enter into confidence with others and enjoy fellowship is nothing less than the "Teaching of Christ," II John 9. For further reference on this thought, compare I John 4:1-3.

The opposite side of the coin of fellowship is separation in this sinful world. Separation is also a large consideration in the life of Christian's and of Christ's church. cf. I John 1:6, 7. It is clear that the Scriptures call upon believers to separate themselves from unbelievers in everything that concerns the faith. Paul has warned about fellowship with those outside the faith in II Cor. 6:14-18. We can observe that Paul says failure in this is like to having fellowship with demons. The Scriptures go much further with the principle of separation when Paul admonishes those of the household of faith to separate from professing believers who are guilty of the sins enumerated in I Cor. 5:9-13. In addressing the Galatians he counsels separation from the Judaizers who certainly could confess Jesus as Lord and Savior according to the Scripture. But Paul says "they would pervert the gospel of Christ" (Gal. 1:7). The bone of contention between Paul and the Judaizers was the doctrine of justification by faith alone. Paul proclaims an anathema against these people (vss. 8 and 9).

In the light of these few brief statements and Scripture references and in the light of more Scripture that could be adduced, Classis Wisconsin is compelled to make the following judgments and recommendations in reference to the World Council of Churches.

Judgments

1. The WCC is more than a discussion forum; it is a "fellowship of churches." Within that "fellowship" liberalism and Barthianism are strongly entrenched. Unequivocally, the Scriptures forbid such a fellowship; we cannot join with those who preach another Gospel. -cf. II Cor. 6:14-18; Gal. 1:8, 9.

2. The WCC fails to define its own basis for membership. What does it mean to "confess Jesus as God and Savior." This beautiful statement is left in a state of ambiguity; each denomination can determine for itself the content. At New Delhi, when the proposed extension of the basis was discussed, it clearly appeared that some of the Churches represented do not accept this basis in the biblical and historical meaning of its terms (cf. report of the Remonstrant Brotherhood of the Netherlands, presented to the Assembly. The New Delhi Report, 1962, p. 153). Can we justify, before God, joining a council which consists of Churches which have divergent and contradictory christological views as this would indicate?

3. The emphasis in the WCC is more upon organizational unity than on oneness of truth. Organizational unity is meaningless if there is no spiritual unity based on the truth of the Word. A failure to present the Christ of the Scriptures is a BETRAYAL of the Lord Himself.

4. The WCC has not accepted the authority of the Word of God. The WCC allows for Scripture and tradition (cf. the Eastern Orthodox Church). To join in such a fellowship would betray our Reformation heritage, and would entangle us in a yoke of bondage (cf. Gal. 5:1).

5. The Christian Reformed Church must beware of compromise with Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy. Already, Eastern Orthodoxy is a member of the WCC. A brief listing of their teachings and practices along with Roman Catholicism teaching is surely not out of place here:

- a. The Roman Catholics and Eastern Orthodox declare the Church is infallible.
- b. They claim to be the only true church, holy and universal.
- c. They claim apostolic succession.
- d. They claim all protestants are heretics.
- e. They practice the seven sacraments.
- f. They worship the Virgin Mary.
- g. They pray to the saints and offer prayers for the dead.

To join such company in a fellowship of churches and in the community of faith is a gross denial of the true faith committed to the saints; a betrayal of the truths of the great Reformation.

The WCC is wooing the Roman Catholic Church. Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, the new secretary of the WCC has said, that in theory "any church is eligible for membership" including the Roman Catholic (cf. *Christianity Today*, p. 857),

6. The WCC does not hesitate to make pronouncements on social matters. Our reaction is that social action can never be substituted for evangelism.

" . . . would to God our nation would return to the God of our Fathers; the clergy to the preaching of Wesleys, John Knox, John Calvin . . . the men who believed in the Scriptures and were willing to give their lives in defense of them. This Social Gospel is wrecking our nation, our family life, the life of the individual. It offers no hope for a soul which knows it needs a Savior and not socialization; a regeneration and not reformations; salvation and not economic revolutions." (cf. A. G. MacLennan, Address, p. 12).

7. The WCC repudiates the idea of its aspiring to become a super church. However, its leaders are pressuring for a super church. (cf. Blake-Pike proposal, in *Christianity Today*, p. 486).

Fathers and brethren, in our humble opinion under the circumstances we have cited, the Christian Reformed Church must not affiliate with the World Council of Churches, and also advise the Gereformeerde Kerken of the Netherlands not to join.

Classis Wisconsin,
Rev. L. Stockmeier, S.C.

Overture 5 — Fund for Needy Churches and Interim Pastor

Classis Florida overtures the Synod to instruct the Fund for Needy Churches to pay also for the services of an interim pastor in vacant churches when requested.

Grounds:

- a. The distance of some of our churches from available ministers prevents them from acquiring pulpit supply on a Sunday to Sunday basis.
- b. The program of many of our younger churches requires a minister in residence rather than pulpit supply only.
- c. The duties of an interim pastor are basically the same as those of a permanent pastor.

Classis Florida,
Rev. E. Hcerema, S.C.

Overture 6 — Amend Rule of Pension Fund Administration

Classis Alberta North overtures Synod to amend Article IV.B 1c, "Be refunded a sum equal to twenty-five percent of the total amount he has contributed to the Fund, in consideration of which he shall be required to sign a release and receipts in full," of the Rules for the administration of the Pension and Relief Fund of the Chr. Ref. Church as follows:

"Be refunded a sum equal to the accumulated total amount he has contributed to the Fund, in consideration of which he shall be required to sign a release and receipt in full."

Grounds:

1. A minister who resigns, is deposed or released from his ministerial office—under the present rules—loses 75% of his own pension-contributions, which in practice is morally indefensible. Salary earned as a minister of our denomination, temporarily withheld for future pension-benefits, must be considered as irrevocable property of such ministers. Deposition and relief from office should not be accompanied by the loss of 75% of accumulated pension funds, funds which belong to the person and should be made available for re-investment in the pension plan of a person's choice.

2. A minister who accepts an appointment entailing other than normal pastoral duties and who consequently wishes to give up (resign from) his ministerial status, should be allowed to do so without the loss of 75% of his own pension contributions.

Note:

In case the special study committee—Minister's Pension and Relief Fund does not complete its report before Synod 1967 convenes, then Synod should give this committee a mandate to work in the above direction.

Classis Alberta North,
Peter Sluys, S.C.

Overture 7 — Delete Section of Rule of Pension Fund Administration

Classis Alberta North overtures Synod to *delete* Article VII, B3,

"The pension of a widow shall be terminated if she ceases, for any reason, to be a member of either the Christian Reformed Church or a church with which it maintains full ecclesiastical fellowship," and Article VII, C3,

"The pension of an orphan shall be terminated if he ceases, for any reason, to be a member of either the Christian Reformed Church or a church with which it maintains full ecclesiastical fellowship," of the Rules for the administration of the Pension and Relief Fund of the Christian Reformed Church.

Grounds:

1. Pension rights for widows and orphans should not be conditional, as they have been paid for by the deceased minister.
2. One should not be dissuaded by financial considerations, from leaving the Christian Reformed Church.

Note:

In case the special study committee—Minister's Pension and Relief Fund does not complete its report before Synod 1967 convenes, then Synod should give this committee a mandate to work in the above direction.

Classis Alberta North,
Peter Sluys, S.C.

Overture 8 — Organization of a New Classis Requested

Classis Chatham overtures Synod to approve the formation of a new classis, consisting of the following churches: Blyth, Clinton, Exeter, Drayton, Galt, Guelph, Kitchener, Listowel, Lucknow, Stratford, Collingwood, Owen Sound, Alliston, Orangeville, and Acton. On the basis of the 1966 Yearbook these churches total 1066 families. The first 3 are in Classis Chatham, the next 7 in Classis Hamilton, and the last 5 in Classis Toronto.

Grounds:

1. The new classis proposed conforms to the structure and functioning of the Christian Reformed Church and Kingdom Life in her area.
2. The rapid growth and expansion of cultural, agricultural, and industrial areas in the proposed classical resort demands reorganization.
3. The rapid growth of several congregations in the proposed classical areas demands the formation of a new classis.
4. The necessity of decentralization of ecclesiastical labors requires the formation of another classis.
5. A number of churches incorporated in Classes Chatham, Hamilton, and Toronto are too far removed from the center of their classical activities.
6. The geographical differences between the congregations of classes Chatham, Hamilton, and Toronto forming the new classis will be considerable less than before.

Classis Chatham
Rev. A. Beukema, S.C.

P.S. Classes Hamilton and Toronto have endorsed the above overture.

Overture 9 — Request to Divide Classis Eastern Ontario

Classis Eastern Ontario overtures Synod to approve the division of Classis Eastern Ontario, thus forming another Classis, according to the following arrangement of congregations:

Classis A — Eastern Ontario

	Families
1. Athens, Ont.	60
2. Brockville, Ont.	120
3. Charlottetown, P.E.I.	29
4. Cornwall, Ont.	39
5. Fredericton, N.B.	19
6. Halifax, N.S.	17
7. Kemptville, Ont.	17
8. Kentville, N.S.	47
9. Kingston, Ont.	131
10. Montreal, P.Q.	100
11. New Glasgow, N.S.	20
12. Ottawa, Calvin, Ont.	138
13. Ottawa East, Ont.	50
14. Pembroke, Ont.	44
15. Renfrew, Ont.	38
16. Truro, N.S.	36
17. Williamsburg, Ont.	85
Total.....	990

Classis B, the other classis

	Families
1. Belleville, Ont.	110
2. Bloomfield, Ont.	78
3. Bowmanville, Rehoboth, Ont.	143
4. Bowmanville, Maranatha, Ont.	135
5. Cobourg, Ont.	52
6. Lindsay, Ont.	57
7. Oshawa, Hebron, Ont.	130
8. Oshawa, Zion, Ont.	103
9. Peterborough, Ont.	81
10. Trenton, Ont.	188
Total.....	1,077

Ground for the proposed division:

1. At present Classis Eastern Ontario is much too large. It numbers 27 churches. This number warrants re-alignment.

2. The proposed classis (B) constitutes an ideal unit, being a group of 10 neighbouring churches with 1,077 families (art. 39 Church Order). The other proposed classis (A) has the potential of a well-functioning church-body, composed of 17 churches with 990 families.

3. Smaller classis meetings, being less unwieldy, can operate more efficiently.

4. More attention can be given to the problems peculiar to the particular areas in which a church or a group of churches find themselves (e.g. the churches in the Maritime Provinces).

5. The geographic spread is much too great for convenient travel arrangements. The distance between the eastern and western boundary of the classis is 1,500 miles. Any reduction in traveling-time and man-days is a great improvement.

Note:

1. Classis indications are here used only for convenience in designation. Obviously it is the prerogative of the one and the other classis to choose their own name.

2. Figures here used are taken from the 1966 Yearbook of our denomination.

3. Proper arrangements are made to ensure continued support of the St. Lawrence Seaway Evangelism Project.

Classis Eastern Ontario,

H. Uittenbosch, S.C.

Overture 10 — Revision of Incorporation Ruling

Classis Hamilton overtures the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church to change the rules concerning the Incorporation of the Churches in such a way that the Churches will be allowed to incorporate as proposed herein.

Present ruling: Acts of Synod 1963, p. 51:

“In event of any schism in this church, those members of the congregation which remain true to the Creeds and the Church Order of the Christian Reformed Church shall constitute the lawful congregation of this church, and the assets and estate of this church shall be held and enjoyed exclusively by such adherents.”

Proposed Alternative:

The property of the Church, real and personal, shall be held subject to the following conditions:

In the event of a schism, as hereinafter defined, the property of the church shall be distributed between the groups of persons into which the congregation shall be divided upon such schism in accordance with the ratio which the number of persons in each group bears to the total number of persons which are members of the church at the date of the schism.

For the purpose of these presents, a schism is deemed to exist when a dispute has arisen between two or more groups of members of the church with respect to the interpretation and application of the Bible, the official Creeds, and the Church Order of the Christian Reformed Church, which has resulted in:

- a) a decision of Synod, followed by
- b) the departure and withdrawal of membership of at least fifteen percent or twenty-five (whichever is the least) of the confessing members of the church, who
- c) cause the Incorporation or other establishment in accordance with the laws of jurisdiction under which this church is incorporated as a church which continues in existence and is administered as a church for a period of one year after its incorporation or other establishment.

Grounds:

The ruling adopted by the Synod of 1963 leaves the decision as to which of the contending parties is true to the Creeds and the Church Order to the civil magistrate.

When members of the Church of Christ challenge each other before the courts with respect to the ownership of temporal possessions, the name of Christ is dishonored on their account. (See I Cor. 6:1 ff.)

Classis Hamilton,

Rev. D. J. M. Lieverdink, S.C.

Overture 11 — Calvin College and Ecclesiastical Control

Classis British Columbia respectfully overtures the Synod of 1967 to appoint a study committee which is to review the relationship between the Christian Reformed Church and Calvin College in the light of the adopted resolutions found in the Acts of Synod 1957 (Cf. Arts. 86, 99, pp. 45ff and 49ff, and for references pp. 477-507), and to investigate means and ways of organizing a society which will own and control Calvin College under the following guarantees:

1. Complete fidelity to the infallible Word of God as expressed in the Reformed Faith.
2. When and where reasonable assurances are evident of financial responsibility and stability.

Grounds:

3. When adequate provisions can be made to assure broad, vital, and continuous interest in society membership as a whole.

1. Scripture is abundantly clear in defining the primary task of the church as preaching and teaching the Word, administering the sacraments, exercising discipline, and collecting and distributing alms. In view of this the Church cannot own and operate a general liberal arts college within the definition of this primary task of the Church as institute. (1)

2. Synod in 1957 decided that the Christian Reformed Church shall continue to own and operate Calvin College "under the present circumstances." (2) Reference here was made to a lack of appreciation of and devotion to a Christian liberal arts college run by a society or institution other than the Church. (3) Now ten years later the situation within the Christian Reformed community with regard to this attitude is much healthier. Presently we are witnessing within our own community a rapid growth in the development of Christian liberal colleges and other institutions for scientific studies supported wholeheartedly by the Christian Reformed community. (4)

3. A careful analysis of the synodical decision of 1957 to continue to own and operate Calvin College will indicate that the basic attitude of our Synod was a lack of faith. (5) Synod feared that Calvin College could not properly develop in every way without the supervision of the Church operating and controlling it. This lack of faith and the presence of too much fear is manifested clearly in the Acts of Synod 1957, Art. 99, grounds 1, 3, 4, 5 and ff.

4. At the present the Christian Reformed Church cannot effectively and directly supervise and operate Calvin College due to the different natures and tasks of both Church and College. This is made even more complicated with the rapid growth of Calvin College both in student body and administration and that of the Church executing her primary task which has become more complicated by its complexity in all aspects of life.

5. In view of the proposed post graduate studies program at Calvin College the Church would be forced to give greater attention and consequently more of her precious time to something that lies outside her primary task. She would hamper the development of Calvin College into a true Reformed institution for scientific studies by her theological dominance over the sphere of sciences.

Footnotes:

(1) cf. Art. 86; a, b, & f: 1. Acts of Synod, 1908, Art. 37, that "it is in principle more correct that a college should arise out of private initiative." 2. Acts of Synod 1926, Art 31 is of similar nature.

(2) cf. Art. 99 of Acts of Synod 1957 referring to the existential situation in 1957 rather than a Reformed approach. (cf. pp. 494ff, 501/2 esp.)

(3) cf. Art. 99 of Acts of Synod 1957, grounds Nos. 1, 3, and 5.

(4) The rapid growth in the development of both Dordt and Trinity Colleges in the United States and that of the Association for Reformed Scientific Studies in Canada. These institutions are supported wholeheartedly by Christian Reformed people. Dordt already is a four-year liberal arts college; while Trinity has plans towards a four-year program. The A.R.S.S. plans to open a Reformed institution by the first of September of this year.

(5) cf. Art. 99, grounds 4 and 5 and the rejection of the motion to appoint a committee to investigate the possibility of organizing a society, etc. Reference is made with regard to the history of many other church-related colleges in the States which became modernistic. This argument is born out of fear and reflects very little faith in our covenant God working out through His Word and Spirit in our obedient hearts.

Classis British Columbia,
Rev. C. W. Tuininga, S.C.

Overture 12 — Delegating Deacons to Major Ecclesiastical Assemblies

I. *A Brief Analysis of the Committee's Report to the Synod of 1966*

The study committee which reported to Synod 1966 on the matter of delegating deacons to major assemblies began its report by studying briefly three passages of Scripture: two of which speak of the office of deacon directly, Phil. 1:1 and I Tim. 3:8-13, and one that is often used to apply to the origin of the office, Acts 6:1-6. They concluded that for Phil. 1:1 and I Tim. 3:8-13, "The inferences from qualifications stated to task implied are limited and give little aid in differentiating the task of deacon from the task of the elder in the church." (*Acts* 1966, p. 113); and in reference to Acts 6:1-6, "This passage is not of conclusive value for the question before us" (*Acts* 1966, p. 114).

If the Scriptural evidence is as scant as this part of the study would imply, then we might legitimately ask if we ought not to discard the office entirely if it rests on such weak Biblical ground. However, the committee takes another tack. They ask the question, Is there anything in the office of elder which necessarily precludes participation by deacons in the assemblies of the church? After examining the office of elder and the general concept of office in the Scripture and finding that the primary concept of both is service (*diakonia*) the conclusion is drawn that we cannot say that "elders have an authority because of their position which precludes any diaconal authority in the church" (*Acts* 1966, p. 117).

But "why is there no mention of their (deacons) supervisory responsibility in the New Testament?" (*Acts* 1966, p. 118). The answer: "The New Testament speaks *specifically* of deacons as office-bearers only in the epistles to Timothy and Titus. These were some of the last written, near the end of the New Testament period. If, as the evidence seems to suggest, the office of deacon as part of the organizational structure of the church developed late in the New Testament period, the assignment of the governmental function to the elders with no mention made of the deacons would be natural, but it would not necessarily imply that deacons should have no authority or supervisory function in the church when that office later developed" (*Acts* 1966, p. 119).

Thus there is no good Scriptural evidence according to the study committee which should compel us to leave deacons out of major assemblies, and on theological grounds which then follow, there is good reason to include them so that the three-fold office of Christ might be represented in the work of the church, although here it is even confessed that there is no good evidence from the Reformed Creeds which speaks specifically on this matter. So then, on an argument from silence, the committee recommends including deacons in major assemblies because there are no lawful objections against such.

The big question is, has the study committee done justice to the teaching of Scripture? Surely, a great number of things could be instituted by the church because there is nothing said about it in the Bible. But is it not our responsibility to stay within the confines of Scripture, especially on such a basic matter as this, believing that the Scriptures are sufficient for the faith and the life of the church? If there is no specific enunciation of the task of the deacons as the committee would have us believe, but rather are assistants to the elders as they say, and a late development at that; why do we not have deacons such as the Anglican Church has, assisting the clergy in worship? Does not our theological argument become sheer rationalism at this point? Still the question is there, has the study committee done full justice to the Scriptures?

II. *The Teaching of Scripture*

One of the basic pillars of the argumentation of the study committee is that the diaconate was a late development in the church and that for this reason elders are

the ones in Scripture who exercise authority and supervision and not deacons. Here there is a recognition that Scripture does assign this function to the elders. (This can be demonstrated very easily by looking at many passages of Scripture, i.e., I Tim. 5:17, I Peter 5:1-3, Acts 20:28, Acts 15:2, etc.) They state further that there are no passages given for the assignment of authority to deacons, only that they have the same quality of office (*diakonia*) and that authority must have come later. Why? Because deacons are only mentioned in I Timothy and Titus, late epistles of the Apostle Paul. But this is not true. Deacons are not mentioned in Titus. Rather as the committee itself stated earlier in the report, (pp. 112, 113), deacons are mentioned as a special office only in I Tim. 3:8-13 and Phil. 1:1. Philippians is not a late epistle in the same sense as the pastorals. It is one of the prison epistles and is usually dated somewhere around 61-63 A.D. However, the important thing to note in Philippians is that Paul addresses the deacons in his salutation as an office already well established and not as something that was developing. "Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons." Phil. 1:1. In I Timothy the evangelist is told the qualifications for office which must be found in deacons. Here again the diaconate is already an established office. But what is most interesting is to compare I Timothy with Titus which was written at approximately the same time near the end of Paul's life. While at Ephesus where Timothy is, deacons are well established as an office, Titus in organizing the church on the Isle of Crete is told only to elect elders. Nothing is said of deacons.

Instead of the Scriptural evidence supporting a gradually developing diaconate which ultimately was assigned authority and supervisory functions, we find that during the apostolic age, the diaconate was developed and functioning in one place, while in another it was apparently nonexistent. Why?

Again, assuming as the study committee does that the task of the deacons is to take care of the poor and handle the distribution of gifts to the needy, (For a defense that this is Scriptural and has its basis in the appointment of the Seven in Acts 6, see D. D. Bannerman's "The Scripture Doctrine of the Church," pp. 411 ff.), why is it that when the gifts of the churches for the needy at Jerusalem were sent up, they were sent to the elders and not to the Seven or to deacons? (c.f. Acts 11:29, 30).

There can be only one answer. The elders according to this clear teaching of Scripture have the supervision over all of the life of the church including distribution to the poor and needy; that they have this supervision of the church by themselves; and that deacons have authority only as they are assistants to the elders to take over the "service of tables" when this is necessary. Never do they have the authority or the supervision of the church on a par with the elders. This is reinforced by the fact that even at the end of his life Paul did not consider it necessary to have deacons at the church in Crete. Elders are indispensable to supervision, but deacons are not. They help the elders but do not participate in their rule. (see "Theological Dictionary of the New Testament" by G. Kittel, vol. II, pp. 89, 90).

Consequently, this has been the historic position of the Reformed Churches (see Agenda part II, Synod 1938, pp. 91-99, esp. Appendix, pp. 97-99) and should not be changed unless there is good, positive, Scriptural evidence to do so.

III. *Overture*

Therefore Classis British Columbia respectfully overtures Synod not to accede to the recommendations of the study committee to delegate deacons to major assemblies.

Grounds:

1. The Scriptures entrust the government of the church to elders.

2. The Scriptures show deacons to be office bearers with the special mandate to care for the needy in word and deed.
3. This has been the historic position of the Reformed Churches.

Classis British Columbia,
C. W. Tuininga, S.C.

Overture 13 — Deacons and Major Ecclesiastical Assemblies

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

The consistory of the Second Christian Reformed Church of Toronto has studied and discussed the report and recommendations of the special study committee on "The Delegation of Deacons to Major Assemblies," and came to the following conclusions, which we present for your consideration.

It appears to the consistory that the answers to the matter being studied by your committee would come (and can come only) from the results of a different study. The first question is not "should deacons be delegated to major assemblies," but rather "what status and authority is given to the deacons in Scripture."

The latter question is rather difficult to answer and thus worthy of intense study. Such a study is thus far lacking in our churches. The present study committee gave some Scriptural references to the office of deacon but failed to come with a positive "thus saith the Lord." Instead their first recommendation is rather negative:

"Synod declare that, in the light of Scripture and the Reformed confessions, it judges that there are no lawful objections to the delegation of deacons to the major assemblies of the church."

The Synod of 1936 appointed a special committee to study the "status of deacons in the council of the church." This committee reported to Synod in 1938. They gave a good report about the history of the diaconate but the committee ". . . did not deem it necessary to make an original study of this subject. What we (the committee) offer in this report is mostly a reference to what others have written before us, and to the official position of our own church."

Synod of 1938 decided to "receive this report as information, and thank the special committee for its labors." It then proceeded to adopt the following advice of its advisory committee:

(Acts of Synod 1938, page 81)

"B. Recommendation:

In view of the fact that the basic problem in regard to the status of deacons in the Consistory hinges on the interpretation of the phrase, "added to the consistory" in Art. 37 of the Church Order, Synod declare that:

1. The phrase, "added to the Consistory," can mean only that the deacons become members of the consistory, and as such they are warranted in performing presbyterial functions including the right to vote in matters of church government.

2. This concession by our Church Order, namely, that deacons may function as elders, is made to avoid the un-Reformed practice of oligarchic rule which would be the only alternative.

3. It ought, however, to be added that such deacons, in matters of church government, should naturally give due consideration to the judgment of the elders.

Adopted."

No reference at all to the Biblical status of the office of deacon but only to a "concession by our Church Order."

The consistory recommends that the Synod of 1967 withhold action on the report and recommendations of the study committee and appoint a committee whose mandate is to study the Biblical status and authority of the deacons.

Respectfully submitted,
 The consistory of the Second
 Christian Reformed Church of Toronto
 Rev. John J. Byker, President
 K. Knoops, Clerk

Done in consistory, March 6, 1967.

Overture 14 — Calling Churches and Home Mission Order

The consistory of the Christian Reformed Church of Riverside, California overtures Synod relative to two matters as follows:

Overture A. That Synod authorize and instruct the Executive Committee of the Board of Home Missions to designate the Riverside congregation as the calling church of the new home missionary who will serve at Riverside.

Grounds:

1. What the Riverside consistory is requesting is permitted by the Home Mission Order. Article 10, Section 1, of the Home Mission Order provides that the Board of Home Missions and/or its Executive Committee shall designate calling churches for the Home Missionaries. What constitutes a "calling church" is not specifically defined in the Home Mission Order or in the Revised Church Order. Basic and elementary principles of Reformed church polity support the position that any regularly organized church with a duly constituted consistory of elders and deacons may be a calling church.

2. What the Riverside consistory is requesting is also permitted by the Church Order. Article 12 of the Revised Church Order reads, in part, as follows:

"A Minister who enters upon the work of home or foreign missions shall be called in the regular manner by a local church, which acts in cooperation with the appropriate committees of classis or Synod."

This language appears to assume that any regularly organized, local church is authorized and permitted to call a home missionary. There is no suggestion of distinctions between churches relative to the function of calling home missionaries.

3. The Home Mission Order (Article 10, Section 1 (c)), provides that the consistory of the calling church shall have oversight as to the life and doctrine of the missionary. Article 12 of the Revised Church Order also states that the supervision of the doctrine and life of the home missionary rests with the calling church.

In circumstances in which an acting and duly constituted consistory is in office in a Home Mission Church, the Reformed principle of the autonomy of the local consistory would require that it be charged with the responsibility of the supervision of the home missionary. In addition, as a practical matter, the consistory of the Home Mission Church will in all likelihood be more aware and cognizant of the life and doctrine of the missionary than any other consistory or even the Home Mission Board. It is desirable that the local consistory of a Home Mission Church have a measure of supervision and oversight with respect to the missionary who serves such a church. It can be a source of very real problems if the missionary believes and feels he is not responsible to the local consistory.

4. The Home Mission Order (Article 10, Section 1 (d)), also provides that the ordination or installation of the home missionary shall take place in the midst

of the calling church. It will create very considerable dissatisfaction among members of the Riverside congregation if the ordination or installation of the home missionary who will ultimately serve in Riverside does not occur in the Riverside church.

Overture B: That Synod add to and supplement Article 10, Section 1 (a) of the Home Mission Order to read as follows:

"The Board and/or its Executive Committee shall designate calling churches for the Executive Secretary, Minister of Evangelism, and the Home Missionaries. *In the case of the calling of Home Missionaries, the local church where the Home Missionary will serve shall ordinarily be designated as the calling church, if the local church is organized and has a duly constituted consistory. The Board and/or its Executive Committees may designate a calling church for a home missionary, other than the local church, upon the concurrence of the Home Mission Committee of the local class.*" (Italics indicates the addition to present language in Article 10, Section 1 (a).)

Grounds:

1. The Home Mission Board and its Executive Committee at present take the position that they are required to designate a calling church other than the Home Mission Church where the missionary will serve, even in cases where the local church has been organized and has its own consistory. Such a position violates the cardinal principle of Reformed church polity relating to the autonomy of the local church and its consistory. The practice at present followed constitutes a serious departure from long-established principles of Reformed church government.

2. Under present practice, the members of the consistory of a Home Mission Church are unable to fulfill their vows of ordination. The Form for the Ordination of Elders and Deacons states that, "It is . . . the duty of the Elders to maintain the purity of the Word and sacraments." The Form also requires of Elders that, "they should with love and humility promote the faithful discharge of the office of their fellow-officers, having particular regard to the doctrine and conduct of the Minister of the Word." However, under existing practice, the Elders of a Home Mission Church are not given the authority to effectively carry out the duties they have solemnly promised to fulfill. According to Article 12 of the Church Order and Article 10, Section 1 (a), of the Home Mission Order, the supervision of the doctrine and life of the home missionary rests with the calling church, which the Board contends cannot presently be the Home Mission Church. Thus, at present a conflict exists between the Form for the Ordination of Elders and Deacons which is used in Home Mission Churches, just as it is in other churches, and Article 10, Section 1 (c) of the Home Mission Order.

3. Allowing the duties of the supervision of the doctrine and life of the home missionary to be withheld from the consistory of the home mission church and given to another consistory relegates the consistory of the home mission church to a second class status. This practice is a flagrant violation of Article 95 of the Church Order which states that, "no church shall lord it over another church and no office-bearer shall lord it over another office-bearer."

4. Present practice is essentially an affront to the consistory and congregation of a home mission church.

5. Present practice undermines the morale and spirituality of a home mission church.

6. The adoption of this proposed overture will promote a better spirit of cooperation between the Board of Home Missions and the consistory of the home mission church in the choice of the home missionary. Present practice of the Home Mission Board, as exemplified in the case of the first two calls which were

issued for a home missionary to serve at Riverside, is to leave the local consistory with no voice of any kind in selecting the missionary who will minister to the church. No consultation with the local consistory takes place with respect to the home missionary who will serve the church, his qualifications, his suitability, for the church, and the church's needs. In the experience of the Riverside church, the Executive Committee of the Board selected the name of the prospective minister for Riverside, sent his name to the consistory of the Christian Reformed Church at Ontario, California, to issue a call, and, subsequently, informed the Riverside consistory of the action which had been taken.

7. Relative to financial considerations, in the case of the Riverside Church, approximately two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) of the cost of the support of the church is contributed by its members and about one-third ($\frac{1}{3}$), by the Home Mission Board. The average per family contribution per week to the church by the members of the Riverside congregation is about \$9.00. The Riverside Church has always paid its denominational and classical quotas in full. But, nonetheless, the Riverside church and its consistory have no voice in deciding who their minister will be. This is inequitable.

8. The language proposed to be added to Article 10, Section 1 (a), set forth above would still allow the Home Mission Board a measure of discretion and flexibility in designating calling churches for home missionaries, with the concurrence of the local Classical Home Mission Committee. If substantial or compelling reasons existed why a consistory other than the local consistory of the home mission church should be designated as the calling consistory, this would still be possible.

9. The addition sought to be added to Article 10, Section 1 (a), does not jeopardize the proper authority of the Home Mission Board or in any way endanger its purpose or function.

By way of explanation and further support of its overtures, the Riverside consistory points out that the overture, in all material respects as outlined above, were brought before Classis California South at its meeting of September 21, 1966. The action of Classis with respect to the overtures, as reflected in the minutes of Classis, was as follows:

"ARTICLE 7. OVERTURES OF RIVERSIDE —

1. A motion is made to appoint a committee to consider these overtures and bring advice to Classis concerning them later in the day. Adopted. The committee is: Revs. Hofman, Nederlof, Dekker and elders Ornee and Huisjen."

"ARTICLE 26. REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON RIVERSIDE OVERTURES — see Art. 7, above. The committee recommends that Classis forward the overtures of the Riverside Consistory to the Chr. Ref. Board of Home Missions as worthy of the Board's serious consideration. Grounds:

A. Your committee is in basic agreement with the church-governmental principles indicated by Riverside.

B. The Board has not had an opportunity to deal with the request of Riverside.

C. As far as revision of the Home Mission Order is concerned, we understand that Synod usually refers overtures of this nature to the Board for advice. Adopted."

The attention of Synod should also be called to the fact that the Board of Home Missions at February, 1967 meeting gave consideration to the above overtures. Although the Riverside consistory has no official notice at this date as to precisely what action was taken by the Board, it is the understanding of the consistory that the Board is in agreement with the purpose of the overtures, and a committee has been or will be appointed to study the possibility of making home

mission churches, which are organized and have regular consistories, calling churches while at the same time preserving necessary supervisory power of the Board.

Since the overtures of the Riverside consistory have been considered by Classis California South and the Board of Home Missions, it is believed that the issues raised by the overtures are ready for consideration and action by Synod.

In order to understand fully the significance of the overture A above, it should be noted that the Riverside church is at present vacant. Three calls have been issued by the Ontario church, acting at the request of the executive committee of the Board, for a home missionary to serve at Riverside. Although the Riverside consistory disagrees with this procedure, it has agreed that the calling of a home missionary in this manner should be continued until the question at issue can be resolved by Synod. The Riverside consistory believes that it is important that another minister be obtained as soon as possible, and for this reason it has acquiesced in the course now being followed.

In the event that a new home missionary is obtained for Riverside prior to action by Synod, this does not render the overture academic. The problem will still remain that the Riverside church will not be the calling church under terms of Article 10 of the Home Mission Order. The Ontario Church, as the designated calling church, will be charged with the responsibilities indicated in Article 10 pertaining to the home missionary, which responsibilities the Riverside consistory believes properly belong to it as a regularly constituted consistory.

Respectfully submitted,

Consistory of the Christian Reformed
Church of Riverside, California

Dr. Alan D. Pauw, Vice-Pres.
Richard Geldof, Clerk

Dated: March 6, 1967.

Overture 15 — Teaching in Calvin College and Seminary

The Council of the First Christian Reformed Church of Ripon, California in its session of February 13, 1967 officially endorsed the overture presented by certain members of the congregation.

Rev. C. Wm. Flietstra, Pres.
John J. Swier, Clerk

We, the undersigned members of the First Chr. Ref. church of Ripon, California would hereby request the adoption of the following overture, to wit:

That those who are teaching in Calvin College and Seminary contrary to Holy Scripture as we of the Chr. Ref. church as a denomination believe Scripture ought to be interpreted, viz.: in harmony with our accepted Forms of Unity (Heid. Catechism, Belgic Confession, and the Canons of Dordt) be forbidden from the promotion of such views.

Grounds:

1. Our Forms of Unity (Belgic Confession in Art. II, VII, and XIV; Heid. Catechism in L.D. IX; and Canons of Dordt in Canons III-IV, Art. 1) maintain the historically adopted and approved interpretation of Genesis 1 and 2.

2. It is evident from the Acts of Synod, 1966, Art. 32, p. 15 that "the Secretary of the Board of Trustees of Calvin College and Seminary has stated that Dr. Wilson *does set forth* the arguments for a form of (theistic) evolution in his classes, and that other professors may have similar views."

3. The Synod of 1966 is yet concerned with the matter of Creation and Evo-

lution in the church since they did not reject Overtures 19-22 and 28 but appointed a committee for further study of this issue. Cf. Acts, 1966, Art. 104, p. 75.

4. The views of Prof. H. Dekker, viz: "God loves all men" and "Christ died for you" are at present harming the unity of the faith and causing divisive attitudes within the church itself.

5. Such teaching as theistic evolution and the views of Professor Dekker should not be continued unless they be proven valid on the basis of Holy Scripture as interpreted with Scripture and adopted by all the governing bodies of the church; viz: consistories, classes, and Synod.

Respectfully submitted,

M. Brandt
 Albert J. Boertien
 Henry Maat
 John Boot
 John Luth
 Henry Koster
 Tom Roos
 John Smink
 Henry Veldstra
 J. J. Weersing
 Henry Plooy

Overture 16 — Financial Aid Requested for Luke Society

Classis Rocky Mountain overtures Synod to grant the request of the Luke Society as follows:

"The Luke Society seeks permission of the 1967 Synod of the Christian Reformed Church to acquaint all churches of the need for a new hospital facility at Rehoboth, New Mexico, and appeal to the membership of the Christian Reformed Church for funds to help attain this goal.

"Grounds:

"A. The Christian witness, through the influence of the present hospital for the past 57 years, has been growing steadily in the western New Mexico area.

"B. Through the performance of Christian mercy to all people, regardless of their race, color or creed, or their ability to pay, the Christian influence as demonstrated in the present facility has reached out across the nation.

"C. The present hospital building is no longer adequate or safe for continued care of patients. Official government personnel in charge of hospital facilities have declared the present structure non-conforming and beyond the advisability to remodel. Therefore, a new hospital must be built if our Christian witness is to continue to be an influence."

Classis Rocky Mountain,

A. Disselkoe, S.C.

Overture 17 — Financial Aid Requested for Calvary Rehabilitation Center

Classis Rocky Mountain overtures Synod of 1967 to place the Calvary Rehabilitation Center (for male alcoholics) at Phoenix, Arizona, on the approved list of causes recommended for financial support from the churches of the denomination.

Grounds:

1. To our knowledge, a program such as that carried on by the Rehabilitation Center does not at the present time receive denominational support; thus there would be no duplication of effort.

2. The annual cost of operating the center is greater than the local churches can support, including both the Reformed and Christian Reformed churches.

3. Men come to the center for help from all areas and not only from Phoenix. The program is therefore more than a local one.

4. There is a definite need for a solid source of probable continuous income for the ever present expenses of the Rehabilitation Center.

5. Approximately $\frac{1}{3}$ of the annual budget must be raised by donations.

6. The center, working closely with the local ministers, has taken the steps necessary to solidify its organizational structure, thereby to assure continued growth and effectiveness.

Classis Rocky Mountain,

A. Disselkoen, S.C.

Overture 18 — Requests Declaration on Communism

The undersigned, concerned about the rapidly growing threat of international Communism, overtures Synod of 1967 to make a declaration regarding Communism.

By Communism I am referring to the movement which Mr. J. Edgar Hoover identifies in his book, *Masters of Deceit*, as "The Science of Marxism-Leninism." This kind of Communism is also known as "Scientific Socialism." Dr. Frederick Schwarz, director of the Christian Anti Communist Crusade, testifying before the United States House Committee on Un-American Activities, said, "The ideology of Communism is applied Godless materialism." The kind of Communism I am referring to is the kind that has enslaved approximately one billion inhabitants of the earth.

It is my opinion that this declaration should clearly point out the fallacies of the atheistic Communist philosophy as opposed to the truth revealed in God's Word, warn of its rapid spread and infiltration into many areas of our own beloved country, and propose a positive program of instruction, and plan of action to combat the onward rush of Communism. Furthermore, since Communism is diametrically opposed to all that we hold dear as Christians, I request that Synod make a decision that no one knowingly belonging to the Communist party, Communist front organizations, or one who advocates or teaches the policies of the Communist movement be permitted to be a member of the Christian Reformed Church.

Mr. J. Edgar Hoover, Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, very properly calls them "Masters of Deceit." Even a casual reading of history shows that many of their gains have been acquired by lies, deceit, force, and murder, showing by their fruits that they are children of him who was a liar from the beginning and as such should be exposed, and have no fellowship in the Church of Jesus Christ.

I present this overture because I believe:

1. There is substantial evidence that the Communists are rapidly gaining control of a large part of the world's population. They now have a stronghold only a few miles from our shores. While there are many voices telling us that the Communists have mellowed and are no longer a threat, this is not true. Mr. J. Edgar Hoover, in a statement to the subcommittee of the Committee on the Judiciary,

United States Senate, concerning the 18th National Convention Communist Party U.S.A., June 22-26, 1966, stated: "The 18th National Convention revealed the party as a unified hard-hitting, well-organized conspiracy, completely loyal to Moscow, committed to the overthrow of our democratic institutions." This report also points out the special emphasis of the Communists to recruit our youth. There is abundant evidence that many areas of our national life have been infiltrated, including the churches and the schools. Unless the tide is turned we stand to lose our many freedoms most precious of which are our freedoms to worship God and propagate the gospel.

2. There is a woeful lack of knowledge among our membership regarding the true nature of Communism.

3. The members of the Christian Reformed Church, if properly informed and motivated, could wield a tremendous influence, with God's help, in exposing the falsehoods, and dangers of Communism, and in strengthening our nation in its hour of crisis.

4. The Christian Reformed Church has set a precedent regarding membership in organizations which are incompatible with the Christian faith, namely, our stand regarding the secret societies and lodges, in which we forbid church membership to any who are members of lodges or secret societies.

I believe that the philosophy and programs of the Communists are far worse, and pose more of a threat to the church of Jesus Christ than those of the lodges we have opposed for many years. Communists are by their own admission atheistic, and have shown in countries where they have gained control that their aim is to curtail the programs of the church. Many Christians are suffering persecution at the hands of the Communists.

5. Finally, a similar overture was introduced in the Council of the Oostburg, Wis., church in 1966, was approved by Classis Wisconsin at the May 10, 1966, session, and was sent on to the 1966 Synod. Here it was not taken up, the reason given was that it arrived too late to appear in the agenda. At the meeting of Classis Wisconsin held this year the matter was again brought up but was defeated, hence I am bringing it as an individual, hoping it may receive your prayerful attention.

Oostburg, Wisconsin

Art Lensink

Note: the above overture is printed in the Agenda on the basis of Rules for Synodical Procedure, V.D. (R.J.D., Stated Clerk)

Overture 19 — Catechism Publications of the Committee on Education

The Consistory of II Toronto Christian Reformed Church submitted an overture to Classis Toronto regarding concern for the Catechetical material published by the Synodical Committee on Education. Classis Toronto concurred in the concern of II Toronto and appointed a committee to refine and strengthen the work which had already been done by the above mentioned consistory. This material is being sent in by the consistory of II Toronto in order to appear in the Agenda and Classical endorsement of this overture will be forth coming from the May meeting of Classis Toronto.

I. The Consistory of II Toronto expresses its grave concern about the fundamental educational principles with respect to the content and methods implied in the material published by the Synodical Committee on education.

II. Consistory of II Toronto overtures the Synod of 1967:

A. To instruct its Education Committee to cease further publication, especially of new catechetical materials.

Grounds:

1. It is unwarranted to continue publication of such materials unless there is an expressed consensus of opinion about the education principles underlying the entire instructional program of the church.

2. In view of the existing dissatisfaction it is economically not feasible to continue publication.

B. To mandate a committee to submit to the following Synod a thorough study of Biblical principles with respect to basis, nature, contents, methods and aims of the churches' educational program.

Grounds:

1. The needs of such a study is evidenced by the fact that there are many examples which can be adduced to illustrate the highly confusing and very mundane effects of such instruction upon the catechumens.

Examples: (See *Steps in Faith* (quarterly tests))

Lesson 10, Q. 26 — Jesus could suffer and die because He

- A. had no human nature.
- B. had a human nature.
- C. was spiritual like angels.
- D. never got married.

Lesson 10, Q. 29 — Jesus became a man

- A. just to have something to do.
- B. to know what it felt like to live on earth.
- C. to bear God's punishment for sin.
- D. because God was tired of having Him in heaven.

Lesson 13, Q. 64 — Christians can be sure their bodies will someday rise from the dead because

- A. God made their bodies out of indestructible material.
- B. of Christ's resurrection.
- C. bodies are too valuable to stay dead.
- D. graveyards are too lonely to live in forever.

2. The dissatisfaction among the churches with many of the publications is not of an incidental but rather fundamental nature and therefore calls for such a study for the sake of the wellbeing of the church.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. John J. Byker
K. Knoops, Clerk

Overture 20 — Overtures re Doctrinal Matters

A. Delay Decision and Continue Study on Doctrinal Matters

The Consistory of the La Grave Avenue Christian Reformed Church respectfully urges the Synod of 1967 to make such disposition of the Doctrinal Committee Report re the Dekker case as will foster a continuing and unprejudiced study in depth of the issues involved.

Grounds:

1) Both the Doctrinal Committee Report of 1966 and the body of commentary arising from it testify to the profundity of the issues which must be considered. An official pronouncement would be premature as long as there are alternative views none of which disagree demonstrably with Scripture and the creeds.

2) The Synod can most effectively "allay . . . the unrest which prevails in the churches" by pointing out that all parties to the present discussion declare their

loyalty to the official standards of the church, and that the theological questions involved are too complex to admit of a ready solution.

3) In its deliberations concerning these profound issues, the church should enlist the theological resources of the wider Reformed community. The example of the international Synod of Dort may well be recalled in this connection.

4) The Doctrinal Committee Report of 1966 has provided a healthy incentive to doctrinal reflection among the membership of the church. At the same time, it is clear that no substantial consensus has yet been reached. The church now needs the opportunity similarly to ponder the Committee's revised report of 1967.

5) The perspective of time may be the church's strong ally in its consideration of these doctrinal questions, as was the case, for example, in the infrasupralapsarian controversy of years past.

La Grave Avenue Christian Reformed Church
John Oole, Corresponding Secretary

B. Decisions Requested re Doctrinal Matters

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

The consistory of the Calvin Christian Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan, having considered the report of the Doctrinal Committee, Supplement 42, Acts of Synod 1966, respectfully submits to Synod the following:

1. There are certain precious truths which lie uniquely at the heart of the life and faith of the Church. Among these are the convictions that the salvation of sinners has been finally and effectively accomplished by Jesus Christ, that we who believe are saved exclusively by God's unmerited grace, and that our salvation rests in God's unconditional election from before the creation of the world. These are, we believe, truths that our Reformed fathers articulated in our creeds, and which we are bound to keep from any violation or attenuation.

2. We have noted that, throughout the recent discussions about the love of God, Professor Harold Dekker has consistently affirmed these truths of our faith. In particular, he has repeatedly confessed that:

a. Sinners are saved only by the unmerited grace of God, through the efficacious atonement achieved by Jesus Christ.

b. The salvation of sinners is rooted in God's election and is in no sense the achievement of their faith or works.

c. The saving application of Christ's atonement is effective, through the work of the Holy Spirit, in the life of particular individuals and not for all men in general.

3. We have observed, however, that the discussion has failed to produce a general, clear and edifying understanding of the issue. Professor Dekker, speaking out of a special missionary concern, originally touched upon a genuine and vital question: how the church can best proclaim the Gospel of Christ to sinners in the pursuit of its missionary vocation. Pressed to defend and expand his original thesis, however, he has been unable to develop his understanding of Scripture in a way that has clearly communicated his meaning to the churches, to say nothing of commanding universal assent. The doctrinal committee, on the other hand, has also failed to convince the churches that its conclusions were supported by comprehensive biblical evidence.

The discussion has thus failed to lead our church community into the common mind which is necessary for a mature and judicious settlement of the issue. A termination of the discussion at this time, through the adoption by Synod of the extra-creedal statements proposed by the doctrinal committee, would, in our judg-

ment, be productive neither of peaceful unity in Christ's body nor of the deeper understanding of the faith that doctrinal decisions ought to promote.

4. We respectfully and prayerfully urge the Synod rather to do the following:

a. Recommend the report of its doctrinal committee to the churches as the point of departure for all further discussion of the issue.

b. Affirm anew, as a solemn witness to the world, that the salvation of God's people was once-for-all effectively achieved by Jesus Christ, that our salvation is by God's grace alone, exclusively through Jesus Christ, that those who come to faith in Christ are elect by God unconditionally from eternity, and that any statement which controverts or obscures or dilutes these precious truths is hostile to the Gospel of God expressed in the Reformed creeds.

c. Address a compelling pastoral exhortation to all spokesmen of the church, and to its theologians in particular, to speak and write in a manner reflecting patient examination of the Bible and humble submission to the creeds of the church, and in all care for the peace and edification of all the people of God.

For the Consistory,

C. Boomsma, President

N. Dekker, Clerk

C. Enforcement of Form of Subscription

Classis Minnesota North overtures Synod that the rule contained in the Formula of Subscription be enforced in connection with the present "limited atonement issue," namely, "that if any difficulties or different sentiments respecting the aforesaid doctrines should arise in our minds, we promise that we will neither publicly nor privately propose, teach, or defend the same either by preaching or writing, until we have first revealed such sentiments to the Consistory, Classis, or Synod, that the same may be examined, etc."

Grounds:

1. Prof. H. Dekker's presentation of the doctrine of the atonement has been demonstrated to be, at the very least, questionable in the light of the Word of God and our Standards. It is therefore incumbent, by virtue of one's endorsement of the Formula of Subscription, on those who hold this view to refrain from teaching it until the Church has come to a decision on this matter.

2. It is apparent that some of our seminary students have become confused regarding the doctrine of limited atonement. Our Classis has had concrete evidence of this in connection with its examinations of candidates for the ministry.

3. Enforcement of this rule now will help to discourage any future violations of the above rule.

Classis Minnesota North,
Clarence Bisschop, S.C.

D. Decision Requested on Atonement Doctrine

Classis British Columbia overtures Synod to take definite and positive action at the 1967 Synod with regard to Prof. H. Dekker's position on the doctrine of the atonement, and that this action be in line with the conclusions and recommendations of the Doctrinal Committee to the Synod of 1966.

Grounds:

1. While certain questions surrounding the present controversy may always remain insoluble for finite man, the study committee has clearly shown the po-

sition of Prof. H. Dekker to be untenable in the light of Scripture and the Confessions.

2. While the concern of Prof. Dekker for the mission of the Church and its zeal to carry out this mission is most laudable, nevertheless his contention that any lack of zeal for the mission of the Church is to be attributed to the Reformed view of the doctrine of particular atonement has not been proved. To the degree that there is a lack of zeal for the mission of the Church, this may well be due to other factors.

3. Further delay in positive (definitive) action now would increase the unrest which prevails in the churches, which Synod sought to allay by appointing the Study Committee. (Cf. Acts of Synod, 1966, p. 437)

4. Further delay would be a real hindrance to our Reformed witness in the Reformed community and beyond.

Classis British Columbia,
Rev. C. W. Tuininga

E. Request Decision on Doctrinal Matter

Anent the doctrinal issue of limited atonement as it relates to the love of God, the Consistory of the Walker Christian Reformed Church overtures the Synod of 1967 to:

I. Endorse the essence of the 1966 report of the Synodical Doctrinal Committee and to adopt some form of that report without changing the doctrinal position contained therein.

1. This issue is causing a great deal of unrest in the church and consequently should be dealt with without further delay.

2. The main body of the report gives obvious evidence that the committee has studied the subject matter thoroughly, dealt with the main issue adequately, marshalled the pertinent Scriptural and creedal evidence acceptably and set forth the Reformed position on the main issue accurately.

3. The 1966 Synodical Advisory Committee agrees that "the report expresses substantially the Reformed tradition in the areas discussed" and that the body of the report has "Biblical and confessional support." (Acts of Synod 1966, 1 and 2 top of page 69).

4. The 1966 Synod concurred with its advisory committee in endorsing the report as having "Biblical and confessional support." Furthermore, Synod recommended this report to the Synodical Doctrinal Committee only for "further reflection and improvement" and for possible "reformulation of the propositions." (Acts of Synod 1966, Recommendation 2, page 69).

5. The report makes it crystal clear that the doctrinal expressions, contending that the love of God to the elect is the same in essence as His love to all men and that the atonement is inherently universal (Acts of Synod 1966, pp. 446, 447), are in conflict with the Scriptures and the creeds. Thus Scriptural truth and creedal strength and unity demand that this issue be dealt with forthrightly.

II. Declare that the "related problems" (Art. 92, B. 3, Acts of Synod 1966) are irrelevant as far as the disposition of the main issue pertaining to God's love and the atonement is concerned.

Grounds:

1. The "related problems" are indeed "complex issues," some of which the church has been struggling with through the ages and for which she likely will not have answers until our Lord returns.

2. In contradistinction to the complexity of these related problems, the Synodical Committee has clearly shown that the unique love of God for His own and particular atonement are clearly set forth in Scripture and the creeds.

3. Thus the "theological clarification and precise statement" of the "related problems" should not hinder us in recognizing the urgent necessity of adopting the doctrinal position of Synod's Doctrinal Committee.

III. Deal with departures from the Scriptural and creedal teachings re the atonement and the love of God, as expressed in the doctrinal statements of the committee's report, according to the requirements of the "Church Order" and the "Form of Subscription."

Consistory of the

Walker Christian Reformed Church

Rev. S. M. Voortman, pres.

G. A. Breker, clerk

F. Professor H. Dekker and Doctrinal Matters

The Consistory of the First Christian Reformed Church of Sarnia, on consideration of the extensive report of the Doctrinal Committee submitted to the churches for study in 1966, overtures the Synod of 1967 to declare that the teachings of Professor H. Dekker that:

1. There is no "qualitative difference between God's love for all men and His love for the elect," and

2. That Christ's atonement is not limited to any group of people but is inherently universal and therefore the church must say to unbelievers as well as to believers "Christ died for you," (Acts 1966, p. 463) is in conflict with the Scriptures and our Confessions and therefore may not be taught in our churches.

Grounds:

1. Many passages of the Bible including the following, teach that there is an electing love of God for His people that is not given to the unbelieving world:

Malachi 1:2, 3, "I loved Jacob; but Esau I hated," is cited in Romans 9:13 as a classic example of God's elective dealing with men.

John 10:11, 15 speak of Christ dying for His "sheep" who are explicitly distinguished in verses 26ff. from unbelievers. ("But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep.")

Acts 20:28 speaks of "the church of the Lord which he purchased with His own blood." Here the qualifying phrase can hardly be generalized as applying to all men without making it meaningless.

Ephesians 5:25-27 compares the love of Christ for His church with the exclusive love of a husband for his wife.

Ephesians 2:4 attributes the Christian's salvation from being "by nature children of wrath, even as the rest," to God's "great love wherewith He loved us."

John 6:36-40 and John 17, especially verse 9, plainly reveal a unique concern of Christ for His own which He does not have for the world.

2. The texts with which Professor Dekker attempts to support his position are those which speak of "the world," or "all men" or "every man" in relation to Christ's sacrifice. These texts are either found in a context in which there is a more specific designation of the objects of the love or grace of God of which they speak in a general way, or they are compatible with the doctrine plainly taught in other Scriptures that there is such a particular reference. On the other hand,

those texts which speak of God's electing love and of a particular or limited atonement cannot be harmonized with the denial that there is such a particular love and such a limited atonement.

3. As Professor Dekker himself admits, the Bible nowhere teaches us that we must say to unbelievers, "Christ died for you."

4. Professor Dekker's insistence on a universal atonement compels him to say "that the atonement as such has no efficacy . . ." and as the committee report reveals, makes it impossible for him to do justice to the Bible's teaching and emphasis on its substitutionary, piacular and saving character. (Acts 1966, pp. 463 ff. on "The Atonement," esp. pp. 463, 471 and 472, where this is called the "fundamental fault" of his view.)

5. These views conflict especially with the **Canons of Dordt, II, 8** which states that it was "the will of God that Christ . . . should effectually redeem . . . all those, and those only, who were from eternity chosen to salvation. . . ."

6. To tolerate teachings contrary to the Word of God and the Confessions would be to betray the Christian faith we must hold as Reformed Churches and to abandon the biblical discipline of our Creeds and Form of Subscription which we have promised before God to maintain.

Consistory of First Sarnia
Christian Reformed Church,
Peter De Jong, President
Ben De Jong, Clerk

G. Doctrinal Issues Confronting Denomination

The Consistory of the Ebenezer Christian Reformed Church, Berwyn, Illinois, being moved by an ever-deepening sense of responsibility concerning the doctrinal issue confronting our denomination, respectfully overtures Synod to adopt a declaration that faithfully reflects the teaching of the Holy Scriptures and the Doctrinal Standards of the Christian Reformed Church on the doctrine of definite atonement as it relates to the love of God.

It is our hope and prayer, should such a declaration be made, that it will be instrumental in persuading Professor Harold Dekker to abandon the position he has been promulgating concerning the atonement as it relates to the love of God, for we believe that such position is contrary to the Word of God and our Doctrinal Standards. Should he persist in this position, we call upon Synod to take whatever necessary action it may deem appropriate under the terms of the Church Order and the Formula of Subscription.

We further implore Synod to take appropriate measures to insure that the teaching of the Word of God and our Doctrinal Standards on the subject of the atonement as it relates to the love of God shall be faithfully taught in Calvin Theological Seminary.

Grounds:

1. Professor Dekker's position was initially made known as far back as December, 1962 and sufficient discussion has taken place to clarify the issues in the controversy that resulted therefrom.

2. We have been persuaded of the essential validity of the Report of the Doctrinal Committee presented to the Synod of 1966, and believe that such report adequately demonstrates that Professor Dekker's views on the love of God and the atonement are erroneous and in conflict with the Holy Scriptures and our Doctrinal Standards. Specifically, we believe his writings concerning the love of

God are at variance with the following passages of Scripture: Deut. 7:6-8; 14:2; Isa. 63:7, 8; Amos 3:2a; Matt. 1:21.... 11:25-27; John 6:37-39; 17; Acts 13:48; 15:14-17; Rom. 9:13-18; Eph. 1:4, 5; 2:2-7; I John 3:1; and with the following creedal references: Confession of Faith, XVI; Canons of Dort, I, 6, 7, 10. His writings concerning the atonement we believe to be at variance with the following passages of Scripture: Matt. 20:28; 26:28; John 6:37-39; 10:11, 14-16, 26-28; Acts 20:28; Rom. 8:28-34; Gal. 1:3, 4; Eph. 1:4-7; 5:25-27; Tit. 2:14; Heb. 10:14; Rev. 5:9; and with the following creedal references: Confession of Faith, XX, XXI; Canons of Dort, II, 8, 9, par. 1.

3. An Advisory Committee of the 1966 Synod has concluded that the Doctrinal Committee's report "expresses substantially the Reformed tradition in the areas discussed" (Acts of Synod, 1966, p. 69).

4. In reply to the Doctrinal Committee's question of "whether the elements in the atonement which speak of its expiatory and substitutionary character allow us to speak about an atonement that is universal," Professor Dekker "either avoided giving a direct answer, or he pleaded that it was 'scarcely possible' for him to answer such a question, since he considered an emphasis on those elements one-sided and inadequate." According to Professor Dekker "there is neither need nor warrant for retaining the concept as it has been traditionally used among us" (Acts of Synod, 1966, p. 465). In short, he has tried to persuade the Church to change its traditionally Reformed concept of the intent and extent of the atonement, while he himself is vague and evasive when asked to define its nature.

5. The Form of Subscription demands that all Professors, Ministers, Elders, and Deacons are disposed to refute and contradict all errors that militate against doctrines taught in our creeds and that if any "different sentiments respecting the aforesaid doctrines should arise in our minds, we promise that we will neither publicly nor privately propose, teach, or defend the same, either by preaching or writing, until we have first revealed such sentiments to the Consistory, Classis, or Synod, that the same may be there examined, . . ." It is evident that Professor Dekker has acted in a manner contrary to this agreement when he publicly challenged our Church's understanding of the doctrine of definite atonement as it relates to the love of God.

6. It is the responsibility of Synod to take such measures as are legitimate and necessary to preserve the uniformity and purity of doctrine in the Church and Seminary.

Respectfully submitted,

Consistory of the
Ebenezer Christian Reformed Church
Berwyn, Illinois

Rev. Eugene Bradford, President
Martin LaMaire, Clerk

H. Proposed Action re Doctrinal Matters and Professor H. Dekker

Classis Grandville, having studied and evaluated the report of the Doctrinal Committee (Acts of 1966, pp. 436-507), the report of the Advisory Committee, and decisions of Synod (Acts of 1966, pp. 68, 69), overtures the Synod of 1967—

1. To declare that the report of the Doctrinal Committee reflects the teachings of Scripture and the Reformed Creeds concerning the doctrine of limited atonement as it relates to the love of God.

2. To address itself directly to the doctrinal expressions of Prof. H. Dekker.

Grounds:

a. The doctrinal position of Prof. H. Dekker is the concrete issue which gave rise to the appointment of the Doctrinal Committee by Synod in 1964.

b. In view of the concrete issue, the related problems become peripheral, and should not hinder the Church in making a decision regarding this matter.

c. The churches have had adequate time to study the report of the Doctrinal Committee and present their responses.

d. A decision concerning this doctrinal issue is necessary to terminate the evident and understandable unrest in the churches, which is due, in large part, to Prof. H. Dekker occupying an office in the church while promoting a suspect theological position.

3. To call upon Prof. Dekker to:

a. Acknowledge that many of his doctrinal expressions (delineated in the report of the Doctrinal Committee on pp. 447, and 463, Supplement 42, in Acts of Synod 1966) concerning the atonement as it relates to the love of God are in conflict with the teaching of Scripture and the Reformed Creeds.

b. Comply with the decision of the Church according to the requirements of the Form of Subscription.

Classis Grandville,

John L. Meppelink, S.C.

I. Adopt Decision re Love of God Issue

Classis Toronto overtures Synod 1967 to deal conclusively with the report of the Doctrinal Committee as it relates to Professor Dekker's pronouncements regarding limited atonement and the love of God.

Ground:

A definite decision is essential for the well-being and the peace of the churches. Professor Dekker's pronouncements have been before the churches for four years, one of which was a year of intensive study. The unrest and confusion in the churches is, understandably, increased greatly because of the key teaching position which brother Dekker holds in our Seminary.

Classis Toronto,

J. W. Van Stempvoort, S.C.

J. Request Adoption of Study Committee Report re Doctrinal Matters

The Consistory of the Trinity Christian Reformed Church of St. Catharines, Ont., overtures Synod to deal *conclusively* with the "Dekker case" and to accept *without delay* the recommendations and conclusions of the Study Committee.

Grounds:

1. These recommendations are Biblical and creedal.

2. The growing unrest in our churches about this cardinal matter requires this immediate action.

For the Consistory,

John D. Hellinga, President
T. Hunse, Clerk

PRINTED APPEALS

1. — Statement on Unusual Benevolent Needs

Classis Eastern Ontario protests the decision of the Synod of 1966, Art. 67—5 re Statement on Unusual Benevolent Needs. (Cf. Acts of Synod 1966 pp. 38, 39.)

Grounds:

1. This synodical decision rules out the Canadian Relief Fund and calls for Diaconal Conferences.

2. This synodical decision makes a Diaconal Conference act as a major assembly.

3. The procedure of Reformed Church polity should be maintained that a consistory directs itself to classis. Classis can then approach the Canadian Relief Fund, and if this proves to be unable to cope with the need, classis can approach CRWRC.

Classis Eastern Ontario

Rev. H. Uittenbosch, S.C.

2. — Emo Consistory, Classis Minnesota North vs. Fund for Needy Churches

The Consistory of the Emo Christian Reformed Church appeals to the Synod of 1967 regarding the decision of the Fund for Needy Churches not to grant subsidy for the salary of Candidate R. Duifhuis.

Grounds:

1. Mr. Duifhuis is the present stated supply of the Emo congregation.

2. The present status of Mr. Duifhuis as stated supply of our congregation is the result of a special arrangement made by Classis Minnesota North to which the Emo Consistory agreed. Mr. Duifhuis had received and accepted a call to serve as minister of the Emo congregation, pending a favorable outcome of the classical examination for ordination. Since Classis decided to re-examine Mr. Duifhuis on certain points at its March, 1967, meeting, the Emo congregation was requested to engage him as stated supply. During this time Mr. Duifhuis would also be preparing for re-examination with the help of other ministers of Classis.

3. Mr. Duifhuis devotes himself full-time to the work of the ministry in the Emo congregation and, pending a favorable outcome of re-examination, will be ordained into the ministry in this congregation.

4. The rules of the FNC do state that assistance will be given for the salary of ministers and, in the case of seminary students, $\frac{1}{4}$ of the usual grant. Though this falls under neither classification, we are convinced that it ought for that very reason receive special consideration.

5. Mr. Duifhuis has no other source of income, as is often the case particularly with emeritus ministers.

6. There is no question raised regarding the status of the Emo congregation being a needy church under the rules of the FNC. Its need in this arrangement is at least as great as it would have been had Mr. Duifhuis been ordained im-

mediately after the September meeting of Classis Minnesota North (e.g., there is the extra expense of considerable travel for Mr. Duifhuis to meet with the ministers in Winnipeg, and for the classically appointed counselor to come to Emo). Done in Consistory, February 21, 1967.

For the Emo Consistory,
Mr. H. Mendel, President
Mr. H. A. Hettinga, Clerk

Classis Minnesota North endorses the appeal of the Emo Christian Reformed Church regarding the decision of the Fund for Needy Churches Committee not to grant subsidy for the salary of Candidate R. Duifhuis.

Grounds:

- a. Candidate Duifhuis presently is serving as stated supply as a result of a special arrangement made by Classis. He has received and accepted a call to serve as minister at Emo upon the favorable outcome of a classical examination.
- b. The rules of the FNC do allow in the case of seminarians who go out on summer assignments $\frac{1}{4}$ of the usual grant. If $\frac{1}{4}$ of full subsidy payment is granted for ten weeks of work, then it seems to follow logically that full payment be granted for a longer period of time.
- c. Candidate Duifhuis has no other source of income.
- d. The Home Missions Committee of Classis Minnesota North has also considered this appeal and endorsed it.

Clarence Bisschop, S.C.
Classis Minnesota North

3.—Decision of 1966 re Theistic Evolution Study Committee

The Consistory of the Walker Christian Reformed Church protests the decision of the Synod of 1966 to appoint a committee to recommend a committee "to study, in the light of the present status of scientific studies and Reformed theological scholarship, the matters involved in and clustering around the question of the compatibility of theories of 'theistic evolution' with the Biblical witness and the creedal affirmations concerning the origin of the world and the human race." (cf. Acts of Synod 1966, p. 78)

I. Specifically we protest the consideration of certain matters which the Synod of 1966 seems to regard as legitimate for discussion such as:

1. The possibility that Genesis 1, 2, and 3 may be viewed as being symbolic or poetic rather than historical and literal. (cf. Acts of Synod 1966, p. 75)
2. The possibility that sub-human creation may have developed gradually from lower to higher forms of existence under divine direction by way of theistic evolution.
3. The possibility that Adam may have developed gradually from some lower form of animal under divine direction by way of theistic evolution. (cf. Acts of Synod 1966, p. 75)
1. The possibility that Genesis 1, 2 and 3 may be viewed as being symbolic or poetic rather than historical and literal. cf. Acts of Synod 1966, p. 75)

Grounds:

1) A fundamental rule of Scriptural interpretation is to interpret a passage literally unless it is plainly stated or implied in the passage or the context that some other interpretation should be given. We find nothing in the Genesis chapters which allows for anything but a literal historical interpretation.

2) The analogy of Scripture clearly implies that the Genesis chapters are to be taken literally and historically.

a. Exodus 20:9-11 assumes as much when it requires six literal historic days of work and the observance of a seventh literal historic day of rest because God created in six such days and rested the seventh.

b. Psalm 33:6 and 9 use expressions which harmonize with the simple literal interpretation of the Genesis chapters: Vs. 6: "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the hosts of them by the breath of his mouth"; Vs. 9: "For he spake, and it was done; he commanded and it stood fast."

c. Both Romans 5:12-19 and I Corinthians 15:21, 22 draw an inescapable and most clear parallel between Adam and the fall, and Christ and redemption. The only possible reading of these texts, acknowledged by all Christian expositors of the Scriptures, makes explicit that both Adam and Christ are to be regarded as historical; and that if Adam and the fall are *not historical*, then *neither is Christ and redemption* historical. Here it is unmistakable that the historicity of Genesis 1-3 is of one piece with our eternal salvation.

d. Throughout Scripture, creation, the fall, redemption and the return of our Lord are held in inseparable conjunction as four parts of an unbreakable historical chain. Denial of the historicity of the account of creation and the fall would take away the basis for insisting on the historicity of the account of the Redeemer and His return.

e. Romans 8:19-22, in harmony with the Genesis chapters, tells of a literal curse on creation resulting from the fall, the effects of which are evident today.

f. Hebrews 11:3 calls for faith in a completely miraculous creation of the world by the Word of God which demands a literal historic view of Genesis 1, 2 and 3.

g. II Peter 3:3-7 correlates creation, the flood and the return of Christ as events that happen in time, in history. It sets these events forth as just those which "mockers" will deny "in the last days."

3) The Belgic Confession, in Article IX, argues for the trinity from the use of the word "us" in Genesis 1:26, 27 and Genesis 3:22. The validity of this argument assumes a literal interpretation of these chapters.

2. The possibility that sub-human creation may have developed gradually from lower to higher forms of existence under divine direction by way of "theistic evolution."

Grounds:

1) A literal, historical view of Genesis 1, 2 and 3, as defended above, requires direct, immediate and sudden creative activity on the part of God.

2) The miracles recorded in the Bible have a reparative and renewing effect on the fallen creation. Thus they are connected with and derive their essence and meaning from the miracle of the first creation. Psalm 136:4, 5 establishes a clear connection between God's doing "great wonders" (miracles) and His having "made the heavens" (creation). Miracles are unquestionably direct, instantaneous acts of God's supernatural power in which He by-passes natural law. For example, in John 2:7-11; Mark 6:37-44 and Matthew 15:34-38 Christ by-passed all process and development and immediately produced the end product. The immediacy of the reparative miracle by implication teaches the immediacy of the original miracle.

3) The purpose of the original creation was to manifest the glory of God. (Psalm 19:1-4; Isaiah 43:7, 60:1; Romans 11:36). The ultimate purpose of miracles is to manifest the glory of God. (John 2:11). In miracles God manifests His glory by transcending the laws of nature. To say less of creation would make it an inferior manifestation of God's glory involving a limitation of His power, an attack on His sovereignty, and a denial of many Scripture passages.

4) The second coming of our Lord will be unexpected sudden and irruptive.

(Matthew 24:37-44; 25:1-12; Mark 13:33-37; I Thessalonians 5:2, 3; Revelation 3:3; 16:15); II Peter 3:5, 7, 10 connects creation and the return of Christ as similar events in that they are miraculous in the highest sense.

5) Colossians 1:16-17 shows that this tremendous, complex, complicated and intricate universe was not brought into existence by gradual development but by and for the preincarnate Christ.

3. The possibility that Adam may have developed gradually from some lower form of animal under divine direction by way of "theistic evolution." (cf. Acts of Synod 1966, p. 75).

Grounds:

1) Scripture explicitly teaches that Adam was created immediately and directly by divine fiat rather than gradually from some lower animal under divine direction.

a. Genesis 1:26, 27, 31a and Genesis 2:7 allow for no other possibility.

b. The expression "after its kind," used no less than ten times in Genesis 1, indicates that the group designated by that phrase has separate origin and existence. Furthermore, the expression "in the image of God" (instead of "after its kind"), in Genesis 1:27 indicates the uniqueness and separate origin and existence of man.

c. Psalm 8 indicates that man, rather than being made out of all things as the final product of the toiling ages as the theistic evolutionist contends, was made a little less than God and was given mastery and dominion over the works of God's hands.

d. Luke 3:38 calls our original ancestor (Adam) "the son of God."

e. I Corinthians 15:39 makes a distinction, tantamount to a radical difference, between the flesh of man and the flesh of animals, thus ruling out the possibility of a genetic relationship between man and animals. "Theistic evolution" removes this distinction by requiring genetic continuity and essential identity of flesh between the two.

f. Ephesians 4:23 and Colossians 3:9, 10 connect creation in the image of God and re-creation in the image of God as two similar acts of God with identical results. Re-creation is admittedly immediate and direct.

2) Scripture unequivocally teaches the solidarity of the human race rooted in and beginning with Adam and Eve.

a. This is the obvious meaning of Genesis 1:26, 27; Genesis 2:7; and Genesis 2:18, 20-23.

b. Genesis 3:20 calls Eve, the first woman, the mother of all living.

c. Luke 3 traces our ancestry back to Adam who is called "the son of God."

d. Acts 17:26 says that God "made from one every nation of men."

e. Romans 3:23; Romans 5:12, 19; and I Corinthians 15:21, 22 show that it is because all are one in Adam that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God and that the unity of the old man in Adam in the covenant of works is the postulate of the unity of the new man in Christ in the covenant of grace. These two are interdependent and stand or fall together.

3) The forms of unity give united testimony to the creation of Adam (the first man and father of us all) out of the dust of the earth, in the image of God and by an immediate supernatural, creative act of God. (cf. Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day III, Question and Answer 6; Belgic Confession, Article XIV; Canons of Dort, First Head of Doctrine, Article 1, Third and Fourth Heads of Doctrine, Articles 1 and 2).

II. Specifically we are concerned about the following:

1. "Theistic evolution" is being embraced and espoused by many present and future leaders in our church.

Grounds:

1) A letter by a late member of the Board of Trustees to the Synod of 1966 states: "But we have been informed by professors who know, that ninety percent of the student body of Calvin have advanced views on this subject and that it would be difficult to find enough professors to count on the fingers of one hand who do not agree in the main." (Acts of Synod 1966, pp. 566, 567).

2), The same late member of the Board of Trustees, mentioned above, was an avowed and vocal proponent of "theistic evolution."

3) The large number of students embracing this view (See 1. above) corroborates what is becoming increasingly obvious, namely, that theistic evolution is being taught as an acceptable explanation of origins in our Church college.

2. The time factor and the element of indefiniteness involved in appointing a committee to recommend a committee to study this problem.

Grounds:

1) This seems to imply that in the meantime it is permissible to propagate theistic evolution.

2) This gives a period of no less than two years for this unbiblical theory to make further inroads into our denomination.

3), This could well involve a much longer period for the entrenchment of theistic evolution in our midst. Last Synod's advisory committee admits: "It is not evident that appointment of a Synodical Study Committee will greatly hasten achievement of the solution to this problem."

3. The considerable emphasis placed on "the present status of scientific studies" and the necessity of having members on the committee who possess scientific competence, making these requirements almost equally as important as theological competence and the ability to interpret the Reformed confessions.

Ground:

This emphasis leaves the impression that science and the Bible are equally ultimate references. It fails to recognize that special revelation has divine authority and perspicuity, that general revelation has been obscured and corrupted because of the curse of sin (Romans 8: 20, 21), and that man's mind has been darkened by sin (Romans 1:18, 21) depriving him of his ability to read either revelation aright. Given these facts it is pellucid plain that general revelation can only really be explained and interpreted in the light of special revelation by those who have been given rebirth and spiritual discernment by the Holy Spirit of God.

4. The seeming disregard for the perspicuity of Scripture and the competence of the average member to exercise spiritual discernment in understanding by faith such matters as creation, the fall and redemption.

Ground:

A Reformed principle attested by Scripture is the right, the responsibility and the ability of the regular membership to judge and to understand the truth. (Acts 17:11; I Corinthians 2:15; 10:15; I John 8:20).

III. In the light of the above, we respectfully overture the Synod of 1967:

1. To reaffirm the Biblical and traditional Reformed view of the historicity of Genesis 1, 2 and 3 and of creation by divine fiat:—"by the word of His power."

Grounds:

1) This is the official position of our church. The Reformed Ecumenical Synod meeting in Amsterdam in 1949 adopted three guiding principles, the first of which is: "The historical character of the revelation in Genesis 1 and 2 must

be maintained without compromise. These two chapters offer no data to justify a symbolical or visionary interpretation or to treat them as a meaningful myth." After consideration of the guiding principles of the R.E.S., the Synod of 1953 adopted the following resolution: "That Synod appreciates the statements submitted by the Reformed Ecumenical Synod on the subject of 'creation and evolution', the *maintenance of the Bible as the infallible word of God, and the historicity of the Biblical account of creation.*" (Italics ours). (Article 151, p. 124, Acts of Synod 1953). Since this resolution has never been rescinded or superseded, we heartily concur with Rev. N. J. Monsma who states in an article in the October 1964 issue of "Torch and Trumpet": "Hence the resolutions of 1953 still stand, so that . . . the first of these principles must be considered in force."

2) This has indeed always been the position assumed and taught in our church in the past. This is, for example, the view set forth by the late Professor Berkhof in his classic work, "Systematic Theology," pp. 139, 140, where he contends that "theistic evolution" is not the "Biblical doctrine of creation," a contradiction in terms" and "as destructive of faith in the Biblical doctrine of creation as naturalistic evolution is." On pages 162 and 163 he says it is "a very dangerous hybrid," that it "destroys the Bible as the inspired book of authority as effectively as does atheistic evolution" and that it is "absolutely subversive of Scriptural truth."

3), The fact that the teaching of evolution in our public schools is one of our main arguments for having and supporting Christian schools shows that we have a firm stand against any form of evolution as an explanation for the origin of things.

4) This is the position plainly implied in and to be inferred from the forms of unity.

a. Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day III, Question and Answer 6; Belgic Confession, Article XIV; Canons of Dort, Third and Fourth Heads of Doctrine, Article 1.

b. At least one proponent of "theistic evolution" in effect admitted this. Page 547, number 8, of the 1966 Acts of Synod reveals that this person, a late member of the Board of Trustees, realized "that, if what we call theistic evolution were accepted as true, a tremendous change would take place in our thinking; . . . for example, if man did descend from some primate physically, can we attribute all imperfection and all of what we call physical evil to man's fall? Is it not an oversimplification anyway? Many of the books would have to be rewritten." On page 566, number 7, he contends that no "fundamental doctrine" would have to be changed but the implication is obvious that doctrine which he regards as non-fundamental, (such as the prevailing doctrines of creation and the fall), would have to be changed.

5) This position is thoroughly grounded in the Scriptures. (cf. Genesis 1:26, 27; 1:31; 2:7; Exodus 20:9-11; Psalm 8:5-8; Psalm 33:6-9; Luke 3:38; Acts 17:26; Hebrews 3:11; II Peter 3:3-7) (cf. also objections and concerns above)

2. To remind Classes, the Board of Trustees, School Boards, Consistories and all in positions of teaching and leadership that this is the official position of our church which signers of the "Form of Subscription" are obligated to endorse, which they promise to diligently teach and faithfully defend and which they will in no way contradict either by proposal, preaching, teaching or writing unless there is an official change of position. (See "Form of Subscription").

Grounds:

1) Recent writings in our church paper and church-related papers indicate that there is confusion and difference of opinion in our church on this subject.

2) The contention by a late board member that it would be difficult to find five professors in Calvin who do not agree in the main with theistic evolution would seem to warrant such a reminder. (See Acts of Synod 1966, pp. 566, 567)

3) The contention by the board member just mentioned that ninety percent of the students have advanced views on this subject strongly suggests that it is being taught as the most acceptable view of the origin of man. (See Acts of Synod 1966, p. 566).

The Consistory of the
Walker Christian Reformed Church
Rev. S. M. Voortman, Pres.
S. A. Breker, Clerk

4. — Appeal Decision re Inclusion in New Classis

The Christian Reformed Church of Alliston, Ontario, hereby wishes to appeal a decision made by Classis Toronto of the Christian Reformed Church meeting in Acton, Ontario, on the 12th day of January, 1967. At that meeting Alliston expressed its desire to have its name removed from the list of churches which had been selected by a committee from Classes Chatham, Hamilton, and Toronto for the formation of a new classis in west-central Ontario. However, Classis refused to consider our amendment to the motion, ruling it out of order, as it would alter the motion presented by the committee. Also Classis felt that the proposed "overture" could not be altered or amended, since the identical overture would be submitted by the three Classes. The Church of Alliston recorded its negative vote and its right to appeal to Synod, since Classis would not consider Alliston's request to have its name removed from the list of churches in the proposed new classis.

The Church of Alliston now wishes to submit its reasons for the request to NOT be included in this proposed new classis in west-central Ontario.

1. It would not be to the welfare of the Christian Reformed Church to include another small and needy congregation in the proposed new classis, since that proposed classis would contain several churches needing financial support from the Fund for Needy Churches.

2. The inclusion of Alliston in the proposed new classis would not be to the welfare of the classis, in that Alliston's relative isolation from the churches of that proposed classis may prove to cause a coolness towards certain classical programs of evangelism in the area of west-central Ontario, which is an area beyond the natural limits of interest and concern of the Alliston Church, which is oriented towards Toronto.

3. Geographically Alliston belongs to Classis Toronto in that it is located 10 miles west of Highway 400, the main north-south artery passing through the re-aligned Classis Toronto. Also Alliston would be isolated from the churches of the proposed new classis by distance and the natural barrier of an escarpment—commonly called the Blue Mountains—10 miles to the west of Alliston, which hinders communication and travel from Alliston to communities west of the escarpment—the area of the proposed classis.

4. Sociologically Alliston belongs to Metropolitan Toronto, even though it is located 35 miles north of Toronto-Rexdale, because Alliston gradually will become a commuter-community as Toronto expands to the north, and as farming becomes less and less in the area. This latter factor is already to be seen in the Church of Alliston, which is now less than 50% farm families.

Respectfully submitted,
Consistory of Alliston Christian Reformed Church,
K. Dekker, Clerk

5. — Appeal Decision of the Board of Trustees

The consistory of the Second Christian Reformed Church of Toronto, feels compelled to appeal against the decision taken by the Board of Trustees of Calvin Seminary during its February, 1967, meeting in connection with the "interfaith ecumenical service" in which Dr. John Kromminga engaged in on November 26th, 1966.

History

The Grand Rapids Press carried a press release stating Dr. Kromminga's participation in an "interfaith ecumenical service". (see appendix one) This news item was reason for the consistory to overture Classis Toronto on the matter. (see appendix two) A copy of the overture was sent to Dr. Kromminga.

Subsequent to sending the overture to Classis Toronto, the consistory received a communication from Dr. Kromminga. (see appendix three) Since the consistory did not have the opportunity to examine Dr. Kromminga's reply prior to the meeting of Classis on January 12th, 1967, its delegates to Classis withdrew the overture, giving the consistory the opportunity to consider the reply.

Finding the reply of Dr. Kromminga unsatisfactory, the consistory decided to send a communication to the Board of Trustees of Calvin College and Seminary. (see appendix four)

The consistory is of the opinion that the Board's decision, calling Dr. Kromminga's action "ill-considerate and indiscreet" does not answer our protest relative to the Seminary President's vow of Ordination, signature to the Form of Subscription and the vow made by Professors of Theology. Neither does it satisfy the Scriptures, e.g. Gal. 1:6-9.

In view of the above, and the fact that the President of the Seminary is reported to publicly advocate membership in the World Council of Churches, which allows and contains various and the same forms of unbelief as those represented in the "interfaith service" of November 26th, 1966, the consistory of the Second Christian Reformed Church of Toronto, asks Synod, 1967, to:

1. declare itself positively on the "interfaith ecumenical service" in which Dr. John Kromminga engaged in on November 26th, 1966.
2. declare itself whether enough has been done in this matter to safeguard the welfare of the church and the high office of Dr. John Kromminga, which he holds in the church.

Respectfully submitted,
 Rev. John J. Byker, Pres.
 Mr. K. Knoops, Corres. Clerk

Done in Consistory March 6th, 1967.

Enclosures: (To be submitted to advisory committee of synod (Stated Clerk)
 Appendix I — Press release, Grand Rapids Press.
 Appendix II — Overture to Classis Toronto.
 Appendix III — Reply from Dr. J. Kromminga.
 Appendix IV — Communication to Board of Trustees.

6. — Reports of Study Committee on Boerkoel Appeal

To the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

The Synod of 1965 sustained the request made by the Council of Second Randolph to Classis Wisconsin for the deposition of the Rev. B. J. Boerkoel. The

Synod of 1966 received and considered an appeal by Mr. Boerkoel. Its decision was to appoint our committee. Our report is herewith presented.

A. MAJORITY REPORT

I. OUR MANDATE

Our mandate is found in Article 113 C of the Acts of Synod, 1966, p. 88:

"That Synod grant the appeal of Mr. B. J. Boerkoel, and appoint a committee to review the reasons for his deposition, and the evidence for and against that action, with a view to making definite recommendations to the Synod of 1967.

Grounds:

1. Mr. Boerkoel has properly appealed to Synod in view of the fact that Synod's action brought about his deposition.

2. The opportunity to make a personal defence on the floor of Synod, a privilege almost universally granted to ministers considered worthy of deposition, was not given to Mr. Boerkoel, thus creating the reasonable doubt that the procedure was entirely equitable."

Synod thus directed us to consider the material aspects of this case by adducing a technical ground, which itself is questionable.

Synod apparently was impressed by Mr. Boerkoel's raising the technical point of not appearing on the floor of Synod, for of the two grounds he offered in his appeal, Synod amended and employed only this technical point as its ground No. 2 (See Mandate, above).

II. STATEMENT OF PROCEDURE

A. *Formal Aspects of the Appeal re Ground No. 2* (See Mandate, above).
Upon investigation of the point thus raised, we found:

1. The Church Order, while guaranteeing every minister a thorough hearing before deposition, makes no provision for a "privilege" of "personal defence on the floor of Synod."

2. The Rules for Synodical Procedure have no regulation which establishes such a "privilege." In fact, Synods have in the past denied the privilege of a personal appearance on the ground that a man was heard by Synod through an advisory committee, cf. the case of Rev. H. Kamps, Synod of 1928, Article 128, 10, b.

3. Other Synods have granted such a privilege, usually only upon direct request.

4. Still other Synods have granted such a privilege, while closely restricting both the time allowed and the parties to be heard, cf. case of Van Farowe, Acts 1932, Article 127, p. 117; also Fortuin, Acts 1939, p. 55.

5. In this case we are dealing with, the Acts of Synod of 1965 record just one protest being submitted re the procedure in the Boerkoel case; we find upon careful examination that this protest raises no complaint against the formal procedure in the case, nor against Mr. Boerkoel's not being heard on the floor of Synod, but merely expresses the opinion that Synod "should have granted him a probationary period according to the recommendation of the majority report of the Advisory Committee." (Article 151)

6. Mr. Boerkoel, in his own testimony to our committee, says he did not request a personal appearance before the Synod of 1965.

B. Material Aspects of The Appeal

1. As committee, we made a thorough and extensive review of all the documents of the case contained in the files of both Synod and Classis Wisconsin.

2. In addition, we have interviewed five of the principals in the case namely

Mr. B. J. Boerkoel the appellant;

Mr. Walter Baas former vice-president of the Randolph II Council during Mr. Boerkoel's pastorate;

Rev. B. Van Someren, Synodical deputy involved in all proceedings re Mr. Boerkoel;

Rev. C. Niewenhuis, former member of Classis Wisconsin and appellant to the decision of Classis Wisconsin taken in January, 1965; and

Rev. J. Blankespoor, member of the minority of Synod's advisory committee re the case of Mr. Boerkoel at the Synod of 1965.

C. Since we diverged on our assessments of the materials and recommendations in the case, we inform Synod that all members of the committee, majority and minority, are willing to be available for consultation should Synod so desire.

III. JUDGMENTS

At the conclusion of these labors, we have reached the considered opinion that the evidence reviewed substantiates the reasons for Mr. Boerkoel's deposition.

A. In addition, we believe the following considerations assure the judgment that Mr. Boerkoel was accorded a fair hearing at the Synod of 1965:

1. He was given adequate opportunity to present his case before Synod's advisory committee.

2. The majority of Synod's advisory committee favored Mr. Boerkoel's defense, and represented this position consistently and at length during the deliberations of Synod.

3. Two of the Synodical deputies, who consistently defended Mr. Boerkoel, made a special trip to Synod's meeting in Sioux Center, Iowa and spoke in his behalf before Synod during its deliberations on this case.

B. We also conclude that from the purely *formal* point of view, Synod of 1965 did not err when it made its decision re Mr. Boerkoel without hearing him in person before the entire Synod.

Grounds:

1. The Church Order makes no provision which guarantees this "privilege."
2. The Rules for Synodical Procedure do not establish such a "privilege."
3. There is no clear precedent to which one can appeal to guarantee such a "privilege."
4. Mr. Boerkoel did not request an audience with Synod.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. That Synod declare that Mr. B. J. Boerkoel was accorded a fair hearing at the Synod of 1965, in which the procedure was indeed equitable according to the past precedents of Synod, the Rules for Synodical Procedure, and the regulations of the Church Order.

B. That Synod declare this to be its answer to the appeal of Mr. B. J. Boerkoel.

ADDENDA

A. We call Synod's attention to the fact that we received a communication from the Second Randolph Council in which they indicate that they are not satisfied that all matters between Mr. Boerkoel and themselves are cleared up. Our committee returned this communication and advised Council we could not receive new materials.

B. The majority wishes to alert Synod to the fact that the recommendation of the minority implies a radical departure from the traditional manner of dealing with cases of appeal in the Christian Reformed Church. Heretofore, Synod has always dealt with cases of appeal on the basis of documents, occasionally granting the appellant, or appellants the privilege of personal appearance before the entire body of Synod. The minority recommendation would lead Synod in the direction of Synod's constituting itself upon such occasions as a court of trial, analogous to a civil court. It has generally been the Christian Reformed practise, following the spirit of the Church Order of Dordt, to view the Church Order as "moral in

character, not judicial. It is a regulatory set of rules, not a legalistic set of laws." (Van Dellen and Monsma, *Church Order Commentary*, p. 13)

Humbly submitted,
Harry G. Arnold
Jay A. Wesseling

B. MINORITY REPORT

To the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church

ESTEEMED BRETHREN:

The undersigned herewith submits a minority report concerning the matter of the appeal of the Rev. B. J. Boerkoel to the Synod of 1966. The minority regrets that it feels constrained to do so, but expresses the hope that the Synod of 1967 will, through both of these reports, have a clear view of the issue that is being joined by our split report.

I. OUR MANDATE

The minority accepts the majority statement of the mandate. It also shares the comment of the majority about the questionable character of this mandate, in that it asks the committee to consider the material aspects of the case, but in so doing, adduces a formal ground, namely the matter of the opportunity for a personal defense. It is regrettable, but in the judgment of the minority, inescapable, that the issue has to be joined in this report on this formal ground and its significance, to a great degree.

The minority also accepts the majority description of the labors performed, and expresses its willingness, as the majority states, to be available for consultation at Synod.

II. JUDGMENTS OF THE MINORITY

A. The question concerning Rev. Boerkoel's not appearing in his own defense before the 1965 Synod.

1. *The matter of synodical precedent.*

A close inspection of synodical dealings in the matter of a personal defense before synods reveals no clearcut, compelling pattern. The right of a personal defense, as the majority contends, has been denied upon occasion. (Refer to the majority report for documentation.) There have been several cases, however, where the right of a personal defense was granted. The minority herewith mentions three of them, (a) the case of Dr. Janssen, in 1922, (b) the case of the Rev. Van Farowe, in 1932, and (c) the case of the seminary professors, in 1952.

The majority argues that the Rev. Boerkoel did not request a personal appearance before the 1965 Synod. The minority contends that if a civil court apprises a person of his rights, a Synod, in the interests of simple justice, ought not do less. The majority also contends that the Church Order is moral in character, not judicial, and that the minority position "would lead Synod in the direction of Synod's constituting itself upon occasion as a court of trial, analagous to a civil court." (ADDENDA, point B, majority report.) The minority contends, however, that the case in point does have a judicial quality to it which can hardly be avoided. This does not remove the moral character of Synodical actions. The point is that one cannot posit a complete distinction between the moral and the judicial which is complete, for the two are, in the circumstances of cases such as this one, inevitably intertwined.

2. *Minority judgment in this matter.*

The minority contends that the privilege of a personal defense should have been extended to the Rev. Boerkoel for the following reasons:

a. The advisory committee which dealt with the matter decided, by a vote of 8 to 2, to recommend that Synod do not sustain the appeal of the Consistory of Randolph II to instruct Classis Wisconsin to depose Rev. Boerkoel. This recommendation was tabled, and the advice of the 2 minority members of the advisory committee was brought before Synod, and this advice prevailed. The minority does not contend that Synod should accept majority opinions, just because they are *majority* opinions. Nor does the minority contend that the Synod did, in fact, err in so doing. The minority only contends that Synod should not have done so without extending to the man the privilege of a personal defense before the Synod. Ten men reviewed all of the evidence with care. Eight of them did not think the evidence warranted deposition. Yet, the body of synodical delegates, most of whom did not see the evidence, felt constrained to overthrow the opinion of a large majority which had seen and had evaluated the evidence, and that, without hearing a word of defense from the man whose ministry was being called into question.

b. The decision of the majority of Classis Wisconsin, though a very small majority, was not defended by that Classis on the floor of Synod. Your minority is at a loss to explain this, particularly in view of the fact that three out of four of the delegates of Classis Wisconsin to the Synod of 1965 did not represent the majority judgment of their classis, and, in fact, did argue against that judgment. This was their right, because Synod is a deliberative body. It was their duty not only to serve notice on Synod of their disagreement with their Classis, and of their intention to argue against it. This being the case, the official decision of the Classis should have been officially represented. We cannot blame Rev. Boerkoel for this, nor can we penalize him for it. It is true that he was defended, as the majority contends. The point is that he was not defended by the proper people in their official capacity, namely, the officially appointed representatives of Classis Wisconsin, duly appointed for this purpose, apart from the regular delegates of Classis Wisconsin.

B. The review of the reasons for Rev. Boerkoel's deposition and the evidence for and against that action.

The majority states that it has reached the considered opinion that the evidence reviewed substantiates the reasons for Mr. Boerkoel's deposition. The minority does not share this opinion, after having reviewed and discussed the evidence with the majority. It offers the following grounds for this opinion:

1. The grounds adduced by the 1965 Synod are characterized by sweeping generalizations which do not deal in specifics. The minority does find, in the evidence, certain ineptitudes, faulty mismanagement of personal funds, hasty and intemperate judgment upon several occasions, but it cannot find substantiation in the evidence for these sweeping generalizations.

2. The grounds reveal a certain subjectivity of judgment which can hardly be proven, and no attempt to do so is found in these grounds. The minority does not come to the same conclusions which these grounds come to. Some of the evidence does reflect unfavorably on Mr. Boerkoel, but the minority does not find objective, positive evidence of gross public sin which warrant deposition.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

The minority recommends that the Synod of 1967 take up the appeal of Mr. Boerkoel and that it extend to Mr. Boerkoel the privilege of a personal defense before the body of Synod, in the interests of fairness and complete clarity. The minority also recommends that the same privilege of appearance before Synod be extended to the Randolph II Consistory.

Humbly submitted,
Arthur W. Hoogstrate

DELEGATES TO THE SYNOD OF 1967

DELEGATES

ALTERNATES

Classis Alberta North

Ministers.....Rev. J. J. Matheis
Rev. H.A. Venema
Elders.....Mr. W. De Boer
Mr. W. Sinnema

Ministers.....Rev. N. Beute
Rev. F. Guillaume
Elders.....Mr. J. Vander Velde
Mr. A. Veldstra

Classis Alberta South

Ministers.....Rev. J. Vriend
Rev. F. J. Van Dyk
Elders.....Mr. G. Yntema
Mr. H. W. Van Brummelen

Ministers.....Rev. J. De Moor
Rev. H. De Bolster
Elders.....Mr. A. Slomp
Mr. W. Lyzinga

Classis British Columbia

Ministers.....Rev. A. H. Venema
Rev. J. Kuntz
Elders.....Mr. D. De Rover
Mr. M. Kwantes

Ministers.....Rev. C. W. Tuininga
Rev. J. Jongsma
Elders.....Mr. G. Bandringa
Mr. G. M. Ridder

Classis Cadillac

Ministers.....Rev. A. Poel
Rev. A. Hannink
Elders.....Mr. J. Vander Weide
Mr. J. Jager

Ministers.....Rev. F. L. Netz
Rev. V. Geurkink
Elders.....Mr. B. Brouwer
Mr. E. Meyering

Classis California South

Ministers.....Rev. T. E. Hofman
Rev. H. Roelofs
Elders.....Mr. R. Geldof
Mr. A. Van Hofwegen

Ministers.....Rev. W. Ackerman
Rev. B. Nederlof
Elders.....Mr. C. Van Beek
Mr. H. Weessies

Classis Central California

Ministers.....Rev. G. S. Kok
Rev. B. Den Ouden
Elders.....Mr. R. Bode
Mr. R. Heckman

Ministers.....Rev. H. Bourma
Rev. E. Tanis
Elders.....Mr. H. Ploeg
Mr. E. Van Es

Classis Chatham

Ministers.....Rev. C. D. Tuyl
Rev. J. B. Vos
Elders.....Mr. B. De Jong
Mr. L. Wassenaar

Ministers.....Rev. A. De Jager
Rev. P. De Jong
Elders.....Mr. M. Vanderzande
Mr. K. Feyen

Classis Chicago North

Ministers.....Rev. Dr. G. Stob
Rev. J. P. Boonstra
Elders.....Mr. R. Tolsma
Mr. H. P. Ottenhoff

Ministers.....Rev. E. Bradford
Rev. J. Draaisma
Elders.....Mr. N. Fisher
Mr. H. Deters

DELEGATES	ALTERNATES
Classis Chicago South	
Ministers.....Rev. O. Breen Rev. J. Bylsma	Ministers.....Rev. C. Terpstra Rev. R. Leestma
Elders.....Mr. H. Kortenhoeven Dr. E. D. Roels	Elders.....Mr. J. Dykema Mr. R. Mulder
Classis Eastern Ontario	
Ministers.....Rev. A. W. Schaafsma Rev. J. G. Klomps	Ministers.....Rev. R. W. Popma Rev. J. Faber
Elders.....Mr. W. Triemstra Mr. J. Luymes	Elders.....Mr. J. Rekker Mr. T. Van Meekeren
Classis Florida	
Ministers.....Rev. D. Wisse Rev. A. R. Rienstra	Ministers.....Rev. S. De Waal Rev. E. Heerema
Elders.....Mr. J. Boeve Mr. R. Zeeff	Elders.....Mr. W. Hollemans Mr. A. Vroon
Classis Grand Rapids East	
Ministers.....Rev. W. Van Rees Rev. C. Boomsma	Ministers.....Rev. M. Beelen Rev. Dr. S. Van Dyken
Elders.....Dr. M. E. Berghuis Mr. H. Moelker	Elders.....Mr. J. Kok Mr. H. Betten
Classis Grand Rapids South	
Ministers.....Rev. G. Gritter Rev. T. Yff	Ministers.....Rev. J. Eppinga Rev. W. Buursma
Elders.....Dr. F. Westendorp Mr. G. Van Wesep	Elders.....Mr. R. Haan Mr. H. Van Tol
Classis Grand Rapids West	
Ministers.....Rev. W. Haverkamp Rev. G. Van Oyen	Ministers.....Rev. N. Veltman Rev. A. Zwart
Elders.....Mr. J. Langeland Mr. H. Winters	Elders.....Mr. L. Kloet Mr. A. Dreyer
Classis Grandville	
Ministers.....Rev. J. B. Hulst Rev. H. De Wolf	Ministers.....Rev. L. Hofman Rev. E. Knott
Elders.....Dr. M. De Vries Mr. J. Steenstra	Elders.....Mr. G. Vander Meulen Mr. S. Berkenpas
Classis Hackensack	
Ministers.....Rev. J. Vanden Hoek Rev. S. Cooper	Ministers.....Rev. D. Oostenink Rev. H. Hoekstra
Elders.....Mr. J. Last Mr. G. Smith	Elders.....Mr. N. Fridsma Mr. A. D. Paauwe
Classis Hamilton	
Ministers.....Rev. A. Kuyvenhoven Rev. J. D. Hellinga	Ministers.....Rev. D. C. Los Rev. H. W. Kroeze
Elders.....Mr. P. Suk Mr. F. De Weerd	Elders.....Mr. P. Damsma Mr. H. Vander Zwaag

DELEGATES	ALTERNATES
Classis Holland	
Ministers.....Rev. G. Stoutmeyer Rev. C. Steenstra	Ministers.....Rev. T. Van Kooten Rev. W. Hofman
Elders.....Dr. C. Van Appeldoorn Mr. D. Vander Ploeg	Elders.....Mr. E. R. Bos Mr. G. De Vries
Classis Hudson	
Ministers.....Rev. G. D. Negen Rev. J. T. Holwerda	Ministers.....Rev. R. Opperwall Rev. N. R. Prins
Elders.....Mr. W. Wiebenga Mr. T. Chambery	Elders.....Mr. E. De Ritter Mr. R. Van Dyk
Classis Illiana	
Ministers.....Rev. Marvin Doornbos Rev. Dr. W. H. Rutgers	Ministers.....Rev. J. Van Ryn Rev. A. E. Rozendal
Elders.....Mr. J. Van Til Mr. R. Vander Zee	Elders.....Mr. H. Schoon Mr. C. Boonstra
Classis Kalamazoo	
Ministers.....Rev. H. Vander Kam Rev. Dr. R. O. De Groot	Ministers.....Rev. Neal Punt Rev. G. Vanderlip
Elders.....Mr. M. Langeland Mr. A. Post	Elders.....Mr. A. Visser Mr. R. Scheffers
Classis Lake Erie	
Ministers.....Rev. G. Vanderhill Rev. D. Stravers	Ministers.....Rev. W. Gritter Rev. S. Draayer
Elders.....Mr. J. Elenbaas Mr. R. Volkema	Elders.....Mr. M. Batts Mr. M. Schans
Classis Minnesota North	
Ministers.....Rev. J. W. Postman Rev. W. Van Antwerpen	Ministers.....Rev. D. Aardsma Rev. G. Vande Riet
Elders.....Mr. L. Vande Einde Mr. J. H. Leder	Elders.....Mr. J. Siegers Mr. J. Kingma
Classis Minnesota South	
Ministers.....Rev. H. G. Entingh Rev. A. Van Schouwen	Ministers.....Rev. N. Roorda Rev. G. Corvers
Elders.....Mr. C. Wiersma Mr. J. Vander Pol	Elders.....Mr. G. De Mots Mr. H. Schaap
Classis Muskegon	
Ministers.....Rev. H. Vander Ark Rev. W. Tolsma	Ministers.....Rev. J. Gunnink Rev. S. Newhouse
Elders.....Dr. J. De Young Mr. L. Wissemann	Elders.....Mr. E. Newhouse Mr. A. Vissia
Classis Northcentral Iowa	
Ministers.....Rev. W. Gebben Rev. A. Walma	Ministers.....Rev. H. Salomons Rev. J. Elenbaas
Elders.....Mr. P. De Waard Mr. W. Siebenga	Elders.....Mr. C. Haupt Mr. B. Coeling

DELEGATES		ALTERNATES	
Classis Orange City			
Ministers.....	Rev. H. P. Baak Rev. G. W. Vanden Berg	Ministers.....	Rev. P. Vander Weide Rev. B. Van Antwerpen
Elders.....	Mr. J. Geels Mr. A. Docter	Elders.....	Mr. L. Ringling Mr. I. Woudstra
Classis Pacific Northwest			
Ministers.....	Rev. H. Petersen Rev. J. D. De Jong	Ministers.....	Rev. A. J. Veltkamp Rev. D. J. Negen
Elders.....	Mr. B. Brune Mr. E. De Young	Elders.....	Mr. G. Schaper Mr. H. Van Zwol
Classis Pella			
Ministers.....	Rev. Dr. O. Holtrop Rev. H. Vanden Einde	Ministers.....	Rev. T. L. Brouwer Rev. A. Zylstra
Elders.....	Mr. J. Huyser Mr. B. P. Groenendyk	Elders.....	Mr. J. Veldhouse Mr. W. Branderhorst
Classis Rocky Mountain			
Ministers.....	Rev. A. E. Mulder Rev. T. Verseput	Ministers.....	Rev. A. P. Ver Burg Rev. B. E. Visscher
Elders.....	Mr. L. Borger Mr. J. Estie	Elders.....	Mr. S. Barton Mr. S. Olthoff
Classis Sioux Center			
Ministers.....	Rev. R. De Ridder Rev. G. J. Rozenboom	Ministers.....	Rev. W. Verwolf Rev. L. Tamminga
Elders.....	Mr. H. Vander Luit Mr. H. Netten	Elders.....	Mr. H. Visscher Mr. J. Leistra
Classis Toronto			
Ministers.....	Rev. J. Joosse Rev. P. M. Jonker	Ministers.....	Rev. J. J. Byker Rev. M. De Vries
Elders.....	Mr. H. Kuntz Mr. J. Tensen	Elders.....	Mr. J. Van Dyke Mr. M. Frankruyter
Classis Wisconsin			
Ministers.....	Rev. C. E. Keegstra Rev. L. Stockmeier	Ministers.....	Rev. T. Vanden Heuvel Rev. F. Handlogten
Elders.....	Mr. M. Kuyers Mr. D. Buyze	Elders.....	Mr. H. Redeker Mr. H. Duitman
Classis Zeeland			
Ministers.....	Rev. H. G. Arnold Rev. H. C. Van Wyk, Jr.	Ministers.....	Rev. M. R. Doornbos Rev. J. Blankespoor
Elders.....	Mr. B. H. Brouwer Mr. G. Byker	Elders.....	Mr. M. De Young Mr. J. De Vries

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