

AGENDA  
FOR  
SYNOD

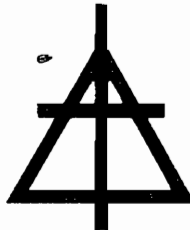
1972

**CHRISTIAN  
REFORMED  
CHURCH**

# AGENDA

1972

**Synod of the Christian Reformed Church**



LITHO  
IN  
U.S.A.

# PREFACE

The special prayer service for the Synod of 1972 will be held on Monday evening, June 12, 1972, at 8:00 p.m. in the Fine Arts Auditorium on the Knollcrest Campus of Calvin College, located two blocks north of Burton Street, southeast on the East Belt Line, Grand Rapids, Michigan. The convening church for synod is The Shawnee Park Christian Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan. The pastor of this congregation, the Rev. Lawrence Veltkamp, will be in charge of the prayer service.

The synod will begin its sessions Tuesday morning, June 13, at 9:00 a.m. in the Fine Arts Center. The pastor of the convening church will serve as president pro-tem until the Synod of 1972 is duly constituted and its four officers have been elected.

Our congregations are requested to remember the synodical assembly in intercessory prayers in their worship on Sunday, June 11. Let us pray that God may bless his church and use our denomination for his honor and a blessing to all men.



Stated Clerk  
2850 Kalamazoo Ave., S.E.  
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49508

## DELEGATES, PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING ITEMS

1. Delegates who travel by automobile are reminded of the decision of the Synod of 1962, that traveling together of one or more delegates will effect considerable savings to the church. (See pages 11, 513, Acts of 1961, and page 102, Acts of 1962.)

2. Plane travel is the most economical for delegates, since expenses for lodging and meals are not incurred.

3. Bring with you your copy of the Agenda for the 1972 synod and other supplementary materials that have been sent to you.



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE .....	3
DELEGATES TO SYNOD .....	7

## REPORTS OF BOARDS

1. Back to God Hour .....	11
2. Board of Trustees - Calvin College and Seminary .....	25
3. Christian Reformed Board of Foreign Missions .....	35
4. Christian Reformed Board of Home Missions .....	64
5. Christian Reformed Board of Publications .....	85
6. Christian Reformed World Relief Committee .....	107

## REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

7. Back to God Tract Committee .....	123
8. Bible Translation Committee .....	126
9. Chaplain Committee .....	127
10. Church Help Fund .....	135
11. Educational Assistance to Churches Abroad .....	143
12. Fund for Needy Churches .....	146
13. Historical Committee .....	157
14. Inter-Church Relations .....	158
15. Ministers' Pension Fund .....	170
16. Sermons for Reading Services .....	182
17. Synodical Committee on Race Relations .....	183
18. Unordained Employees' Pension Fund .....	190

## REPRESENTATIVES' REPORTS

19. American Bible Society .....	192
20. Canadian Bible Society .....	194
21. Dordt College .....	195

22. Faith, Prayer, and Tract League .....	197
23. Christian Laymen's League .....	203
24. Lord's Day Alliance of Canada .....	207
25. Lord's Day Alliance of the United States .....	208
26. Luke Society .....	211
27. Reformed Bible Institute .....	216
28. The Evangelical Literature League .....	218
29. United Calvinist Youth .....	219
30. World Home Bible League .....	224

### STUDY COMMITTEE REPORTS

31. Closer Relations with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church .....	226
32. Place of Deacons in Major Assemblies	
A. Majority Report .....	229
B. Minority Report .....	237
33. Membership Loss Committee .....	250
34. Clinton, Ontario, in Loco Committee .....	255
35. Committee to Study Homosexual Problem .....	262
36. Liturgical Committee .....	263
37. Women in Ecclesiastical Office .....	267
38. New Confession .....	268
39. Psalter Hymnal Supplement Committee .....	281
40. Ecclesiastical Office and Ordination .....	285
41. Abortion .....	345
42. Neo-Pentecostalism .....	351
43. Proof Texts for the Heidelberg Catechism .....	352
44. Nature and Extent of Biblical Authority .....	359
45. Lodge and Church Membership	
A. Majority Report .....	413
B. Minority Report .....	419
46. Translation of Heidelberg Catechism .....	436
47. Contact with Canadian Reformed Churches .....	452
48. Improvement in Method of Calling Ministers .....	454
49. Classical Examination Revision Request .....	466

**OVERTURES**

1. Revision of Church Visiting Guide (Classis Hamilton) .....	472
2. Disapprove Race Committee Action (Classis Holland) .....	472
3. Amendment of Church Order Article 42a (Classis Chatham) ....	472
4. Church Help Application Form and Rules (Classis Central California) .....	473
5. Amendment of Church Order Article 96 (Classis Toronto) .....	473
6. Re Ecclesiastical Control of Calvin College (Classis Pacific Northwest) .....	474
7. "The New Hermeneutic" (Classis Pacific Northwest) .....	475
8. Change Classis Florida in Calvin Area Quota Plan (Classis Florida) .....	476
9. Notification Rules for Ministerial Discipline (Classis Grandville)	477
10. Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship (Classis Lake Erie) .....	477
11. Limitation of Quota Increase (Classis Pella) .....	478
12. Supervision of the Lord's Supper (Classis Pella) .....	478
13. Change Usage of Church Order Article 41 (Classis California South) .....	478
14. Women at Congregational Meetings (Classis Hudson) .....	479
15. Re SCORR and Lawsuit (Classis Chicago North) .....	480
16. Shorten Acts of Synod (Classis Chicago North) .....	484
17. Synodical Examination of Candidates (Classis Sioux Center) ....	485
18. Change Church Order, Article 52b (Classis Rocky Mountain) ..	485
19. Re SCORR and Lawsuit (Classis Kalamazoo) .....	486
20. Retire SCORR (Consistory, First Pella, Iowa) .....	486
21. Requesting Censure of Classis Chicago North (Consistory, Lawndale, Chicago) .....	487

**PRINTED APPEALS and/or PROTESTS**

1. Classis Muskegon appeals decision of Synod of 1971 .....	489
2. Classis Chicago North appeals decisions of Synods of 1968-1971 ..	489
3. Wheaton Consistory appeals procedures of Classis Chicago North .....	503
4. Garfield Consistory appeals decisions of Classis Chicago North ..	504

<b>NOTIFICATION OF APPEALS and/or PROTESTS .....</b>	<b>505</b>
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## DELEGATES TO THE SYNOD OF 1972

DELEGATES		ALTERNATES	
<b>Classis Alberta North</b>			
Ministers .....	Rev. J. W. Postman	Ministers .....	Rev. C. Vriend
	Rev. J. Vriend		Rev. J. Huizenaga
Elders .....	Mr. D. Van Dyke	Elders .....	Mr. G. Koning
	Mr. John De Leeuw		Mr. N. Greidanus
<b>Classis Alberta South</b>			
Ministers .....	H. Wildeboer	Ministers .....	Rev. H. De Moor
	Rev. L. Mulder		
Elders .....	Mr. D. Bouwsema	Elders .....	Mr. C. Zeilstra
	Mr. B. Sterenberg		Mr. P. De Boer
<b>Classis British Columbia</b>			
Ministers .....	Rev. B. Nederlof	Ministers .....	Rev. J. Van Hemert
	Rev. J. Kits		Rev. P. Van Egmond
Elders .....	Mr. D. De Rover	Elders .....	Mr. P. Grootendorst
	Mr. W. Griffioen		Mr. J. Camfferman
<b>Classis Cadillac</b>			
Ministers .....	Rev. G. Compaan	Ministers .....	Rev. R. Wiebenga
	Rev. S. Bultman		Rev. A. Poel
Elders .....	Mr. H. Boehm	Elders .....	Mr. J. Quist
	Mr. H. King		Mr. J. Herweyer
<b>Classis California South</b>			
Ministers .....	Rev. J. Hasper	Ministers .....	Rev. A. De Jager
	Rev. J. Howerzyl		Rev. L. J. Dykstra
Elders .....	Mr. H. De Blaey	Elders .....	Mr. E. Brouwer
	Mr. J. Emerson		Mr. G. Byrne
<b>Classis Central California</b>			
Ministers .....	Rev. C. W. Flietstra	Ministers .....	Rev. J. Hekman
	Rev. R. Kok		Rev. H. Petroelje
Elders .....	Mr. J. Van Hofwegen	Elders .....	Mr. J. Grimmus
	Mr. R. Bode		Mr. M. Den Dulk
<b>Classis Chatham</b>			
Ministers .....	Rev. J. De Jong	Ministers .....	Rev. G. Bouma
	Rev. J. W. Van Weelden		Rev. M. Pool
Elders .....	Mr. J. M. Renkema	Elders .....	Rev. G. J. Hoytema
	Mr. H. Mulder		Mr. J. Triemstra
<b>Classis Chicago North</b>			
Ministers .....	Rev. E. Shuart	Ministers .....	Rev. A. Mulder
	Rev. G. Vanderhill		Rev. G. Stoutmeyer
Elders .....	Mr. J. Heerema	Elders .....	Mr. J. Wassenaar
	Mr. A. Hoving		Mr. A. Van Kampen
<b>Classis Chicago South</b>			
Ministers .....	Rev. A. C. De Jong	Ministers .....	Rev. J. Bylsma
	Rev. R. G. Timmerman		Rev. N. Punt
Elders .....	Mr. M. C. Doot	Elders .....	Mr. C. Dykstra
	Mr. B. Werkman		Mr. C. Christians
<b>Classis Columbia</b>			
Ministers .....	Rev. H. Leestma	Ministers .....	Rev. H. B. Spaan
	Rev. J. A. Petersen		Rev. K. R. Slager
Elders .....	Mr. W. B. Jansen	Elders .....	Mr. C. Van Dalfsen
	Mr. J. Danhof		Mr. J. Koetje



DELEGATES		ALTERNATES	
<b>Classis Eastern Canada</b>			
Ministers.....	Rev. H. Vander Plaats Rev. J. De Pater	Ministers.....	Rev. W. Gritter Rev. J. H. Binnema
Elders.....	Mr. G. van 't Foort Mr. Y. De Bruyn	Elders.....	Mr. F. Vedder Mr. W. Rebel
<b>Classis Florida</b>			
Ministers.....	Rev. E. Tamminga Rev. E. Heerema	Ministers.....	Rev. A. Rienstra Rev. R. Tjapkes
Elders.....	Mr. M. Zylstra Mr. R. Zeeff	Elders.....	Mr. A. Vroon Mr. L. Huls
<b>Classis Grand Rapids East</b>			
Ministers.....	Rev. M. R. Doornbos Rev. C. Boomsma	Ministers.....	Rev. H. G. Vander Ark Rev. J. A. De Kruyter
Elders.....	Mr. P. J. Zondervan Mr. T. Ribbens	Elders.....	Mr. H. Langeland, Sr. Dr. C. J. Miller
<b>Classis Grand Rapids North</b>			
Ministers.....	Rev. W. Haverkamp Rev. G. Rozenboom	Ministers.....	Rev. E. Knott Dr. R. De Groot
Elders.....	Dr. W. Rooks Mr. N. Rickers	Elders.....	Mr. G. Broene Mr. H. Geers
<b>Classis Grand Rapids South</b>			
Ministers.....	Rev. G. Holwerda Rev. J. M. Hofman	Ministers.....	Rev. H. De Jong Rev. M. S. Jorritsma
Elders.....	Dr. H. J. Kreulen Mr. H. Meyers	Elders.....	Mr. G. Altena Dr. R. S. Wierenga
<b>Classis Grandville</b>			
Ministers.....	Rev. H. DeWolf Rev. H. Erffmeyer	Ministers.....	Rev. H. Hoekstra Rev. L. Bossenbroek
Elders.....	Mr. J. Steenstra Mr. G. VanderKam	Elders.....	Mr. P. Boonstra Mr. R. Hoeksema
<b>Classis Hackensack</b>			
Ministers.....	Rev. S. Vander Klay Rev. A. Van Zanten	Ministers.....	Rev. A. Haan Rev. L. Van Staalduin, Jr.
Elders.....	Mr. P. Steenland Mr. G. Schultze	Elders.....	Mr. A. Vermeulen Mr. J. Last
<b>Classis Hamilton</b>			
Ministers.....	Rev. D. Los Rev. H. De Bolster	Ministers.....	Rev. J. J. Hoytema Rev. W. Vander Beek
Elders.....	Mr. H. Douma Mr. D. Wesseling	Elders.....	Mr. T. Hunse Mr. J. Shrimmer
<b>Classis Holland</b>			
Ministers.....	Rev. B. Den Ouden Rev. J. Leugs	Ministers.....	Rev. J. Kruis Rev. T. Vanden Heuvel
Elders.....	Mr. R. Holwerda Mr. J. Zoetewey	Elders.....	Mr. N. Yonker Mr. R. Ericks
<b>Classis Hudson</b>			
Ministers.....	Rev. N. R. Prins Rev. R. W. De Vries	Ministers.....	Rev. R. Opperwall Rev. D. Wisse
Elders.....	Dr. D. L. Olson Mr. D. Bush, Sr.	Elders.....	Mr. A. Wiersma Mr. P. Dykman

DELEGATES		ALTERNATES	
<b>Classis Huron</b>			
Ministers .....	Rev. J. A. Quartel Rev. P. Brouwer	Ministers .....	Rev. G. Nonnekes Rev. J. C. Derksen
Elders.....	Mr. E. Tuintjer Mr. R. Lubbers		
<b>Classis Illiana</b>			
Ministers .....	Rev. J. C. Scholten Rev. A. J. Vander Griend	Ministers .....	Rev. J. E. De Vries Rev. H. G. Arnold
Elders.....	Mr. W. Van Bruggen Mr. H. Wm. Otte	Elders.....	Mr. A. Vander Wall Mr. H. Schoon
<b>Classis Kalamazoo</b>			
Ministers .....	Rev. J. Mulder Rev. H. Brink	Ministers .....	Rev. N. Veltman Rev. J. Bultman
Elders.....	Mr. A. Bishop Mr. P. Nieboer	Elders.....	Mr. R. Engbers Mr. M. Hoekstra
<b>Classis Lake Erie</b>			
Ministers .....	Rev. S. Draayer Rev. W. Lenters	Ministers .....	Rev. F. Steen Rev. C. Keegstra
Elders.....	Mr. K. Ludema Mr. J. Batts	Elders.....	Mr. J. Vanderzyden Mr. J. Koopman
<b>Classis Minnesota North</b>			
Ministers .....	Rev. G. D. Mouw Rev. A. G. Van Eek	Ministers .....	Rev. T. Wevers Rev. S. Newhouse
Elders.....	Mr. D. Buteyn Mr. A. H. DeHoog	Elders.....	Mr. A. Geurkink Mr. R. Dornbush
<b>Classis Minnesota South</b>			
Ministers .....	Rev. B. Den Herder Rev. N. Roorda	Ministers .....	Rev. B. Ver Meer Rev. P. Brouwer
Elders.....	Mr. T. Koopman, Sr. Mr. R. Bleeker	Elders.....	Mr. A. Bouma Mr. D. Fikse
<b>Classis Muskegon</b>			
Ministers .....	Rev. N. Meyer Rev. J. Morren	Ministers .....	Rev. E. Piersma Rev. J. Meppelink
Elders.....	Dr. M. De Kryger Mr. A. Vissia	Elders.....	Mr. J. Heethuis Dr. T. Vanden Berg
<b>Classis Northcentral Iowa</b>			
Ministers .....	Rev. H. Hollander Rev. A. Van Heyst	Ministers .....	Rev. F. Walhof Rev. W. Elgersma
Elders.....	Mr. K. Muyskens Mr. M. Kole	Elders.....	Mr. J. Koldenhoven Mr. G. Bakker
<b>Classis Orange City</b>			
Ministers .....	Rev. H. De Groot Rev. H. Hiemstra	Ministers .....	Rev. N. Vogelzang Rev. F. Handlogten
Elders.....	Mr. M. Hofman Mr. J. Broek, Jr.	Elders.....	Dr. M. Petroelje Mr. E. Tormanen
<b>Classis Pacific Northwest</b>			
Ministers .....	Rev. J. Maas Rev. D. Negen	Ministers .....	Rev. J. Wesseling Rev. J. Stulp
Elders.....	Mr. E. Roosma Mr. H. Bosman	Elders.....	Mr. C. Quist none appointed

DELEGATES		ALTERNATES	
		<b>Classis Pella</b>	
Ministers .....	Rev. S. Kramer Rev. P. E. Bakker	Ministers .....	Rev. R. Venema Rev. W. Swets
Elders.....	Mr. R. Monsma Mr. S. Gabrielse	Elders.....	Mr. C. Hein Mr. H. Groenendyk
		<b>Classis Quinte</b>	
Ministers .....	Rev. C. D. Tuyl Rev. A. Vanden Berg	Ministers .....	Rev. J. Geuzebroek Rev. R. Popma
Elders.....	Mr. A. Van Belle Mr. H. Pel	Elders.....	Mr. T. C. Strikwerda Mr. H. Wiersma
		<b>Classis Rocky Mountain</b>	
Ministers .....	Rev. J. Vander Laan Rev. W. Leys	Ministers .....	Rev. J. Boonstra Rev. G. De Young
Elders.....	Rev. C. Bajema Mr. E. W. Boot	Elders.....	Mr. J. Vander Meulen Mr. C. Westenburg
		<b>Classis Sioux Center</b>	
Ministers .....	Rev. J. Engbers Rev. H. Vanden Heuvel	Ministers .....	Dr. P. Y. De Jong Rev. C. Van Essen
Elders.....	Mr. H. Vander Luit Mr. C. Visscher	Elders.....	Mr. H. De Jong Mr. W. De Vries
		<b>Classis Toronto</b>	
Ministers .....	Rev. P. Jonker Rev. J. Vos	Ministers .....	Rev. L. Tamminga Rev. M. De Vries
Elders.....	Mr. C. C. Vander Riet Mr. F. Masselink	Elders.....	Mr. A. Snippe Mr. R. Van Dyke
		<b>Classis Wisconsin</b>	
Ministers .....	Rev. P. W. Vis Rev. G. E. De Vries	Ministers .....	Rev. G. L. Van Enk Rev. H. G. Vanden Einde
Elders.....	Mr. F. Stremmer Mr. H. Kok	Elders.....	Mr. H. Wiersma Mr. A. Eggebeen
		<b>Classis Zeeland</b>	
Ministers .....	Rev. C. Bolt Rev. W. Van Rees	Ministers .....	Rev. E. Haan Rev. E. Los
Elders.....	Mr. C. Dykema Mr. W. C. Bakelaar	Elders.....	Mr. M. De Young Mr. P. Jasperse

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# REPORTS OF BOARDS

## REPORT 1

### THE BACK TO GOD HOUR COMMITTEE

#### DEAR BROTHERS:

The Radio Committee supervises the production and distribution of more than 970 regular feature length programs each week. They are in six languages. In addition, the committee supplies broadcasters with spot announcements for both radio and television in English, and for radio in Spanish. This programming is supported by a wide range of literature written specifically to serve those who respond to the broadcasts. In this report we wish to share with the denomination our joy and excitement as we are involved in spreading the gospel through these programs. This report is divided into sections called North America, Foreign, Literature, and Finance.

#### NORTH AMERICA

In the nature of the case, the bulk of our broadcasting activity is expressed on the North American continent where more than 300 stations carry the regular Back to God Hour broadcast. (Figure 1) During 1971 we renewed our contract with NBC. The contract with Mutual was renewed only after special negotiations with the network during which they agreed to air our 4½ minute *Insight* broadcast. While there are many availabilities, it is necessary to examine each one in terms of the audience that can be delivered in terms of money spent. And existing outlets must be examined carefully as well. This is done whenever contracts are renewed.

During 1971, two significant soft spots developed. KHJ in Los Angeles and CKEY in Toronto indicated that they would not be able to carry the program during 1972. It is hoped that suitable substitutes will be found. In order to fortify our coverage in the Chicagoland area, we have used a strong FM station. In Canada, the whole relationship of American produced religious broadcasts to the Canadian scene is being investigated by a government agency. As yet, we have been pleased with good availabilities in Canada, but we will watch these developments carefully. The committee has taken significant steps to make our program as Canadian as possible by establishing two mailing addresses in Canada, one in Ottawa and one in Montreal, and incorporating there as well.

So far as programming in North America is concerned, the following programs are being released:

The Back to God Hour 1/2-hour version  
 The Back to God Hour 25-minute version  
 MASTERPLAN—15-minute variation on The Back to God Hour  
*Insight*—4 1/2 minutes  
 RACOM Spots—radio  
 RACOM Spots—television  
 RADIO TODAY—one-half-hour daily over KDCR, Dordt College  
 Radio  
 Lo Hora de la Reforma—15-minute weekly, Spanish  
 Radiophonique De L'Eglise Chretiennee Reformee—15-minute weekly, French

These program offerings represent an attempt to provide the broadcasting industry with a variety of materials. Many of these materials are produced for public service release. We estimate that at least 100 stations are carrying *Insight*. We have verification of 94 stations releasing our TV spots either daily, weekly, or "in rotation." Nineteen of these are in the top 25 population areas.

The Spanish language releases in North America are restricted to areas where many Spanish speaking people are concentrated. WADO in New York City is an important ministry to Spanish speaking people there. The French language ministry has also expanded significantly in Montreal with the addition of the 50,000 watt CKAC. More than 250 letters came from French speaking Quebec during 1971, a record for that ministry.

#### FOREIGN MINISTRY OF THE BACK TO GOD HOUR

The foreign ministry of The Back to God Hour is conducted in English, Arabic, Spanish, Portuguese, French, and Indonesian. A synopsis of each of these activities follows.

*English Language*—The regular English language release of The Back to God Hour is modified for use overseas. (Figure 2) The Reformed Churches of Australia cooperate in financing and producing a special edition of The Back to God Hour for 10 stations in that country. Mr. Vander Schoor, who has handled our business in Australia for several years, visited our office during 1971. In addition, *Radio Today* (Bonaire Project) is a daily magazine type format program designed primarily for overseas use. The 15-minute program *Masterplan* is aired each Thursday evening by Radio Cyprus. This is a significant penetration into the Middle East, especially Israel.

The English language programs from The Back to God Hour can be heard virtually everywhere in the world. The use of superpower stations on the island of Bonaire and in Monte Carlo enables The Back to God Hour to blanket Europe and reach deep behind the Iron Curtain, into Russia and Red China. India is a very significant target area. With millions of people understanding English today, well over 160 million in India alone, the overseas English ministry is an important extension of our church's mission.

*Arabic Language, the Rev. Mr. Bassam Madany, Arabic Language Pastor* (Figure 3) This work, begun in 1958, now covers every part of

the Arab world with the message of Reformed Christianity. During 1971, the continued effectiveness of Radio Cyprus, a regular wave station with a large listenership in the Middle East, strengthened the coverage of the Arabic ministry. FEBA, a new station in the Seychelle Islands in the Indian Ocean, also began carrying the Arabic broadcast and has proven very effective.

During 1971 more than 3400 letters were received. Most of these are sent to the Arabic mailing address in Khartoum, the Sudan. And they indicated that besides many listeners in North Africa and the Middle East, there are many listeners throughout Europe. Arabic speaking students in Russia are among those who write. When we remember the limited amount of gospel broadcasting being done in Arabic and the great ideological struggle in the Middle East and North Africa today, this ministry, which brings 26 programs each week into the area, continues to be a strategically important element in our church's world-wide outreach.

*Spanish Language, the Rev. Mr. Juan Boonstra, Spanish Language Pastor* (Figure 4) In addition to the regular programs, La Hora de la Reforma and La Antorcha Espiritual, the Spanish program offerings were supplemented in 1971 by a Christmas special. Twenty-eight stations throughout South America played this on a public service basis. A new series of 4½-minute broadcasts called *Reflexion* dealing with the Gospel of John were also produced. Progress was made, too, in the production of spot announcements; ten were produced using the facilities and actors of a studio in Mexico City.

This ministry continues to attract growing numbers of listeners throughout Central and South America. More than 10,000 letters came into our office from Spanish speaking listeners during the past year. During 1971, Rev. Boonstra visited several fields manned by the Foreign Mission Board, as well as Haiti where there seemed to be possibilities for a new field.

*Portuguese Language* (Figure 5) During 1971, the Rev. Mr. William Muller continued to supervise the production of this broadcast, which is a part of the Bonaire package. Offers of literature over the broadcast brought in large letter response, one month more than 900, from Brazil.

*French Language, Radiophonique De L'Eglise Chretienne Reformee*, (Figure 5) achieved greater penetration than ever in Quebec with the addition of CKAC, a 50,000 watt station there. Rev. Madany supervises the production of this broadcast, and the Rev. Aaron Kayayan of Belleville, France, prepares the spoken messages. Many letters of the record response in 1971 were from priests and nuns.

*Indonesian Language* (Figure 5) Rev. Junus Atmarumeksa continued to represent us in this ministry, carried on in cooperation with Indonesian Reformed Churches and Far East Broadcasting Company (hereafter called FEBC). His varied offering of programs, ranging from preaching programs to short programs defining Christian terms, to drama, form a major part of the work being done by FEBC in Indonesian today.

*Chinese* The committee would also like to receive approval from synod to begin a Chinese language ministry. FEBC has approached us with an offer of time over their new station, HLDA, in Cheji Island off the coast of Korea. This will give good coverage to Shanghai, and preliminary engineering reports indicate that there will be a good signal more than 1000 miles inland. We would be able to supply scripts and the station would furnish the production. We feel that a substantial daily ministry could be conducted in this way, at an annual cost of approximately \$40,000.

#### LITERATURE

The entire ministry outlined above is supported by specialized literature. Well over three million pieces of literature were sent out in connection with the English language ministry. Two important booklets were reprinted in Arabic: *Freedom in Christ*, a study of Galatians; and the Arabic language edition of *The Lord's Prayer*, by Peter Eldersveld. Arabic correspondents were also sent other copies of Rev. Madany's books. In Spanish, a new 12-month series of the *Family Altar* was prepared and distributed. French listeners are supplied with copies of French sermons. In Indonesia, the *Family Altar* is also available in Indonesian for listeners there. The *Compendium* in Portuguese, and the *Family Altar* in that language are distributed to listeners in Brazil.

#### FINANCES

We now submit our budget for 1973. This budget presupposes that we will continue to generate increasing above quota receipts. The budget is based on a quota support of \$16.00 per family.

We wish to underscore the urgency of our need by noting several considerations.

First of all, the bulk of our costs are determined by the general state of business. Purchase of radio time, printing, mailing, postage—all these costs are gradually moving upward. All of our expenditures are subject to careful scrutiny and wherever possible, savings are realized. Nonetheless, at least a 5% increase per year is necessary to maintain production levels.

Closely related to the general cost rise is the continuing dollar crisis. Since much of our budget goes for the purchase of overseas broadcast time, we must expect that the declining purchasing power of the dollar in foreign markets will result in rising foreign broadcast costs that will be far greater proportionately than those caused by our domestic inflationary factors.

Secondly, our request for a \$16.00 quota base is not an indication that your committee intends to depend more and more upon quota support. The opposite is true. In 1971 the increase in quota receipts over 1970 amounted of \$77,227 while our increase in voluntary giving categories was \$154,858. This represented a situation in which for every dollar additional in quota, more than two dollars was raised through voluntary giving.

Thus, the request for a \$16.00 quota base is made in a context in which the committee is expanding increasing efforts to generate above-quota giving. The success of these efforts is demonstrated in the financial performance for 1971 in which the increase in voluntary giving was more than double that of the increase in quota receipts.

Thirdly, because of the nature of its operation, The Back to God Hour does not accumulate reserves. We can therefore assure the denomination that quota support of this ministry directly affects the levels of the ministry at any given time. By the same token, failure to rise to the current need will immediately result in curtailment of our work.

Fourthly, your committee feels that the \$16.00 quota base for our work represents a minimal denominational response to the challenge of broadcasting today. In a world of expanding world populations and other international realities that inhibit the mission of the church in so many ways, broadcasting as a tool for proclaiming the gospel emerges as exceptionally useful. Failure to exploit this medium in times like these would be gross irresponsibility. We fervently hope that our church will signify its serious intention to continue to expand its use of radio by giving its approval to our budget proposal.

\* \* \* \*

It is scarcely possible in a report of this nature to communicate the sense of excitement and high privilege which we have as we conduct this broadcast ministry. The letters which come in from many countries all around the world bear eloquent testimony to the continuing power of the Word of the gospel. There are conversions, there are groups who meet in study, there are people strengthened in their faith, and there are those who are comforted with the good news as they approach death. Whatever the results, we attribute them solely to the marvelous power of the Word of God, the Bible, which remains today the great instrument whereby God is calling in his people from the four corners of the world.

Perhaps it is because broadcasting can blanket so much of the earth's surface and penetrate many thousands of private lives, that there is a unique atmosphere of expectation and surprise in work like this. There is so much we can never know about what our ministry is doing today. But there is one thing we do know with utmost certainty: broadcasting is one of the great means Christ himself is using to hasten his return. Jesus has said, "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, as a testimony to all nations; and then the end will come" (Matthew 24:14). Christ has a timetable! It is as sure as sure can be. And we know that as we broadcast the gospel of the kingdom to all the nations, our work is being integrated into his great history consummating action.

We are thrilled to be a part of all this—thrilled and humbled. Please pray fervently for all of us. Pray for our staff ministers, the Reverends Joel Nederhood, Bassam Madany, Juan Boonstra; and for the ministers who work with them, the Reverends Junus Atmarumeksa, Aaron Kaya-yan, and William Muller. So much depends upon these men. Pray for our office staff that supports them. Pray for us as a committee, that we may have wisdom and courage as we give direction to this world-wide



work of God. And pray that God will continue to accompany his proclaimed Word so that many, moved by the glorious gospel of the kingdom and impelled by the Holy Spirit, may come and take their place among the redeemed in the New Jerusalem.

These are not dark days for the church. We stand in the victory of Jesus and rejoice to be a part of his great march through history.

#### MATTERS REQUIRING SYNODICAL ATTENTION

I. The Radio Committee requests that Dr. J. Nederhood and either the president, Rev. D. Negen, or the secretary, Rev. N. Punt, be given the privilege of the floor when Back to God Hour matters are discussed.

#### II. Nominations:

Canada West area:	Rev. J. Jongsma (incumbent) Rev. R. Stienstra
Pacific Northwest area:	Rev. D. Negen (incumbent) Rev. A. Leegwater
Central Iowa area:	Rev. R. Slater (incumbent) Rev. E. Blankespoor
California area:	Mr. C. Vander Brug (incumbent) Mr. J. Verhoeven
Southern Michigan area:	Mr. W. Veldkamp (incumbent) Mr. A. Post
Rocky Mountain area:	Rev. D. Aardsma Rev. S. Redhouse

III. The Radio Committee requests approval of the new Chinese broadcast.

IV. The Radio Committee requests authorization to continue its cooperation in the Indonesian broadcasting venture through June 1975.

V. The Radio Committee requests approval of the French broadcast through June 1974.

VI. The Radio Committee requests that the proposed budget for 1973 and the quota of \$16.00 be adopted.

VII. The Radio 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 RADIO COMMITTEE

Rev. D. Negen, President  
 Rev. R. Wildschut, Vice-president  
 Rev. N. Punt, Secretary  
 Dr. A. Diekema, Treasurer  
 Mr. R. J. De Nooyer  
 Dr. S. Greidanus  
 Rev. J. W. Jongsma  
 Rev. R. Slater  
 Mr. E. Tamminga  
 Mr. R. Triemstra  
 Mr. C. Vander Brug  
 Mr. W. Veldkamp  
 Rev. R. Venema

THE BACK TO GOD HOUR — TENTATIVE BUDGET - 1973

*Estimated Receipts*

Synodical Quotas .....	\$ 849,750.00
Churches - Special Offerings .....	115,500.00
Organizations .....	11,000.00
Individual Gifts .....	326,750.00
Foreign - Designated .....	297,000.00
Station Sponsorship .....	11,000.00
Other Income .....	31,000.00

\$1,642,000.00

*Disbursements*

Broadcasting:

Domestic .....	\$ 670,000.00
Foreign:	
English .....	98,000.00
Arabic .....	76,000.00
Spanish .....	141,000.00
French .....	25,000.00
Indonesian .....	10,000.00
Portuguese .....	74,000.00
Recording & Duplicating .....	30,000.00
Research & Development .....	10,000.00

Administration:

Audit .....	2,000.00
Christian Reformed Employees Pension Plan .....	5,000.00
Committee Expense .....	5,000.00
Data Processing & Payroll Service .....	5,000.00
Equipment .....	12,000.00
Insurance .....	8,000.00
Maintenance & Repairs .....	9,000.00
Ministers' Pension Fund .....	4,000.00
Salaries .....	145,000.00
Social Security Expense .....	6,000.00
Supplies .....	19,000.00
Travel .....	9,000.00
Utilities .....	10,000.00
Family Altar .....	103,000.00
Capital Improvements .....	5,000.00
Literature .....	43,000.00
Ministers' Housing & Allowances .....	10,000.00
Music Production .....	5,000.00
Other Printing .....	40,000.00
Professional Services .....	18,000.00
Sermons .....	45,000.00

\$1,642,000.00

**THE BACK TO GOD HOUR**  
**FINANCIAL REPORT - JANUARY 1 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 1971**

*Receipts:*

Synodical Quotas .....	\$689,359.08
Churches - Special Offerings .....	89,667.29
Organizations .....	7,309.68
Individual Gifts .....	254,829.96
Foreign - Designated .....	230,671.82
Station Sponsorship .....	8,777.42
Legacies .....	28,387.09
Trust Account Transfer .....	29,407.87
Other Income .....	20,200.03
<i>Total Receipts</i> .....	<u>\$1,358,610.24</u>

*Disbursements:*

<b>Broadcasting:</b>	
Domestic .....	\$563,505.03
Foreign:	
English .....	88,827.31
Arabic .....	57,269.81
Spanish .....	97,090.67
French .....	12,622.39
Indonesian .....	4,096.92
Portuguese .....	53,483.60
TV .....	12,333.76
Recording & Duplicating .....	27,070.74
Research & Development .....	6,004.36
<b>Administration:</b>	
Audit .....	1,712.80
Christian Reformed Employees Pension Plan .....	2,781.12
Committee Expense .....	3,908.04
Data Processing & Payroll Service .....	2,386.56
Equipment .....	6,618.50
Insurance .....	5,466.49
Maintenance & Repairs .....	6,626.09
Ministers' Pension Fund .....	2,250.00
Salaries .....	120,862.65
Social Security Expense .....	4,120.54
Supplies .....	14,320.06
Travel .....	4,801.34
Utilities .....	7,769.56
Family Altar .....	95,875.72
Capital Improvements .....	8,732.24
Literature .....	45,120.50
Other Printing .....	31,623.43
Ministers' Housing & Allowances .....	6,802.42
Music Production .....	5,339.48
Professional Services .....	7,700.93
Sermons .....	34,038.13
Other Expense .....	3,117.50
<i>Total Disbursements</i> .....	<u>\$1,344,278.69</u>

Dr. Anthony Diekema, Treasurer

*Fig. 1* THE ENGLISH DOMESTIC BROADCAST COVERAGE

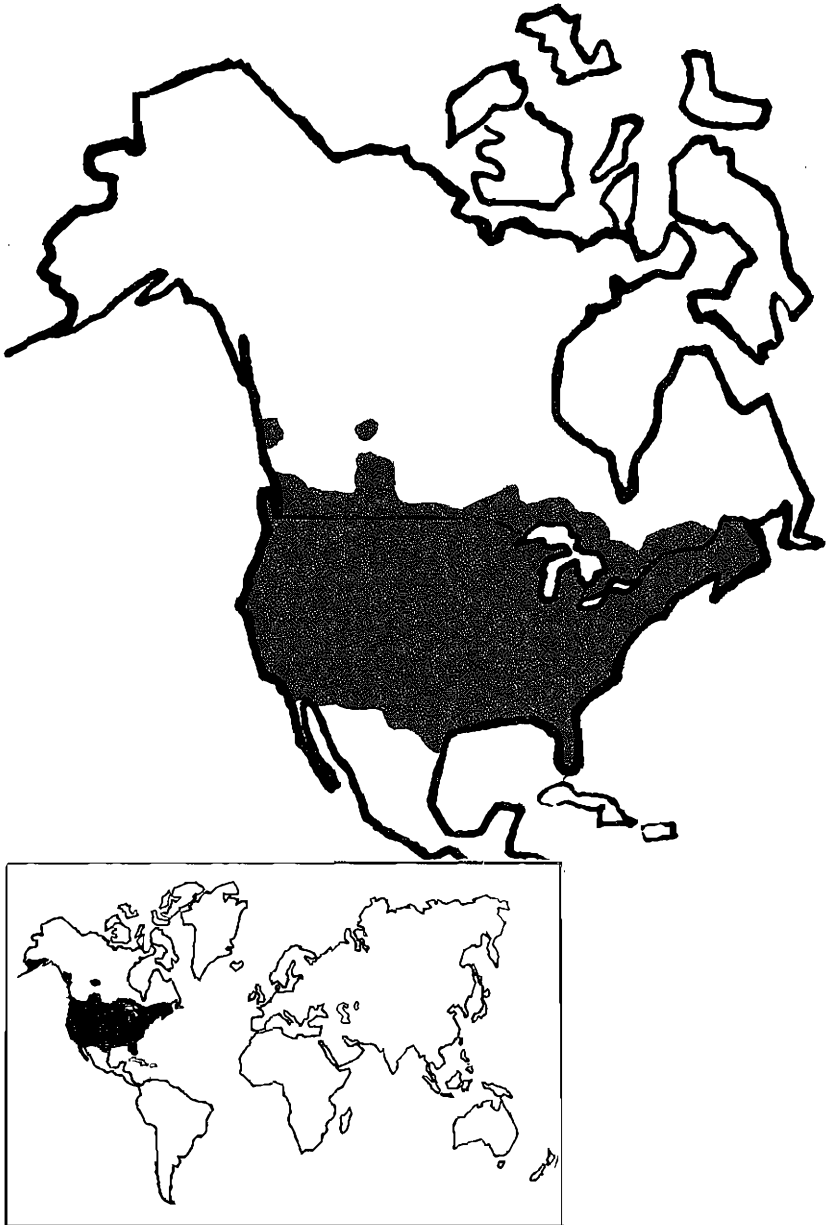
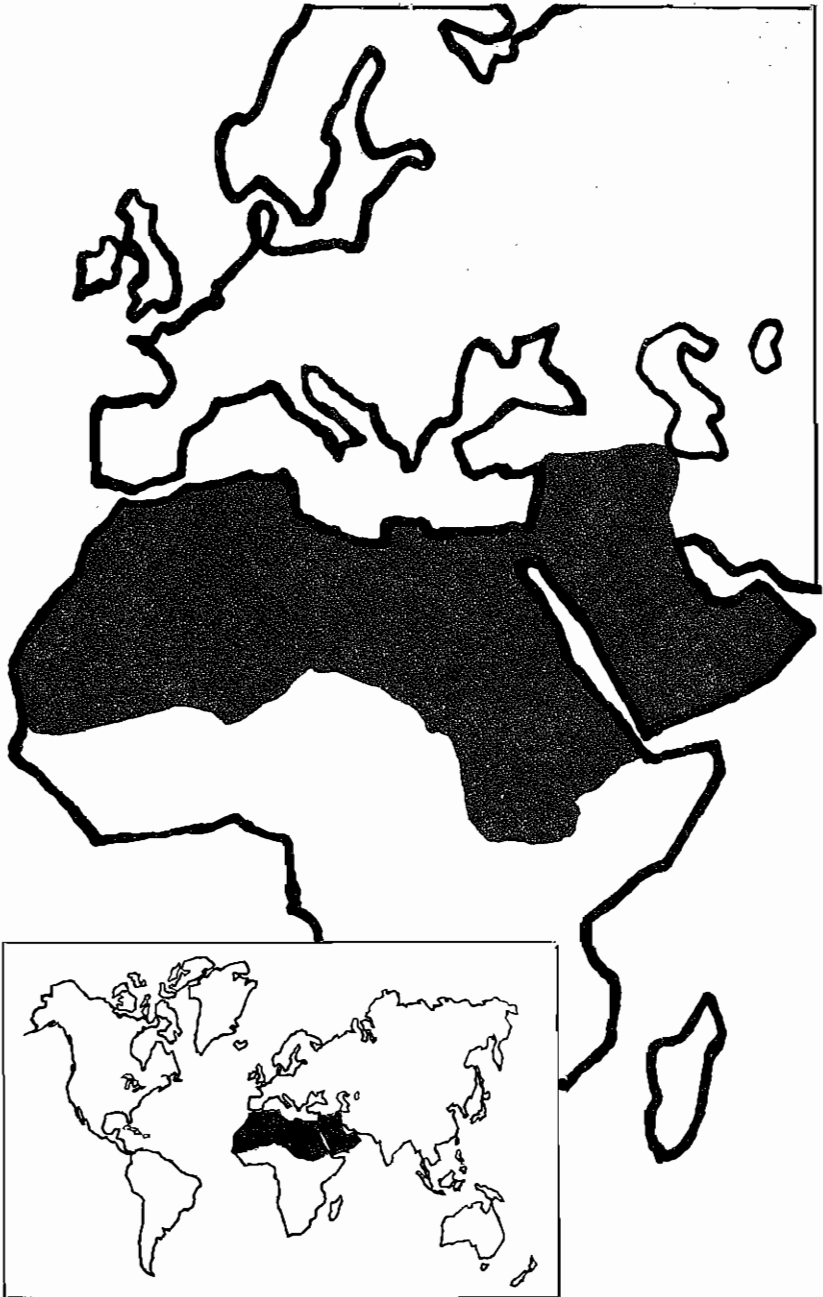


Fig. 2 THE ENGLISH OVERSEAS BROADCAST COVERAGE



Fig. 3 THE ARABIC BROADCAST COVERAGE



*Fig. 4* THE SPANISH BROADCAST COVERAGE



Fig. 5 PORTUGUESE, FRENCH AND INDONESIAN COVERAGE

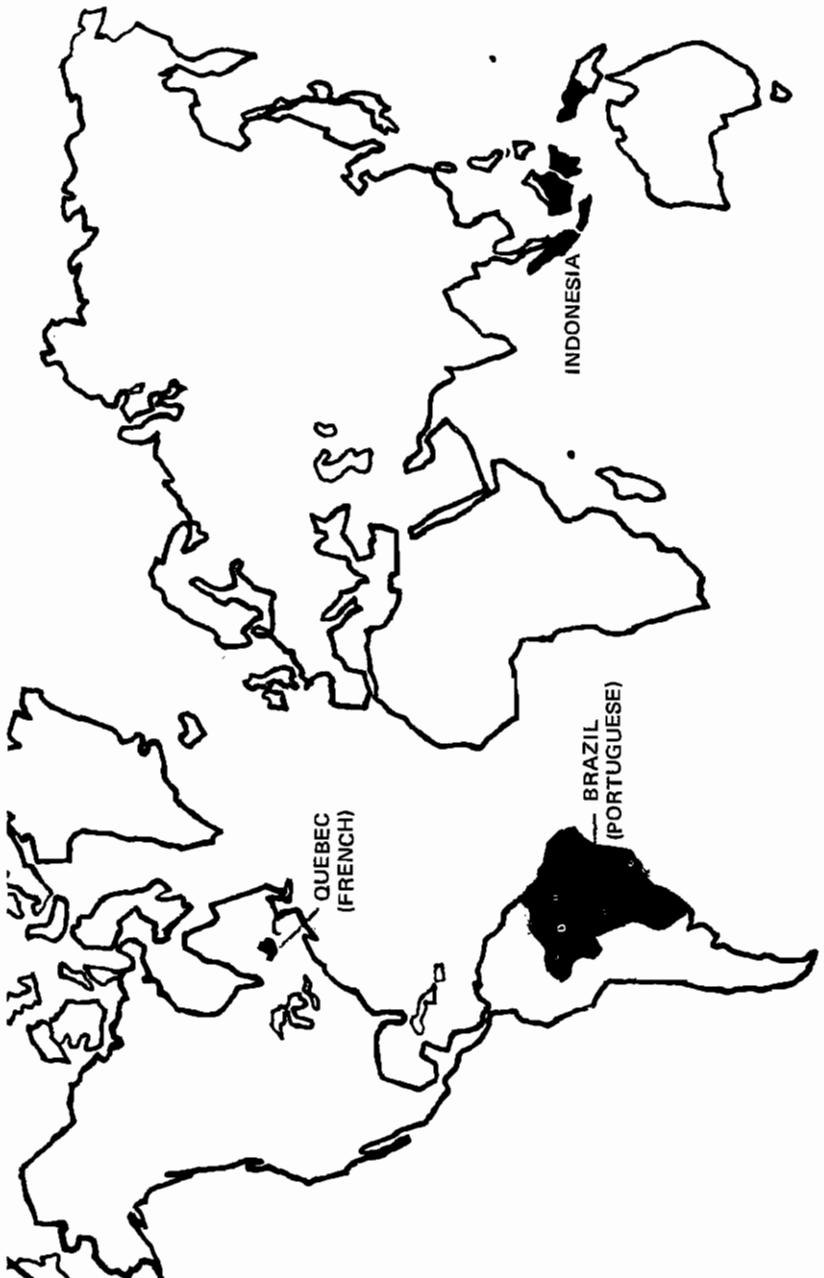
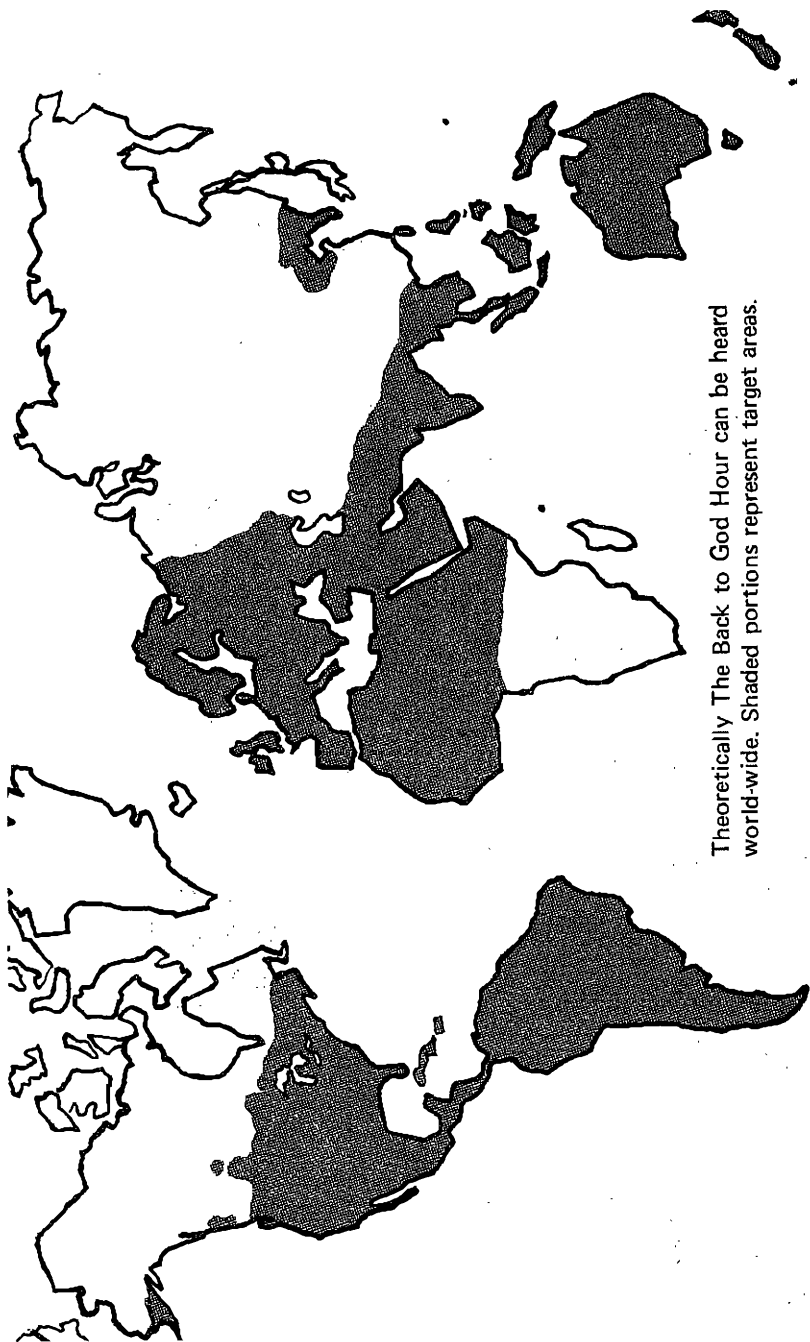




Fig.6 PRIMARY TARGET AREAS



Theoretically The Back to God Hour can be heard world-wide. Shaded portions represent target areas.

## REPORT 2

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES—CALVIN COLLEGE AND SEMINARY

## DEAR BROTHERS:

This report covers the actions of the Board of Trustees of Calvin College and Seminary from June, 1971 to February, 1972. A supplementary report will follow after the May, 1972 meeting of the board.

## I. INFORMATION

A. *Board of Trustees*

1. The board, composed of forty-six (thirty-seven clergy and nine lay) members, held its winter semi-annual meeting February 7-10, 1972, at the Knollcrest Commons.

2. Officers: At the February meeting the following officers were elected:

President	— Rev. Henry Vander Kam
First Vice-President	— Mr. John Vander Ark
Second Vice-President	— Rev. George Gritter
Secretary	— Rev. Leonard Hofman
Treasurer	— Mr. Stewart Geelhood
Assistant Secretary	— Mr. Berton Sevensma

3. The meeting of the Board of Trustees was characterized by a spirit of goodwill, reflected in a genuine concern for our college and seminary, along with an awareness of their strategic position in the lives and thinking of the people of the church. A sense of community prevails on campus and a more vital spiritual sensitivity among students, faculty, administration, and members of the board.

It is also observed that the relationship of the college and seminary to the constituency has shown remarkable improvement. Gratitude is expressed to God for the privilege of focusing efforts upon the important kingdom business of Christian higher education.

4. Executive Committee: The five lay members and seven ministers of the Executive Committee met regularly each month, except August, transacting the business of the college and seminary, with the presidents serving as advisors. On July 29 the Executive Committee met in special evening session with members of the Association of Christian Reformed Laymen. While some time in this past year was devoted to careful handling of correspondence which conveyed both supportive and concerned sentiments of members of our denomination, there was a marked decrease in the amount of mail received and an increase in evidences of goodwill. In addition to acting on behalf of the Board of Trustees, the members of the Executive Committee serve on various committees. Currently the members of the Executive Committee are: the Rev. Gerard Bouma, Mr. Harry Elders, the Rev. Wendell Gebben, Mr. Stewart Geelhood, the Rev. George Gritter, the Rev. Leonard Hofman, the Rev. John Scholten, Mr.

Berton Sevensma, Dr. James Strikwerda, Mr. John Vander Ark, the Rev. Henry Vander Kam, and the Rev. Tennis Van Kooten.

5. Class visits were assigned and carried out in keeping with regular procedure. The reports submitted by board representatives were generally thorough and favorable.

6. The Board of Trustees reserved a portion of Wednesday, February 9, 1972 so that members could attend the Second Annual Faculty-Board Winter Conference. The general topic discussed was: "The Pedagogical Implications of the View of Man in *The Christian Liberal Arts Education*." Those faculty members participating were Professors N. Wolterstorff, W. De Boer, P. De Boer, D. Vroon, C. Miller, D. Hoekstra, and E. Boevé. The conference was successful in providing spiritual and intellectual stimulation along with opportunity for Christian fellowship. Arrangements for the conference were made by a special committee from the board and the two faculties.

7. Reports of board members to classes. It was decided to provide reports containing information about the life of the college and seminary for each of the board members for the purpose of assisting them in reporting to their various classes.

#### 8. Film Study Committee

The Board of Trustees at its February, 1971 meeting appointed a committee to investigate, in consultation with the Film Arts Council and the Administration, the problems involved in showing films on campus. This committee reported at the February, 1972 meeting of the board and its conclusions were adopted as follows:

a. Having assessed the problem and the administration of the on-campus film program, the Board of Trustees is of the opinion that the organization, policies, and procedures are sound and defensible. The Film Council is sensitive to the various aspects of the problem and functions with integrity. The Board of Trustees concludes that the present program is a worthy implementation of synod's call for the initiation of education in film arts.

b. The Board of Trustees commends *Chimes* for its present practice of not accepting for publication advertisements for films shown off campus and urges the Publication Committee to adopt as its policy a continuation of this practice. We further recommend that the Publications Committee formulate guidelines on the reviewing of films similar to those adopted by the Film Council.

c. Because there is some apprehension and much lack of understanding on the part of the constituency, and also the student body, with respect to the showing of films on campus, the Board of Trustees recommends that there should be publicity regarding the Film Council and the service it is rendering.

### B. *The Seminary*

#### 1. *Faculty*

##### a. Personnel

The following changes have taken place in the faculty since last year. Dr. David Engelhard has assumed his full duties as a new member of the

faculty. Professor Henry Zwaanstra has returned from his sabbatical leave. Dr. Henry Stob is on leave for the year, and Professor Dekker is absent from the faculty for the second quarter. Dr. Bandstra is serving as Academic Dean and Dr. Fred Klooster as Secretary of the Faculty. The Rev. Dirk Lieverdink fills a dual role as Acting Dean of Students and Acting Director of Field Education. Mr. Jack Reiffer is the Registrar. The following are among those who rendered part-time service to the seminary: Dr. Seymour Van Dyken assisted in the teaching of Church History during the first quarter. The Rev. Richard De Ridder taught courses in missions during the second quarter. Teaching services in the Department of Ethics and Apologetics are being rendered by Dr. Richard Mouw, Dr. Ralph Vunderink, and Dr. Elton M. Eenigenburg. The Rev. Martin Geleynse and the Rev. Paul Schoon are providing part-time services in the office of field education.

b. Reappointment

Since Prof. Henry Zwaanstra was not available for interview in February of 1971, the tabled recommendation of the Faculty Evaluation Committee of the seminary was acted upon, and following favorable interview, the Board of Trustees decided to recommend to synod that Prof. Henry Zwaanstra be reappointed as associate professor with permanent tenure. It is to be noted that the rank of professor will be awarded when he has received his doctorate from the Free University.

c. Lecturers

The Board of Trustees approved the appointment of Dr. David Holwerda as a full-time lecturer in the New Testament Department for the academic year 1972-73, during the leaves of absence of Dr. B. Van Elderen and Dr. A. Bandstra.

The Board of Trustees approved, following a favorable interview, the appointment of Mr. Allen Verhey as lecturer in ethics for one year, 1972-73.

d. Nomination for the Department of Practical Theology.

The Board of Trustees decided to delay making a nomination for the Department of Practical Theology for one year for the following reason: The additional year will enable the seminary faculty to complete its unfinished study of the particular position to be filled in the Department of Practical Theology, as well as the preparation of a nomination to that position. It was decided to appoint Dr. J. Marion Snapper of Calvin College as lecturer to teach the core course entitled "The Educational Ministry of the Church" in the first quarter of the academic year 1972-73.

e. Exchange of Professors

While Dr. Sierd Woudstra had accepted an appointment to teach Old Testament subjects at the Theological College of Geelong, Australia, a serious health problem developed in his family in the critical illness of his fifteen-year-old daughter, Kathy, making it impossible for him to meet the February 19 deadline for beginning his work in Australia. To meet this situation an arrangement was worked out by which Dr. Marten Woudstra would teach in Australia for one term, and Dr. Sierd Woudstra fill in for him in the Old Testament Department at Calvin Seminary. This met with the approval of both professors, the Executive Committee

of the Board of Trustees, and the Executive Committee of the Board of Foreign Missions in cooperation with whom Dr. Sierd Woudstra was scheduled to carry on his work.

f. Mandatory Retirement Age

The Board of Trustees approved the recommendation that the mandatory retirement for professors at Calvin Seminary be set at age 65. The seminary administration is authorized, however, to employ a professor for classroom service on a year-to-year basis after age 65, provided consultation with the division involved has been made and approval by the Board of Trustees or its Executive Committee has been given. The decision relative to mandatory retirement age was made immediately applicable to all professors who had not reached age 60 at the time the provisions were adopted and the specific financial provisions adopted for the college faculty were to be applied where appropriate.

g. Faculty Involvement in Synodical Study Committees

Without going into detail, it is worthy of mention that members of the seminary faculty are very actively involved in synodical study committees. Some nineteen committee assignments for the denomination can be counted. In this way the professors are providing leadership by articulating their positions with respect to theological problems.

2. Curriculum

a. The following elective courses were approved: *The Church and the Social Order* (Dr. R. Mouw), *The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Dr. Hoekema), *Perspectives on Personality* (Dr. Hugen), *Adventures in Classic Mission Literature* (Prof. Recker), and *A Survey of the History of Missions in Africa* (Prof. Recker).

b. The following three-hour elective courses were approved:

- In Old Testament, "*Exile and Restoration: an examination of the history of Israel from Josiah's reform to the restoration of Israel under Ezra and Nehemiah.*"

- In New Testament: "*Studies in the Gospel of John: a study of the background, structure, and theology of the Gospel of John, including an assessment of the critical views regarding the relationship between history and gospel.*"

3. Student Affairs

a. The 1971-1972 academic year began with the following student enrollment: Juniors—33, Middlers—34, Seniors—50, Graduate Students—15, Unclassified—11, and Interns—11, for a total of 154. Since the senior class is the largest of the three classes, the enrollment figure is likely to decline still farther next year. Various efforts are being put forth at recruitment of students. A committee of the Board of Trustees and faculty was requested to study the matter of the possible decline of the number of seminary students, and the matter of continued need for candidates in the Christian Reformed Church. While some interest has been expressed in a "Twice-Yearly Declaration of Candidacy," the board decided to withhold action on the matter, but take steps toward establishing a regular procedure by which, in cases of demonstrated

special need, the board's examination and recommendation to synod could be completed at its February meeting.

b. Changes of status.

The board ratified the action of the Executive Committee in approving a change in status for ten students, and licensure was approved for eight.

c. The Board of Trustees took grateful note of the removal of the Accrediting Commission notation regarding the Calvin Seminary Library, and the excellent progress made in the improvement of our library facilities and operations, as well as the efficient service of Mr. Peter De Klerk, Theological Librarian.

d. The board also gratefully acknowledged the receipt of the generous bequest of \$96,896 from the "Eugene and Ruth Dodds Seminary Trust."

C. *The College*

1. *Faculty*

a. Size and status of the teaching staff. There are, currently, 168 teachers who are classified as full-time members of the Calvin College teaching faculty. This is a reduction of eight persons from the 1970 teaching staff. Twenty-five part-time teachers were employed.

b. Ratifications of actions of the Executive Committee. The board ratified the action of the Executive Committee in appointing Mrs. Gretchen Zuiderveen as Dean of Women for one year, Mr. Larry Teitsma as Visiting Assistant Professor of Psychology for one year, and in assigning to Dr. Philip R. Lucasse the rank of Associate Professor of Education for two years.

c. The Board of Trustees approved the recommendation that Dr. Dennis Hoekstra be designated Professor, with assignment to the Sociology Department, for a term of two years, after which he will be considered for permanent tenure. Dr. Hoekstra is currently serving Calvin College as Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs.

d. The board processed thirty-five reappointments and changes in rank. Six members of the faculty were interviewed and reappointed with permanent tenure. Five new appointments were made.

e. Leaves of absence were approved for fourteen faculty members. Most of these will be working in areas of research or on degree programs.

f. Faculty honors and achievements. The president presented a list of fifty-two faculty members who were distinguished by special recognition, achievements, and honors in the past year. The board took special note of this information and requested President Spoelhof to express the congratulations of the board and its high appreciation for the honors and activities for progress in their respective fields of discipline.

g. Death of faculty members. The Board of Trustees took note of the death of four faculty members: Dr. Tony Brouwer who died on October 23, at the age of fifty-three years; Assistant Professor Leonard Vander Lugt, who died on December 6, 1971, at forty-eight years of age; Dr. Edwin Y. Monsma, who died on January 17, 1972, at seventy-seven years of age; and Dr. Richard Drost, who died on January 28, 1972,

at the age of eighty. Memorial notices were included in the minutes of the board and were also sent to the families.

h. Reasonable restrictions regulating so-called nepotism. The Board of Trustees adopted restrictions which would apply when the appointment of a husband and his wife or that of the husband or the wife of a faculty member to a full-time position is under consideration, when faculty status is determined, or when certain actions are taken or decisions are made.

## 2. *Academic Affairs*

a. A Combined Curriculum Plan in Letters and Natural Resources was approved. Students wishing to prepare themselves to become certified foresters can do so by enrolling in the combined curriculum program in forestry at Calvin College. This program requires a student to take his first three years at Calvin College and his final two years in the School of Natural Resources at the University of Michigan or some other accredited School of Natural Resources. At the conclusion of the second year at the university the student will receive the five-year professional degree, Bachelor of Science in Forestry, from the University of Michigan or from any other university which he attended. At the conclusion of one year in the School of Natural Resources of an accredited university the student would be given a Bachelor of Science degree in Letters and Natural Resources.

b. The Board of Trustees approved a schematic program and the application to the State Board of Education for certification of a group minor in the Academic Study of Religions. The board also acknowledged with appreciation the progress which was made in working out a program in the Master of Arts in teaching.

c. The following new courses were approved:

Astronomy 1XX—Planets, Stars, and Galaxies

Education 3XX—Reading Skills in the Content Areas

d. The 1971 summer session was the largest yet. Among innovations introduced was the adding of a fourth three-and-one-half-week session, making it possible for students to complete an entire four-course semester in one summer. There also was planning, promotion, and joint sponsorship by the National Union of Christian Schools and Calvin College of courses particularly helpful to in-service teachers. The enrollment for 1971 was 699.

e. The Interim Program continues to hold the interest of students. In addition to on-campus courses attracting many students, Calvin College had six off-campus interim courses in January, 1972, including Dutch, French, German, and Greek Interims abroad, along with an Ontario, Canada Interim and a Washington, D.C. Work-Study Interim.

## 3. *Student Affairs*

a. Revised Legal Age of Majority

On January 1, 1972, the State of Michigan statute which lowered the legal age of majority from twenty-one to eighteen years of age went into effect. There are a great number of implications for colleges which arise out of this legislative act. The act, among other things, allows eighteen-year-olds to purchase and consume alcoholic beverages under

the same circumstances as can any other adult. Questions of fiscal responsibility, communication with parents, and rights of parents to grades and cumulative records all arise out of the new law. All students at Michigan colleges, whether native to the state or from out of state, will be treated in the same way under the new act. In this connection the Board of Trustees endorsed a statement relative to the "Age of Majority and College Operational Policies."

b. Religious Activities

A positive, cooperative, and committed Christian spirit is found on the campus. At registration students are invited to fill out a form indicating interest in Bible-study groups. Over sixty Bible-study groups and fellowship groups were formed. The voluntary chapel arrangement is judged to be a success, and the single "chapel hour" in the schedule has been a most helpful device in sustaining student attendance. Foreign language chapels are held weekly in Dutch, German, French, and Spanish. In addition there are small groups who meet for praise, devotion, and prayer.

c. Student Activities

Students in leadership positions have exercised responsible freedom, with a good relationship existing between the students and administration. Some problem areas continually surface, but there is mutual consideration of points of view. Over two hundred students are again involved in the KIDS program.

4. *Student Personnel Services Division*

a. Student recruitment

A faculty Recruitment Committee, which includes student membership, was established. In Calvin's presentation to prospective students the theme selected is, "The Spirit Moves." It was selected because it refers to the work of the Holy Spirit as he moves into the lives of the Calvin community and in the whole educational enterprise of the college. A number of experiments in recruitment practices were conducted this year.

b. Enrollment

The September, 1971 enrollment of 3,306 students was a decrease of 3.8% from last year's total of 3,437 students. This is the third consecutive year we have had a decrease. The number of Canadian students at Calvin College has declined each year since 1966, from 238 in 1966-67 to 154 in 1971-72. The number of out-of-state students has dropped as well. Formerly, about 24% of our freshmen came from public schools, whereas last year 29% came from these schools. Minority student enrollment increased from 13 students to 25 students. It is important that accurate information reach prospective students and their families, in keeping with a proper image of our school. It is also necessary that the college strive to meet the educational needs of students in our society.

5. *Library*

A total of 8,181 new books were added to the general library. In addition, 129 Dewey classified books were recataloged, making a total of 8,310 books which were processed for the last academic year. In addition



to books accessioned by the library, a substantial growth was achieved in other library materials. During this year we enriched our holdings by the acquisition of 60 reels of *Manuscripta* microfilm and 18 reels of theses and miscellaneous materials. In addition, the 12,800-piece Library of American Civilization Microbook Collection was acquired and the multi-volume set of National Cyclopaedia of American Biography. The *New York Times* on microfilm from 1971 to the present was acquired for the serials collection. In August, 1971, the Curriculum Center was moved from Franklin Street to the Knollcrest Library and is organizationally now a part of the library.

#### D. *Property and Finance*

1. At the February board meeting the auditors' report for the fiscal year ended August 31, 1971, was accepted as the official financial report of Calvin College and Seminary for the fiscal year 1970-71, and the revised operating budget for 1971-72, showing projected revenue of \$5,600,000 and projected expenses of \$5,513,300, was approved.

2. In connection with financing for the proposed Classroom-Administration-Faculty Building the administration was authorized to issue up to \$2,000,000 of 8% promissory notes at the appropriate time to help finance the cost of the CAF building. (Note: the federal government will reimburse the college for 5% of the 8% rate, resulting in a net interest rate of 3% for the college.) This subsidy begins at the completion of the project. The proposed notes are a substitute for the \$3,500,000 bond issue which was authorized by the Board of Trustees a year ago).

3. At the time this report is being written the plans call for a bid-opening for the CAF building on March 23. A number of contractors have asked for copies of the plans.

4. Sale of the Franklin Street Campus. At the present time there is cause for some optimism with respect to the sale of this campus. Negotiating a sale by the time we are ready to vacate the campus in 1973 is seen as a possibility.

5. Generally the financial condition of Calvin College and Seminary is good. This is a direct result of God's indispensable blessing and of careful handling of funds. We express genuine gratitude to God for his blessings in providing the loyal support which the schools need.

6. It was agreed that tuition will be increased \$40 per semester for the 1972-73 academic year. However, for students living outside of Michigan and those Michigan residents living more than 150 miles from Calvin College, the grant-in-aid will be increased in the amount of \$20.

7. The Board of Trustees also adopted an "Age 65 Retirement Policy" for members of the Calvin College faculty and staff.

## II. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SYNODICAL ACTION

### A. *The Seminary*

1. The Board of Trustees recommends that Professor Henry Zwaanstra be reappointed as Associate Professor of Historical Theology with permanent tenure. (It is to be noted that the rank of professor will be awarded when he has received his doctorate from the Free University.)

2. The Board of Trustees recommends that a regular appointment to the staff of the Practical Theology Department (in "Church Education") be delayed until the Synod of 1973.

*Ground:* The additional year will enable the seminary faculty to complete its unfinished study of the particular position to be filled in the Department of Practical Theology, as well as the preparation of a nomination to that position.

### B. *The College*

1. The Board of Trustees makes the following recommendations for appointment:

- a. Wayne Joosse, M.A., Assistant Professor of Psychology for 2 years
- b. Harry Kieffe, Ph.D., Visiting Assistant Professor of Physics for 2 years
- c. Charles Miller, Ph.D., Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs for 2 years
- d. David J. Winsenz, Ph.D., Guest Lecturer in Psychology for 1 year
- e. Roger Stouwie, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Psychology for 2 years

2. The Board of Trustees makes the following recommendations for re-appointment (*italics indicate change in rank or tenure*):

- a. Henry Baron, M.A., Assistant Professor of English for 4 years
- b. N. Henry Beversluis, Ed.D., Professor of Education with *permanent tenure*

\*c. Donald L. Boender, M.A., Dean of Men for 3 years

- d. Martin J. Bolt, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Psychology for 2 years
- e. Helen Bonzelaar (Mrs.), M.A., Assistant Professor of Art for 3 years
- f. Herbert J. Brinks, Ph.D., Professor of History with *permanent tenure*

g. Elsa Cortina (Mrs.), Doct. en Pedagogia, *Assistant Professor of Romance Languages* for 4 years (French)

- h. Robert De Vries, M.A., Instructor in Political Science for 2 years
- i. Paul Henry, Ph.D., Visiting Assistant Professor of Political Science for 2 years

j. Henry Hoeks, M.C.E., Assistant Professor of *Religion and Theology* for 2 years

\*k. Dennis Hoekstra, Ed.D., *Professor with assignment* to the Sociology Department for 2 years

l. Harmon D. Hook, M.A., *Associate Professor* of English for 2 years

\*m. Wayne K. Hubers, M.A., *Director* of Student Financial Aid for 4 years

n. Robert A. Jensen, M.F.A., *Associate Professor of Art with permanent tenure*

o. James D. Korf, M.A., *Visiting Instructor* in Speech for 2 years

p. Bernard Kreuzer, M.A., *Associate Professor* of Germanic Languages for 2 years

q. Sanford C. Leestma, Ph.D., *Associate Professor* of Mathematics for 4 years

\*Administration

- \*r. Marvin Monsma, M.A., M.A.L.S., Director of the Library for 4 years
- s. Richard J. Mouw, Ph.D., *Associate Professor* of Philosophy for 2 years
- t. Delwin G. Nykamp, *Assistant Professor* of Speech for 2 years
- u. Kenneth Piers, Ph.D., *Associate Professor* of Chemistry for 4 years
- v. William A. Sanderson, M.A., B.D., S.T.M., *Associate Professor* of Psychology for 4 years.
- w. Donald H. Smalligan, M.B.A., M.S.W., *Assistant Professor* of Sociology for 2 years
- \*x. William K Stob, B.D., Th.M., Dean of Student Activities for 4 years
- y. Leonard Sweetman, Th.B., *Associate Professor of Religion* and Theology with *permanent tenure*.
- z. Robert Terborg, Ph.D., *Associate Professor* of Psychology for 4 years
- (a) James Timmer, M.A., *Assistant Professor* of Physical Education for 2 years
- (b) Ronald C. Vander Kooi, Ph.D., *Associate Professor* of Sociology for 2 years
- (c) Ray Vander Weele, Ph.D., *Associate Professor* of Economics for 4 years
- (d) Lamber Van Poolen, Ph.D., *Assistant Professor* of Engineering for 2 years
- (e) Howard J. Van Till, Ph.D., *Professor of Physics* with permanent tenure
- (f) George Van Zwalenberg, Ph.D., *Professor* of Mathematics with permanent tenure
- (g) John B. Van Zytveld, Ph.D., *Associate Professor* of Physics for 4 years
- (h) Fredric R. Walkeer, Ed.D., *Visiting Assistant Professor* of Education for 2 years
- (i) Marvin A. Zuidema, P.E.D., *Professor* of Physical Education (permanent tenure)
- (j) Evelyn Weidenaar, A.M.L.S., Librarian for 2 years
- \* (k) Gretchen Zuiderveen (Mrs.), B.A., Dean of Women for 1 year

For the Board of Trustees,  
Leonard J. Hofman, Secretary

### REPORT 3

## CHRISTIAN REFORMED BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS

DEAR BROTHERS:

The Board of Foreign Missions counts it a high privilege to bring report once again to the synod. As your servants in the great charge to make Christ known to the ends of the earth we have sought through this past year to carry on our work with full dedication, and we may report back that the Lord has given us much for which to give praise and thanksgiving. We trust foreign missions will again have its due share of synod's attention, and that through synod the entire Christian Reformed Church may be encouraged to press forward to bear witness to Christ as Lord and Savior, and to call men everywhere to repentance and faith.

We are thankful to God for the spirit of prayer and financial support given during this past year by our constituency. We praise him also for the innumerable blessings given on our many mission fields in that the Gospel could be brought freely and without serious handicap. The doors of opportunity have been wide open, and the Spirit of God has given fruits of faith on the work that has been done. This will be evident in the details mentioned later in this report.

It should be mentioned that foreign missions is being conducted at present amid a vast amount of debate about mission in general and foreign missions in particular. Something of this would be evident to any who would put forth the effort to read the recent publication of Dr. Donald McGavran, "The Eye of the Storm." The theology and philosophy lying behind the foreign mission movement, the message to be brought, the attitude towards non-Christian religions, the response to foreign cultures, the role of the home churches and that of the newly developing national churches, the financial structures to be approved or disapproved, and many more matters seem to be up for reassessment. One might think that a total restructuring is in order. Recognizing that there are many areas of discussion and debate that might profitably be considered, it is nevertheless important for us to indicate that on all our mission fields we remain committed to a sound, biblical, Reformed witness. We are seeking to keep abreast of the modern currents of thought as well as the new avenues of effort that are opening, but we want to remain moored to the solid rock of the Word as God has given it to us in our Reformed heritage. We ask for the prayers of synod. We pray that God may supply richly of his Spirit so that we may, both at home and on the far reaches of foreign missions, give clear and unmistakable witness to "the faith once delivered to the saints."

## Section One Organization and Personnel

### A. Board

The board met in annual session on February 8-10, 1972, 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. John Bylsma, president; Rev. Henry N. Erffmeyer, vice-president; Mr. Wilbert J. Venema, treasurer; Rev. Alvin J. Vander Griend, minute clerk; Rev. Henry J. Evenhouse, executive secretary; Mr. Alvin W. Huibregtse, assistant secretary.

*B. 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. Cornelius Vriend.....	Rev. Edgar O. Holkeboer
Alberta South.....	Rev. Gerald Hogeterp.....	Rev. Henry De Moor
British Columbia.....	Rev. Marvin W. Heyboer.....	Rev. Peter Dekker
Cadillac.....	Rev. Abel Poel.....	Rev. Stanley Bultman
California South.....	Rev. A. P. Veenstra.....	Rev. James Howerzyl
Central California.....	Rev. C. W. Flietstra.....	Rev. George Ebbers
Chatham.....	Rev. John De Jong.....	Mr. John Vander Heide
Chicago North.....	Rev. George Vander Hill.....	Rev. Albert Walma
Chicago South.....	Rev. John Bylsma.....	Rev. Henry Vellinga
Columbia.....	Rev. Roger D. Posthuma.....	Rev. Howard Spaan
Eastern Canada.....	Rev. Hilbert VanderPlaat.....	Rev. Peter Mantel
Florida.....	Rev. Andrew Cammenga.....	Rev. Fred Diemer
Grand Rapids East.....	Rev. Wesley Timmer.....	Rev. Dick M. Stravers
Grand Rapids North.....	Dr. Renze O. De Groot.....	Rev. John Bergsma
Grand Rapids South.....	Rev. Gerrit W. Sheeres.....	Rev. John Hellinga
Grandville.....	Rev. Henry N. Erffmeyer.....	Rev. Allen Bultman
Hackensack.....	Rev. Edward G. Cooke, Jr.....	Rev. Sidney Cooper
Hamilton.....	Rev. Gerrit H. Polman.....	Rev. William Renkema
Holland.....	Rev. Jerrien Gunnink.....	Rev. Fred Van Houten
Hudson.....	Rev. James White.....	Dr. Richard De Ridder
Huron.....	Rev. Henry W. Kroeze.....	Rev. Peter L. VanKatwijk
Illiana.....	Rev. Alvin Vander Griend.....	Rev. James De Vries
Kalamazoo.....	Rev. Harvey Brink.....	Rev. James A. Bultman
Lake Erie.....	Rev. John Steigenga.....	Rev. Allen J. Hoogwind
Minnesota North.....	Rev. Garrett VandeRiet.....	Rev. Paul Ouwinga
Minnesota South.....	Rev. Walter DuBois.....	Rev. Harry Vanderaa
Muskegon.....	Rev. Norman Meyer.....	Rev. John Morren
Northcentral Iowa.....	Rev. John Elenbaas.....	Rev. John Entingh
Orange City.....	Mr. Franklin Vogel.....	Rev. Fred Hondlogten
Pacific Northwest.....	Rev. John Fondse.....	Rev. Donald Negen
Pella.....	Rev. Gordon Stuit.....	Rev. Siebert Kramer
Quinte.....	Rev. Repko W. Popma.....	Rev. Wieger De Jong
Rocky Mountain.....	Rev. Gerrit Boerfyn.....	Rev. Kenneth VanderWall
Sioux Center.....	Rev. M. Paul Van Houten.....	Rev. Gerald L. Essenburg
Toronto.....	Rev. Charles T. Fennema.....	Rev. Wiebe Van Dyk
Wisconsin.....	Rev. John Hoeksema.....	Rev. Peter Vis
Zeeland.....	Rev. Otto De Groot.....	Rev. Berton VanAntwerpen
Member-at-large (Canada).....	Mr. John Wiggers.....	
Member-at-large.....	Mr. Wilbert J. Venema.....	Mr. Abe Stroo
Member-at-large.....	Mr. Jan Vander Heide.....	Mr. Abe Stroo
Member-at-large.....	Dr. John Vroon.....	Mr. Abe Stroo
Member-at-large.....	Mr. Sidney De Young.....	Mr. Abe Stroo

*Member-at-large.* There are at present 42 members on the Board of Foreign Missions. Thirty-seven are delegates appointed by classes. Five are delegates appointed directly by synod to be members-at-large.

Mr. Jan S. Vander Heide has now completed six years of service (two terms) as a member-at-large, and must be replaced. His business experience and his abilities in the area of publicity and promotion have been very helpful. To Mr. Vander Heide and to his fellow members-at-large we owe very much. Foreign missions inevitably is involved in a great deal of business activity, and the sanctified judgment of experienced and knowledgeable business men is invaluable to us.

*Nominations for member-at-large.* As replacement for Mr. Vander Heide we present to synod the following:

Mr. Donald Bratt of Grand Rapids, Michigan

Mr. John VanderVeld of Wheaton, Illinois

Mr. Bratt has been active in the field of advertising and during the past several years served on mission committees for his church. He is a member of the Brookside Christian Reformed Church of Grand Rapids. He has indicated his availability and willingness to serve if appointed by synod. Mr. VanderVeld is a member of the Wheaton Christian Reformed Church, is a businessman of much experience and has served in the consistory of his church in the past, and has indicated his availability and willingness to serve if appointed by synod.

*Alternate member-at-large.* We have thus far had but one alternate to serve our board as member-at-large in the event that one of the five regular members could not be present. Mr. Abe Stroo has been the alternate and has functioned from time to time as need arose. However, the board believes that we should have two alternates available. We ask that synod approve having two alternates for members-at-large on the board and we submit for this purpose the names of:

Mr. John Wielsma and Mr. Edward Dykstra

Mr. Wielsma is a consistory member of the Calvin Christian Reformed Church and is the treasurer for the city of East Grand Rapids, Michigan. Mr. Dykstra is a member of the Beckwith Hills Christian Reformed Church of Grand Rapids and has an insurance agency in Grand Rapids.

*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, Promotion, Recruiting and Personnel; and the following area committees: Far East, Japan, Latin America, and Nigeria.

*D. Field Personnel*

**Argentina**

Rev. Raymond Brinks  
 Rev. W. Thomas De Vries  
 Miss Cecelia Drenth  
 Rev. John Hutt  
 Rev. Robert Jipping  
 Dr. Sidney Rooy  
 Rev. Arnold Rumph

Rev. Louis Wagenveld  
 Miss Linda Bulthuis\*

**Australia**

Dr. Sierd Woudstra

**Brazil**

Rev. Willem Dirksen  
 Rev. Charles Uken  
 Rev. Simon Wolfert

**Cuba**

Cuba Pastors

**Guam**

Rev. Henry Dykema  
 Mr. Conrad Douma  
 Mr. Bruce Bode\*\*

**Honduras**

Rev. G. Bernard Dokter  
 Rev. Cornelius Persenaire

**Japan**

Rev. Henry Bruinooge  
 Rev. Michiel De Berdt  
 Dr. John De Hoog  
 Rev. Ronald W. De Young  
 Dr. Martin Essenburg  
 Rev. Ronald Hempel  
 Rev. Raymond Hommes  
 Rev. Gerrit Koedoot  
 Rev. Dick Kwantes  
 Mr. John Ouwinga\*\*  
 Dr. Harvey Smit  
 Rev. William J. Stob  
 Rev. Richard D. Sytsma  
 Rev. Richard E. Sytsma  
 Dr. John Timmer  
 Rev. Maas Vander Bilt

**Mexico**

Rev. Paul Bergsma  
 Mr. Fred Boersma\*  
 Mr. Clarence De Boer  
 Mr. John De Young  
 Rev. John Groen  
 Mr. Abe Marcus  
 Rev. Gerald Nyenhuis  
 Miss Shirley Poll  
 Rev. J. Jerry Pott  
 Rev. J. Lawrence Roberts  
 Mr. Jack Roeda  
 Rev. Robert Ruis  
 Rev. Chester Schemper  
 Rev. John Tuinstra  
 Rev. Gerald F. Van Oyen  
 Mr. John Van Ee  
 Mr. Richard Walstra\*  
 Rev. Hans Weerstra

**Nigeria**

Mr. Daniel Achytes  
 Mr. LeRoy Baas  
 Rev. Ralph Baker  
 Miss Laura Beelen  
 Mr. Abe Bierling  
 Dr. Harry R. Boer  
 Rev. John Boer  
 Mr. Reanard Bouma  
 Mr. Donald Bremer  
 Mr. Norman Brouwer  
 Mr. Raymond Browneye  
 Mr. Gordon Buys  
 Dr. John Channer  
 Miss Nancy Chapel  
 Mr. Ralph Cok

Mr. Warren De Boer  
 Mr. Fred De Jong  
 Rev. Harold De Jong  
 Miss Neva De Vries  
 Mr. David Dykgraaf  
 Miss Margaret Dykstra  
 Mr. Aldrich J. Evenhouse  
 Mr. William Evenhouse  
 Mr. Harry Faber  
 Mr. Fred Feikema  
 Mr. Allen Flietstra  
 Miss Marjorie Franz  
 Miss Nancy Friend  
 Mr. Leonard Gabrielse  
 Miss Geraldine Geleyne  
 Dr. Herman Gray  
 Dr. G. Paul Groen  
 Mr. Louis Haveman  
 Miss Angie Hoolesema  
 Dr. Peter Ipema  
 Mr. Charles Jansen  
 Miss Frances Karnemaat  
 Miss Mary Kaldeway  
 Mr. Frank Kass  
 Rev. Harvey Kiekoever  
 Dr. Stuart Kingma  
 Miss Bena Kok  
 Miss Margaret Kooiman  
 Mr. Robert Koops  
 Mr. Cornelius Korhorn  
 Mr. Johannes Kotze  
 Mr. William Lemcke  
 Mr. Bauke Lodewyk  
 Miss Mae Jerene Mast  
 Rev. Timothy Monsma  
 Miss Rachel Moolman  
 Mr. Kenneth Oosterhouse  
 Dr. Henry Ooster  
 Mr. Gerrit Ouwerkerk  
 Dr. Keith Plate  
 Mr. Thomas Posthumus  
 Miss Lois Pothoven  
 Dr. Ray Prins, Jr.  
 Mr. Alan J. Reberg  
 Dr. Martin Reedyk  
 Miss Christine Roos  
 Miss Ruth Salomons  
 Mr. George Schutt  
 Mr. Dick Seinen  
 Rev. George Spee  
 Miss Dorothy Sytsma  
 Mr. Willem Termorshuizen  
 Mr. John Tiemersma  
 Mr. and Mrs. Engbert Ubels  
 Miss Jean Van Beek  
 Miss Geraldine Vanden Berg  
 Mr. Nolan Vander Ark  
 Miss Julie Vander Laan  
 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  
 Rev. William Van Tol  
 Miss Ruth Veltkamp  
 Miss Marina Verdun  
 Mr. Stanley Vermeer  
 Mr. Thomas Visser  
 Miss Anita Vissia  
 Miss Evelyn Vredevoogd  
 Mr. Abe Vreeke  
 Mr. Ronald Zoet

**Philippine Islands**

Mr. Vicente Apostol  
 Rev. Barry B. Blankers  
 Rev. Dick C. Bouma  
 Rev. Henry De Vries

**Puerto Rico**

Rev. Ronald Sprik  
 Rev. Marvin Vugteveen

**Taiwan**

Rev. William Kosten  
 Rev. Alvin Machiela  
 Rev. Dennis Mulder  
 Rev. Peter Tong  
 Rev. Kenneth Van De Griend  
 Rev. Mike Vander Pol

**New Appointees**

Mr. Bernard Oldenkamp, Brazil  
 Dr. John VanderKooy, Nigeria  
 Mr. Cornelius Van Wyk, Nigeria

\*Short term and volunteer workers

\*\*Seminary Interns

*E. Representation at synod*

The board respectfully requests that Rev. John Bylsma, the chairman of the board; Mr. Wilbert J. Venema, 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.

*F. Presentation of missionaries*

Each year the synod sets apart a time for the introduction of missionaries who are home on furlough and those who are preparing to leave for their first assignment in a foreign country. The board is grateful for this opportunity and the missionaries appreciate the privilege of meeting with synod and bringing greetings from the various fields.

This presentation usually takes place during the second week of synod. The suggestion and request has come from fields that possibly a time can be set aside during the first week of synod, and also that the work of missions be remembered in the Synodical Prayer Service. In the judgment of the board the widespread mission ministry of the denomination would be in clear focus at synod from the very beginning of the sessions, if this were done.

**Section Two  
 General Matters**

*Area Secretaries*

The Synod of 1969 approved the plan presented by the Board of Foreign Missions that we set up the offices of area secretaries for the more efficient operations of our work. Dr. Eugene Rubingh has been serving in this capacity for our work in Nigeria and Rev. Edward Van Baak for the work in the Far East. With reference to their services the Executive Secretary's report to the board this past February read as follows: "Both Rev. Edward Van Baak and Dr. Eugene Rubingh have completed one year of service as area secretaries. It has been for them a time of testing and in some degree a time of orientation. I am convinced it was a step in the right direction to have them enter into our office activities, and I believe it has proven to be effective in keeping



a closer tie-in with the respective fields they serve, and I am confident it will also prove to be a means of strengthening our hands as we seek to handle the diverse and difficult problems which modern foreign missions bring to the fore. Diversity of experience and competence are essentials, and I feel that both have demonstrated their qualifications in these respects."

At this time the board brings to synod the name of Rev. Roger S. Greenway for approval as area secretary for Latin America. Rev. Greenway has spent eleven years as a missionary under assignment of the Board of Foreign Missions, three and one half years in Ceylon and seven and one half years in Mexico. During the past year he has carried on a doctoral program. The Latin America work includes the mission activities of our church in the following countries: Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, Honduras, Mexico and Puerto Rico. The entire Latin America world gives every evidence of being a field ripe unto harvest, and it is the conviction of the board that we also as a Christian Reformed Church face great opportunity as well as great responsibility towards this vast continent to the south of us. We may add that favorable communications have been received from several of our Latin America mission fields endorsing the appointment of Rev. Greenway to this position. If the appointment is approved by synod, and accepted, his services under our board will be for an initial two-year period commencing as of July 1, 1972.

#### *Recruitment and Orientation*

That the area of recruitment is a significant aspect of the work of the mission office can be seen from the fact that some 25 new missionaries and their families were appointed or sent out during 1971. These new appointees cover a wide spectrum of professions, including teaching, building, the ordained ministry and the healing arts. Twenty-one of the new appointees were laymen and 4 were ordained. The need for ordained men continues apace, and it is particularly this aspect of recruitment that has proven to be difficult. The field in Argentina particularly is feeling the results of this inability to secure ordained men for its staff. Five calls were issued during the year for the Argentine field, but all were declined. In an effort to help assuage this difficult situation, several young people have volunteered for a year of service without salary in Argentina. At the present time 4 are under such appointment.

The volunteer program seems to be attracting continued favor on the mission fields. The call for volunteers is particularly strong from Mexico. There the Mexico General Conference has requested a total of 6 volunteer workers, appealing for men and women from the homeland who may spend a year or more in service to the missionary program in Mexico without salary. In these cases the board has paid for travel expenses, and provided housing while in that country.

Most of the new appointees, however, have gone to Nigeria where the bulk of our missionary staff is located. This field accounted for 14 of last year's appointments. The Nigeria field continues to be ap-

pealing to the Christian Reformed constituency, even in the face of grave difficulties in visa acquisition.

At the present time, the board is seeking to fill 13 vacancies on the foreign mission fields. The ordained men for Argentina and a doctor for Nigeria are among the most crucial personnel needs at present. Thus the work of recruiting continues to be a significant one, involving initial contacts, arrangement of interviews, physical and psychological examination and orientation before departure to the field. During 1971, for example, some 60 psychological tests were given to individuals being considered for appointment. Orientation to the field to be served is an important aspect of preparation and involves area studies as well as interviews with missionaries home on furlough and members of the office staff.

#### *Retirement of Rev. and Mrs. Edgar H. Smith*

Rev. Edgar H. Smith retired from the ministry as of February 1, 1972. Both he and Mrs. Smith were under full-time appointment under our Board of Foreign Missions for a total of thirty-two years. They were on the Nigerian field long before our church officially entered the work in 1940. We praise God for having led them to the mission field and for having used them in such significant ways through all these years. It was the pleasure of our board to acknowledge officially the faithful services of both Rev. and Mrs. Smith; and it is the desire of our board that synod also take time to give official acknowledgment to these faithful servants of Christ at this synod.

#### *Church Relations*

Concerted effort continues to be put forth to acquaint our constituency with the work on the several fields. A regular schedule of dissemination of information has been followed to support the outreach through the raising of necessary funds.

Several churches have established new relationships with foreign missionaries by way of the special missionary support program. The overall number of churches and Sunday schools participating increases from year to year. A list of the calling and/or supporting churches by classes is a part of this report. Since the per family quota only covers approximately 37% of the synodically approved budget, the base of support must be broadened through special missionary support and we are thankful for the many churches willing to assume this added responsibility.

Along with the special missionary support program there is the added giving received from individuals, schools, Sunday schools, church organizations and church offerings. This represents another major area which must be expanded to help carry out the planned programs of endeavor. 1971 showed a slight increase over 1970 in this respect and we trust this trend will continue through the practice of faithful stewardship.

During this past year more mission emphasis weeks involving the faith promise offering plan were held by individual churches than ever before. The Western Springs, Illinois, Church, is in its eighth year of faith promise giving for foreign missions. Cottage Grove, South Hol-

land, Illinois, began in 1967. Seymour, Grand Rapids, recently entered this program. Highland Hills, Grand Rapids, has held two very successful annual weeks. Brookside and Beckwith Hills, Grand Rapids, participated in this thrilling program for the first time in November, 1971, and January, 1972, respectively. At the the time of this writing, Park Lane, Evergreen Park, Illinois, and Heritage, Byron Center, Michigan, are making plans for their initial weeks in the next few months. Total faith promises have exceeded estimated response and congregations have experienced a spiritual growth which had not been known before through a fuller awareness of responsibility to spread the gospel abroad. Many new and added relationships have been established with foreign mission personnel resulting in a very active support program in prayer and gift.

We urge other churches to consider holding a mission emphasis week following the general plan used by the above churches. We are confident that any of the churches presently involved will welcome inquiries and the home office is ready to assist in any way it can.

Every year the women of the churches sponsor informational meetings and receive offerings for missionary projects. There are 36 Women's Missionary Unions, and each union comprises from two to forty-two ladies' societies. The unions arrange, in addition to their inspirational meetings, many congregational gatherings, and meetings in local public and Christian schools. The speakers on these tours represent both home and foreign mission boards, who have a joint committee for promotion.

In addition to the WMU tours, missionaries on furlough continue to circulate throughout the denomination on deputation assignment. Through these personal contacts and the sharing of experiences on the field, we trust that understanding the outreach of the gospel abroad will become more meaningful and complete.

### CALLING AND/OR SUPPORTING CHURCHES BY CLASSES

#### Alberta North

Neerlandia, Alta.  
Red Deer, Alta.

#### Alberta South

Classis Alberta South  
Granum, Alta.  
Bethel, Saskatoon, Sask.

#### British Columbia

Chilliwack I, B.C.  
Terrace, B.C.

#### Cadillac

Cadillac, Mich.  
Prosper, Falmouth, Mich.  
Lucas, Mich.  
Rudyard, Mich. SS  
Vogel Center, Mich.

#### California South

Bellflower I, Cal.  
Bellflower III, Cal.  
Honolulu, Hawaii  
Ontario, Cal.  
Redlands I, Cal.

Highland Ave., Redlands, Cal.  
Bethel, Sun Valley, Cal.

#### Central California

Escalon, Cal.  
Modesto, Cal.  
Ripon I, Cal.  
Moorpark, San Jose, Cal.

#### Chatham

Chatham I, Ont.  
Essex, Ont.  
Sarnia I, Ont.  
Sarnia II, Ont.  
East, Strathroy, Ont.

#### Chicago North

Cicero I, Ill.  
Elmhurst, Ill.  
Oak Park, Ill.  
Western Springs, Ill.  
Wheaton, Ill.

#### Chicago South

Archer Ave., Chicago, Ill.  
Roseland II, Chicago, Ill.

Evergreen Park I, Ill.  
 Park Lane, Evergreen Park, Ill.  
 Roseland I, Glenwood, Ill.  
 Calvin, Oak Lawn, Ill.  
 Oak Lawn I, Ill.  
 Kedvale Ave., Oak Lawn, Ill.  
 Palos Heights, Ill.

**Columbia**

Bethel, Manhattan, Mont.  
 Manhattan I, Mont.  
 Sunnyside, Wash.

**Eastern Canada**

Kemptville I. Ont.  
 Calvin, Ottawa, Ont.  
 Williamsburg, Ont.

**Florida**

Bradenton, Fla.  
 Calvin, Pinellas Park, Fla.

**Grand Rapids East**

Ada, Mich.  
 Caledonia, Mich.  
 Boston Square, Grand Rapids  
 Brookside, Grand Rapids  
 Calvin, Grand Rapids  
 Cascade, Grand Rapids  
 Eastern Ave., Grand Rapids  
 East Paris, Grand Rapids  
 Faith, Grand Rapids  
 First, Grand Rapids  
 Fuller, Grand Rapids  
 Mayfair, Grand Rapids  
 Mayfair, Grand Rapids SS  
 Millbrook, Grand Rapids  
 Neland Ave., Grand Rapids  
 Plymouth Heights, Grand Rapids  
 Princeton, Grand Rapids  
 Seymour, Grand Rapids  
 Shawnee Park, Grand Rapids  
 Sherman St., Grand Rapids

**Grand Rapids North**

Coopersville, Mich.  
 Eastmanville, Mich.  
 Alpine Ave., Grand Rapids  
 Arcadia, Grand Rapids  
 Beckwith Hills, Grand Rapids  
 East Leonard, Grand Rapids  
 Highland Hills, Grand Rapids  
 Riverside, Grand Rapids  
 West Leonard, Grand Rapids  
 Westview, Grand Rapids  
 Grant, Mich.  
 Lamont, Mich.  
 Plainfield, Mich.

**Grand Rapids South**

Covenant, Cutlerville, Mich.  
 Cutlerville Hills, Cutlerville, Mich.  
 East, Cutlerville, Mich.  
 Cutlerville I, 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  
 Ideal Park, Grand Rapids  
 Kelloggsville, Grand Rapids  
 LaGrave Ave., Grand Rapids  
 Moline, Mich.  
 Wayland, Mich.

**Grandville**

Byron Center I, Mich.  
 Heritage, Byron Center, Mich.  
 Hanley, Grandville, Mich.  
 Hope, Grandville, Mich.  
 Ivanrest, Grandville, Mich. SS  
 South, Grandville, Mich.  
 Baldwin St., Jenison, Mich.  
 First, Jenison, Mich.  
 Ridgewood, Jenison, Mich.  
 Trinity, Jenison, Mich.  
 12th Ave., Jenison, Mich.  
 Beverly, Wyoming, Mich.  
 Calvary, Wyoming, Mich.  
 Lee St., Wyoming, Mich.  
 Rogers Heights, Wyoming, Mich.  
 Wyoming Park, Wyoming, Mich.

**Hackensack**

Northside, Clifton, N.J.  
 Richfield, Clifton, N.J.  
 Lodi, N.J.  
 Newton, N.J.  
 Bethel, Paterson, N.J. SS  
 Pompton Plains, N.J. SS

**Hamilton**

Brantford I, Ont.  
 Aldershot, Burlington, Ont.  
 Calvin, Dundas, Ont.  
 Mount Hamilton, Hamilton, Ont.  
 Maranatha, St. Catharines, Ont.  
 Immanuel, Simcoe, Ont.  
 Riverside, Wellandport, Ont.

**Holland**

East Saugatuck, Mich.  
 Graafschap, Mich.  
 Hamilton, Mich.  
 Bethany, Holland, Mich.  
 Calvary, Holland, Mich.  
 Central Ave., Holland, Mich.  
 Faith, Holland, Mich.  
 14th St., Holland, Mich.  
 Harderwyk, Holland, Mich.  
 Holland Heights, Holland, Mich.  
 Maple Ave., Holland, Mich.  
 Maranatha, Holland, Mich.  
 Montello Park, Holland, Mich.  
 Niekerk, Holland, Mich.  
 Ninth St., Holland, Mich.  
 Park, Holland, Mich.  
 Pine Creek, Holland, Mich.  
 Prospect Park, Holland, Mich.  
 Providence, Holland, Mich.

Noordeloos, Mich.  
 South Olive, Mich.  
 West Olive, Mich.

**Hudson**

Midland Park, N.J.  
 Midland Park, N.J. SS  
 Paterson IV, N.J.  
 Rochester, N.Y.  
 Pleasant St., Whitinsville, Mass.  
 Calvin, Wyckoff, N.J.

**Huron**

Owen Sound, Ont.

**Illiana**

First, De Motte, Ind.  
 Highland I, Ind.  
 Highland II, Ind.  
 Bethel, Lansing, Ill.  
 Lansing I, Ill.  
 Oak Glen, Lansing, Ill.  
 Munster, Ind.  
 Bethany, South Holland, Ill.  
 Cottage Grove, South Holland, Ill.  
 South Holland I, Ill.  
 Peace, South Holland, Ill.

**Kalamazoo**

Battle Creek, Mich.  
 Alamo Ave., Kalamazoo, Mich.  
 Comstock, Kalamazoo, Mich.  
 Kalamazoo I, Mich.  
 Grace, Kalamazoo, Mich.  
 Milwood, Kalamazoo, Mich.  
 Parchment, Kalamazoo, Mich. SS  
 Prairie Edge, Kalamazoo, Mich.  
 Kalamazoo III, Mich.

**Lake Erie**

Akron, Ohio  
 Parkview Heights, Cincinnati, Ohio  
 Maple Heights, Cleveland, Ohio  
 East Lansing, Mich.

**Minnesota North**

Brandon, Man.  
 Bunde, Minn.  
 Community, East Grand Forks,  
 Minn. SS  
 Emo, Ont.  
 Pease, Minn.  
 Prinsburg, Minn.  
 Raymond, Minn.  
 Emden, Renville, Minn.  
 Bethlehem, Thunder Bay, Ont.  
 Kildonan, Winnipeg, Man.

**Minnesota South**

Chandler, Minn.  
 Edgerton I, Minn.  
 Hills, Minn.  
 Holland, Minn.  
 Holland Center, S.D.  
 Ebenezer, Leota, Minn.  
 Pipestone, Minn.

Volga, S.D.  
 Worthington, Minn.

**Muskegon**

Ferrysburg, Mich.  
 Fremont I, Mich.  
 Fremont I, Mich. SS  
 Fremont II, Mich.  
 Trinity, Fremont, Mich.  
 Trinity, Fremont, Mich. SS  
 Grand Haven I, Mich.  
 Grand Haven II, Mich.  
 Allen Ave., Muskegon, Mich.  
 Bethany, Muskegon, Mich.  
 Calvin, Muskegon, Mich.  
 East Muskegon, Muskegon, Mich.  
 Green Ridge, Muskegon, Mich. SS  
 New Era, Mich.  
 Reeman, Mich.  
 Spring Lake, Mich.  
 Spring Lake, Mich. SS

**Northcentral Iowa**

Austinville, Iowa  
 Holland, Iowa  
 Kanawha, Iowa  
 Wellsburg I, Iowa  
 Wellsburg II, Iowa SS  
 Woden, Iowa

**Orange City**

Hull I, Iowa  
 Ireton, Iowa  
 Orange City I, Iowa  
 Orange City II, Iowa  
 Sheldon, Iowa

**Pacific Northwest**

Trinity, Anchorage, Alaska  
 First, Everett, Wash.  
 Bethel, Lynden, Wash.  
 Lynden I, Wash.  
 Lynden III, Wash.  
 Mount Vernon, Wash.  
 Sumas, Wash.  
 Tacoma, Wash.

**Pella**

Cedar, Iowa  
 Trinity, Iowa City, Iowa  
 Calvary, Pella, Iowa  
 Faith, Pella, Iowa  
 Pella I, Iowa  
 Pella II, Iowa  
 Sully, Iowa

**Quinte**

Maranatha, Belleville, Ont.  
 Rehoboth, Bowmanville, Ont.

**Rocky Mountain**

Denver I, Colo.  
 Denver II, Colo.  
 Rehoboth, N.M.  
 Immanuel, Salt Lake City, Utah

**Sioux Center**

Doon, Iowa  
 Lebanon, Iowa  
 Calvin, Rock Valley, Iowa  
 Rock Valley I, Iowa  
 Bethel, Sioux Center, Iowa

**Toronto**

Barrie, Ont.  
 Orillia, Ont.  
 Grace, Scarborough, Ont.

**Wisconsin**

Delavan, Wis.  
 Kenosha, Wis.  
 Milwaukee, Wis.  
 Oostburg, Wis.  
 Randolph II, Wis.  
 Waupun I, Wis.

**Zeeland**

Allendale I, Mich.  
 Allendale II, Mich.  
 Borculo, Mich.  
 Drenthe, Mich.  
 Hudsonville I, Mich.  
 Hillcrest, Hudsonville, Mich.  
 Immanuel, Hudsonville, Mich.  
 Messiah, Hudsonville, Mich.  
 Jamestown, Mich.  
 Oakland, Mich.  
 Overisel, Mich.  
 Bethel, Zeeland, Mich.  
 Zeeland I, Mich. SS  
 Haven, Zeeland, Mich.  
 Zeeland III, Mich.  
 Zutphen, Mich.

**Section Three****Far East**

The Far East areas of mission responsibility are Australia, China, Guam, Japan, Philippines and Taiwan.

In many respects, the strategy of the Far East mission still revolves around the Chinese people. There are 800 million on the mainland, and 18 million overseas Chinese. But also by way of sprawling land mass, unique location, ethnic solidarity, and their international influence, the Chinese people are the inescapable focus of the Far East. In every endeavor of human responsibility, China is ignored only at our own peril. In mission endeavor, the Christian Reformed Church sent personnel to China from 1920 to 1950 and to Taiwan from 1953 to the present.

The new era of Sino-American relations which opened this year in the historic conversations of respective premier and president also bears significance for our foreign missions. The stance of the Board of Foreign Missions will continue to face the realities of the great commission as it includes China. It is a major part of the world we are commanded to reach. The missions to Japan and to Taiwan are historically closely related to the former outreach to China. Guam continues to be an American mid-point in the Western Pacific which may be of significance to the mission to China as Cyprus was to Paul.

The following opportunities continue to be used:

a. *Preaching*: the only method available is radio, and this is done through the broadcast of Rev. Peter Tonf from Far East Broadcasting Company transmitters in Manila. Additional avenues of approach are being evaluated.

b. *Literature*: the Taiwan mission has a systematic program of preparation of Reformed books and pamphlets. Bibles are available through Taiwan and Hong Kong.

c. *Prayer*: renewed vigilance in prayer for China is currently being encouraged through use of the film "What God Can Do In China" produced by the late Rev. Albert H. Smit, last Christian Reformed Church missionary to leave China.

d. *Personnel*: the possibility of a pastoral visit to Kiangsu province remains under continual observation. The current Asia staff of the board has China-born and China-trained members. The nature of the future visits would be similar to Paul's second journey to Asia Minor: i.e., spiritual support of congregations gathered during his first visit.

### *Australia*

The Board of Foreign Missions continues its assignment from synod to assist in the mission of the Reformed Churches of Australia. These churches have the vigor to engage in their own exploratory evangelism and initial outreach. Further involvement in this work by Christian Reformed missionaries would include only specific assignment to recommended locations for an agreed period of time. The board is currently fulfilling its responsibility in the area of training pastors by providing subsidy for students and by providing a professor to teach at the Geelong Theological College.

Rev. Gerard Van Groningen completed thirteen years of service, partly in church planting and partly in pastor training. His place as Old Testament professor in the Reformed Theological College of Geelong was filled by the appointment of Dr. Sierd Woudstra. The departure of the Sierd Woudstra family for Australia was delayed during the last half of 1971 by the illness of their daughter Kathy. The first semester of 1972 marked the exchange of Dr. Sierd Woudstra and Dr. Marten Woudstra of Calvin Seminary. Thus Geelong has been provided with qualified personnel; Calvin Seminary received an experienced substitute, and the Sierd Woudstra family gained time in the quest for recovery and health.

The temporary exchange of personnel received full approval from the boards of Foreign Missions, Calvin Seminary, and Reformed Theological College.

### *Guam*

The center of the work on Guam is the organized church. The missionary-pastor Rev. Henry Dykema is now in his seventh year of ministry there. He and the consistory of the church and the Board of Foreign Missions are agreed on the objective of a self-supporting church, with its own minister, in this remote U.S. territory in distant waters. The church is committed to the Reformed confessions, the Christian Reformed church order, and continued affiliation with the denomination through the Board of Foreign Missions until it becomes self-sustaining. The church hopes eventually to call a minister from the Christian Reformed Church; mode of classis affiliation will be determined at a future date.

The church ministers to the Guamanians through its preaching and teaching, both in the church building and in the daily radio broadcast "Call to Faith." Many Micronesians from other islands also attend the meetings. Rev. Dykema was also invited to visit in the Ponapean island group where he led a Pastor Training School. The invitation extended to Rev. Dykema came as a result of friendships which grew when a pastor from Ponape studying in the University of Guam lived with the Dykemas and participated in the fellowship of the Guam Church.

The Faith Bookstore is managed by Mr. Conrad Douma, a staff of people locally employed, and church members who volunteer their time for this ministry. The focus of the bookstore is the sale of religious books, but the stock includes a fascinating array of materials which appeal particularly to a clientele which lives in island isolation: travel books, paperbacks, and Asia-related literature. Sales again reached record levels in 1971.

The Hospitality House is another arm of the mission, involving a fellowship hall on the second floor above the church. It was staffed during its second year by Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Bode, seminary interns. Under their leadership, and with assistance from the congregation, the main outreach has been to the United Nations' Trust Territory island students who study on Guam. In the Trust Territory are 2,141 islands distributed in three million square miles of Pacific Ocean. American-owned Guam is the largest of these Micronesian Islands but not administratively part of them. The Hospitality House also provides a fellowship-home for American servicemen and single employees. When the Bodes return to Calvin Seminary the Hospitality House will be staffed again by new appointees.

### *Japan*

Four more congregations have been organized as a result of the Christian Reformed Japan Mission efforts, bringing to fifteen the number of groups that have begun with missionary leadership and graduated into full ecclesiastical fellowship with the Reformed Church in Japan (RCJ).

Yokohama, Soka (also called Matsubara Danchi), Tokiwadaira, and Kawagoe were organized as self-supporting groups. All joined the Eastern Presbytery of the RCJ, and each has called its own pastor.

Ten other approved posts are progressing toward fully organized congregation status, in addition to these other activities of evangelistic outreach: radio evangelism, directed toward the 30,000,000 people in the Tokyo megalopolis; student evangelism, especially in the university sites of western Tokyo; itinerant evangelism, through a teamwork effort involving missionaries and local pastors and evangelists; and literature evangelism, through books and pamphlets used in all the mission posts and churches.

Revs. Michael De Berdt, Gerrit Koedoot, Harvey Smit, William J. Stob, Richard D. Sytsma, Richard E. Sytsma, John Timmer, and Maas Vander Bilt each conduct a church-planting ministry. Rev. Henry Bruinooge is assigned to radio evangelism, Rev. Koedoot to student evangelism, Revs. Vander Bilt and Kwantes to "team evangelism," which includes pioneer evangelistic work.

Rev. Raymond Hommes has recently been assigned a new post, called Kohoku New Town in Yokohama, and until furlough will work under the direction of the Onco Reformed Church, the original RCJ congregation in the Tokyo area. Rev. Ronald Hempel is completing his first year of language study; Rev. Ronald W. De Young and his family are the most recent additions to staff and have begun language work.

Dr. Martin Essenburg is completing his thirteenth year at the Christian Academy, at which the Japan Mission also provides the services of Mr. John De Hoog, science teacher and guidance counsellor.



The fifteen organized congregations begun by Christian Reformed Church missionaries are staffed with pastors, all of whom have graduated from Kobe Reformed Seminary. Ten other seminary graduates are involved in the mission's current evangelistic work. One of these men plans to become the first RCJ foreign missionary, to be sent to Indonesia in 1972. Dr. Harvey Smit is currently assigned to a part-time lectureship in Ethics and Apologetics at Kobe Seminary.

Among the blessings marking continued progress in the Japan Mission are the goodwill of the RCJ, the provision of trained evangelists from Kobe Seminary, the aggressive work in apartment complexes, the revolving loan fund for building chapels, the faithful repayment of loaned funds by fledgling congregations, and the depth of spiritual fellowship and co-operation in the missionary staff. God sustains these blessings through the gifts and prayers of the sending church.

### *Philippines*

Congregations are being formed in the Bacolod, Bago, and Pulupandan communities of Negros Island, some 300 miles south of the capital city Manila. The work has been assigned to Mr. Vicente Apostol, and Revs. Dick Bouma and Barry Blankers. After a year on the field as a seminary intern, Rev. Henry De Vries returned to the United States for ordination and has now embarked on a full term of service. These four families are further assisted by the Fred Schuld family working in agricultural and community self-help programs.

In Bago City a part of the simple building which is used for worship is the scene of the evening classes of the Reformed Institute of Theology. The missionaries are the staff which conducts classes in Christian leadership and biblical studies. Expansion into day-school activities will be implemented when circumstances permit.

Further development of the mission into the Manila area has been carefully surveyed, and two places of opportunity have been remembered by the conference. Approval of this new work has been given, and Rev. Dick Bouma has been assigned to this work to begin upon the completion of his current furlough period. The next recruit to be sent to the Philippines is also expected to work in the surveyed and assigned Manila area.

### *Taiwan*

There is a staff of six missionary families on Taiwan, whose work reflects the bilingual nature of the island and the historical factors of governmental control. Revs. William Kosten, Peter Tong, and Mike Vander Pol are Mandarin-speaking workers who have been assigned in the Taipei area. This is the capital of Taiwan and the area where former mainlanders, Mandarin-speaking, are concentrated.

Revs. Alvin Machiela, Dennis Mulder, and Kenneth Van De Griend have completed their language studies in the Taiwanese language, which is still the mostly wide used language on Taiwan.

In deploying the mission personnel most advantageously among the population of the island much study and report has been made prior to the decisions reached in the past year. Revs. Tong and Vander Pol will remain in Taipei, and Rev. Kosten is to be assigned to Chang-hwa in the middle of the island. Rev. Van De Griend will remain in Taipei

and supplement his use of Taiwanese with further study in Mandarin. It is felt that at least some of the missionaries should be bilingual. During the coming year Revs. Machiela and Mulder will begin work in Kaoshiung, which has been developing very rapidly as an industrial city and important port.

The work continues to be centered in church-planting evangelism and has been greatly helped by the formation of an indigenous denomination of churches formed through the efforts of Reformed missionaries. Included in the greater effort of evangelism which brought this denomination into being were the labors of missionaries from Korea, New Zealand, and from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. The denomination is called the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Taiwan, and has begun with four congregations in one presbytery.

Pastor training continues to be a difficulty on Taiwan. The Calvin United Theological College in which the Christian Reformed Mission participated has suspended operations due to lack of students. This problem has occurred in other conservative missions as well, resulting in the formation of the China Evangelical Seminary in which more than twenty missions and churches of evangelical theological stance could train pastor candidates. Theological Education by Extension is also being evaluated. Chinese leaders from Southeast Asia met this past year in Hong Kong to survey and hopefully solve the problems in theological education faced by the entire Christian Chinese communion in that part of the world. This Theological Consultation has been entirely conducted by Chinese people.

For twenty-two years there has been a maintenance of the 1950 status quo in Taiwan-mainland-United States relationships. These have undergone dramatic changes in the past months. The crisis that has developed in emotional reactions to these momentous conversations have created fear in the minds of some and have opened vistas of increased opportunity and challenge to others. Nothing in recent years has showed us more vividly how much we are constricted in mission efforts by the accidents of nationality and political events. But we have also been made aware of the possibilities for reversal of policies which have prohibited personal contact with Christians on the mainland; we have seen with fascination the power of communication which has been developed through electronics and satellites; and we have observed that even in the most discouraging situations of human endeavor our faithful God is able and willing to exercise even the most formidable governmental powers on the earth to promote the interests of the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

The relationship of Taiwan, the People's Republic of China, and the United States will certainly not be completely resolved in the next months, but the opportunities for future Gospel penetration into the areas that have been closed are as bright as the promises of God.

#### Section Four Latin America

What is Latin America? Perhaps the term is most frequently understood to include all of the American continent south of the United States.

Yet it must be remembered that a great many of the Caribbean areas were under the control of the Dutch, British and French, and the term Latin America refers mainly to those countries settled and controlled by the Spanish and Portuguese.

What is the religion of Latin America? By far the greatest land area was settled by the Spanish and Portuguese beginning four centuries ago. These explorers and settlers forced their Catholic religion upon the natives, compromising with their pagan practices of the people, thus developing a religion that often was neither Christian nor pagan but with a false security in the power of the church. It is in this context that Protestant missions began work within the last century. Although church growth has not been exceptionally rapid, yet it has been steady.

### *Argentina*

Our missionaries in Argentina are located in the following areas:

Rev. Raymond Brinks.....	Olavarria
Miss Linda Bulhuis.....	Olavarria
Rev. W. Thomas De Vries.....	Chascomus
Miss Cecila Drenth.....	La Plata
Rev. John Hutt.....	Mar del Plata
Rev. Robert Jipping.....	Tres Arroyos
Dr. Sidney Rooy.....	Buenos Aires
Rev. Arnold Rumph.....	La Plata
Rev. Louis Wagenveld.....	Comodoro Rivadavia

With the exception of Comodoro Rivadavia in southern Argentina, all of these locations are within a radius of two hundred miles from the seaport city of Buenos Aires. The work is carried on in cooperation with the Reformed Church of the Netherlands. The National Mission Committee of the Reformed Church of Argentina assumes overall responsibility for the work under the synod. Dr. Sidney Rooy is a member of this committee. They are eager to extend the Reformed witness in Argentina and hope the Christian Reformed Church can increase the number of missionaries in their country.

The Synod of the Reformed Churches in Argentina in its meeting of October 19-21, 1971, adopted a declaration of mission policy which is being studied by the board.

The Committee of Publications of the Reformed Church is also expanding its work and plans to open a bookstore in downtown Buenos Aires, in a very desirable location. The churches of the Netherlands have donated \$25,000 for this purpose, and our Board of Foreign Missions has agreed to a gift of \$5,000 to aid in furnishing the store.

### *Brazil*

Our missionaries in Brazil have during the past year consolidated and intensified their work in the northwest part of the state of Sao Paulo. The cities in which they have begun meetings are Aracatuba, Guararapes, Pereira Barreto, and Ihla Solteira, with great interest and good attendance at meetings and services.

Rev. Charles Uken has now returned from furlough and has joined Revs. Willem Dirksen and Simon Wolfert in Aracatuba. Rev. and Mrs.

Wolfert with their child are to leave Brazil for furlough in April. Rev. and Mrs. Dirksen with their family will come to this country for a three-month furlough in December, 1972, because of the educational needs of their children.

Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Oldenkamp, former Peace Corps workers in Brazil, have been appointed as unordained missionaries to Brazil, and plan to leave early in the summer.

We believe the mission work in Brazil holds great promise for the future, under the blessings of God. The missionaries are warmly received and the close working relationships with the National Presbyterian Church (Igreja Presbiteriana do Brazil) are working out very satisfactorily.

### *Cuba*

Cuba still remains outside of our range as far as direct contact is concerned. No missionary of our church is active on the island but we know that there is a continuing ministry going on within the body of believers. Several small congregations had been established before we were forced to leave. Word still comes on occasion of regular worship services, faithful preaching of the Word, and earnest desire that we as a church in North America remember them in their needs. Inquiry is being made as to whether someone from our Canadian churches can serve as visitor to Cuba so as to meet with the believers and to strengthen the tie of mutual care. Last Christmas we did receive warm greetings from the churches, and earnest appeal that we be faithful in prayers in their behalf.

### *Honduras*

Last year synod authorized the board to open the field for missionary service in Honduras. Since then Rev. and Mrs. G. Bernard Dokter and family have left Argentina and have entered into their new assignment. They have taken up residence in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. Although they entered the work already a few weeks prior to March 12, 1972, that particular Sunday was designated as the official opening day for the work. On that Sunday Rev. Dokter was officially received into the congregation of Tegucigalpa. Rev. J. Jerry Pott of Mexico City was on hand for official representation of the Board of Foreign Missions, and the bond of fellowship was sealed, as it were, with the body of believers at whose urgent request our church entered in that country. We are pledged to cooperate with them in ministering to the needs of the believers already on hand, and in seeking to reach out further to those still outside the fellowship of believers.

Rev. Cornelius Persenaire and family are currently in Costa Rica studying the Spanish language with the intention of joining the Dokter family to carry on mission work in Honduras. From all indication the outlook for the future is good in that there is full freedom to witness, and an eagerness of all already involved to go forward with proclamation and invitation.

### *Mexico*

Mexico has become our largest field of service in Latin America as far as number of workers is concerned. It is also the most diversified as to

types of ministry being carried on. It is also the most scattered as far as locations of personnel are concerned. The work in the Yucatan is about one thousand miles from Mexico City, and that being conducted in Baja California is about the same distance in the other direction. Consideration is being given to possibly dividing the work into three separate programs of ministry rather than seeking to keep it all under one administrative umbrella with headquarters in Mexico City. All of the work is carried on in close association with the Independent Presbyterian Church, and a good deal of activity relates closely to the services rendered by the Wycliffe Bible Translators, Inc. We carry on with a seminary program in Mexico City, a Bible School in both the Yucatan (Merida) and in Mexico City; six bookstores in strategic cities of Mexico, and a constant missionary thrust into villages and barrios besides that conducted in several of the larger cities. God has given great response of confessions and baptisms during the past year, and the outlook continues to be most challenging as students of the Bible schools and seminary carry on the regular itinerating programs. By means of an active film ministry the work is greatly enhanced; and the Christian school operated in Mexico City for missionary children also fills an important place in the full spectrum of our work.

#### *Puerto Rico*

Opportunities for witness abound in Puerto Rico. Rev. Marvin Vugteveen remains in Bayamon and Rev. Ronald Sprik has moved to Fajardo on the eastern part of the island. Mr. Carlos Ramos has taken over the work in Rev. Sprik's former post, Caroline, and the board at its annual meeting granted permission to this group to organize as a congregation and to ordain Mr. Ramos.

Mr. Raul Gimenez is now full-time assistant to Rev. Vugteveen at Bayamon. Both of these men are well trained and very capable to assist or take charge of a local group under the supervision of our missionaries.

The board at its annual meeting approved the request for a third ordained man to Puerto Rico for the following reasons:

1. There is a real need on the field to place a third ordained man to continue the ministry in a most effective way.
2. Present fruits show that this field is ripe and therefore every effort should be put forth to reap the harvest at this time of extreme receptivity.

### Section Five Nigeria

Nigeria continues to occupy a place of major significance in our missionary responsibility. During 1971, two events of crucial importance for our mission work occurred in Nigeria, and these will be dealt with in some detail below. They were:

- a. The reorganization of the mission with the dissolution of the Nigerian General Conference and the establishment of committees upon which the national churches were given equal representation with the missionaries.
- b. The establishment of the Reformed Theological College of Nigeria, the Tiv Seminary, at Shangev station.

These two events are in a sense a parable of the place at which many missions in Africa find themselves today.

*Sudan United Mission.* The 1971 meeting of the International Committee of the Sudan United Mission should not go unnoticed. The Christian Reformed Church has been associated with the Sudan United Mission since 1940 when we first officially entered Nigeria. The International Committee meets every five years to assess God's blessing and to discuss challenges and strategy. Delegates were present from many branches, including the British, Swiss, French, Danish-Lutheran, Australian, South African, Christian Reformed and United Methodist.

Several projects are conducted in concert by these branches, such as: New Life For All, Faith and Farm, Lake Chad Medical Ministry, Civil War Rehabilitation, Central Christian Pharmacy, Islam-In-Africa Project, and Airplane Service. Just to the north of the Tiv area in Nigeria one may find the field of the South African Branch. This mission has found its work increasingly difficult due to political reaction, and has begun negotiations to merge with the British Branch by 1974. The Danish Lutheran Branch began work in Nigeria in 1913, and in January of 1972 transferred its property in Nigeria to the Lutheran Church of Christ. All missionaries of this branch thus become employees of the national church, and former mission funds are now used for inter-church aid.

These organizational changes indicate the temper of the times in Africa, and show that our mission is by no means alone in dealing with knotty problems of mission/church relationships. Meanwhile, the historic statement of faith of the Sudan United Mission was reaffirmed, and the almost incredible blessings recorded since the first intrepid party of pioneers set out in 1904 were noted.

*East Benue Church of Christ.* Our mission in Nigeria is called upon to nourish the two autonomous denominations which have sprung forth in the valley of the Benue. To the east the EKAS Benue Church now numbers 37 congregations and has a membership total of approximately 8,000. A distinct problem faced by this denomination is the large number of vacant churches, caused in part by the difficulty of bringing together funds for the support of a pastor. Nevertheless, last year there were 14 students in pastors training, and when these men are graduated, the pastor shortage may hopefully be alleviated. This denomination is composed of a congeries of tribes, and this fact brings added complexity to the church make up. The main linguistic groups represented are Wukari-Jukun of Wapan, Takum-Donga Jukun, Kutef, Ichen, Nodoro, Tigon and Chambe. Within these groupings the Kuteb, who are situated near the historic mission station of Lupwe form the largest single bloc comprising one-third of the membership of the denomination. Mr. and Mrs. Rob Koops are currently engaged in a linguistic ministry among the Kuteb, while Miss Margaret Dykstra works in the Takum-Donga Jukun, and Mr. and Mrs. William Evenhouse are at work on the Wapan.

To mention these tribal distinctions at once indicates the problem confronting church and mission, and at the same time dangerously calls undue attention to the fact. Relationships across tribal boundaries are

delicate, and it is the love of Christ that must weld the leaders of this denomination together into one family of Christ.

The surge for continuing expansion of educational facilities rises high among these leaders. During the past year they organized their own secondary school at Lissam which is complementary to the Wukari Divisional Combined Secondary School near Takum where several of our missionaries serve. This striking expression of local enthusiasm indicates the initiative with which the church and Christian community today support such projects.

*The Tiv Church of Christ.* To the west of the EKAS Benue denomination lies her sister church the Nongo U Kristu U ken Sudan Hen Tiv, the Tiv Church of Christ. At the end of 1971 there were 45 congregations in this denomination, although the meeting places in many villages and compounds numbered well over 900. The small "bush" Bible and literacy classes, which dot the tribal area often become preaching centers for worship services on Sunday. At one time these classes were in great demand; currently, however, the spread of actual primary schools in many locations has decreased the prestige of the bush school somewhat. Furthermore, many of the teachers in these literacy and bush Bible schools find it very difficult to continue on at the wages which they acquire. Many of them receive \$7.00 a month for their teaching and must attempt to eke out a living by farming in their spare time. This fact perhaps makes the ministry of the Benue Bible Institute even more crucial as it strives to upgrade the level of teaching.

Furthermore, recent events have caused almost all the interest of the church to be placed on the matter of pastor training, and the separate seminary. This may have caused some falling off in the attention being paid to the evangelists and Bible school teachers. On the whole, however, it is obvious that they and the evangelists are at the cutting edge of the Christian faith in Tivland.

*Reformed Theological College of Nigeria.* The Reformed Theological College of Nigeria, the separate Tiv seminary, has now opened at Shangev station with 19 students, and 2 Tiv faculty in attendance. Among the Tiv people a massive swell of feeling insists that the seminary is viable. At the same time, the Tiv Christians affirm that their fellowship with the other churches in the fellowship of churches known as the Tarrayya continues to be warm and meaningful. Their own seminary, they state, will eventually be a strength to the Tarrayya, and increase the impact of the Reformed faith upon it. The General Conference and the board, however, have upheld the ideal of one seminary for the Reformed churches, and have urged the NKST to proceed in the way of full fellowship with the other churches which together with the NKST are the owners of the TCNN, The Theological College of Northern Nigeria. In Christ we seek to draw together and not to become separate.

It has been difficult for the Tiv people to understand how that the apex to all kinds of training provided by the mission should be denied to the NKST. The Tiv point to elementary schools followed by teacher training schools and secondary schools. They point to dispensaries followed by fine hospitals and nursing schools. They point to the Bible

schools followed by Veenstra Junior Seminary and the Vernacular Pastors Training Classes. But the thing they say they most expected the mission to bring to the tribal areas is, in fact, the thing they lacked. The Tiv deny that this attitude is a form of tribalism. That which inspires the progress of the Tiv is not in their eyes an evil or a weakness to the Tarrayya.

With the coming into existence of the RTCN, it became evident that the board would have to reexamine its stance with respect to this form of theological education. In January our office received an official request from the Tiv church to appoint two members to the Board of Governors of the RTCN, and to help with the building and staffing of this institution. After a long and thorough discussion of the situation the board took action as follows:

**“ECM 254. ASSISTANCE TO REFORMED THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF NIGERIA**

The Tiv Liaison Committee has forwarded to the Home Board NKST minute 1823, in which NKST Executive Committee asks the Liaison Committee for assistance by posting a teacher at the Reformed Theological College of Nigeria, by providing money for building facilities, by placing two members on the Board of Governors of RTCN. The TLC has recommended our affirmative action on the request. The following decisions were made:

“A. The board after review of the decisions of NGC, the CRC Synod, NKST Synod, and the NKST Liaison Committee, acknowledges the existence of the Reformed Seminary established by our sister church in Tivland.

“B. The board further states its conviction that the TCN came into existence through a series of events in which adequate correspondence and fellowship with all the affected groups, missions, and church was lacking. Nevertheless, the RTC exists as a seminary of our sister church, and we must now seek for the ways in which this church may be most fruitfully assisted.

“C. The board records its gratitude to NKST for her invitation to appoint two members to the Board of Governors of RTCN. The board further instructs the TLC to appoint these delegates.

“D. The board encourages the NKST as it seeks to deepen its fellowship in TEKAS and with EKAS Benue Church, and notes with gratitude the desire of NKST to continue support of TCNN.

“E. The board authorizes TLC to post a teacher to the staff of RTCN from our personnel available on the field.

“F. The board decides to assist with the building of RTCN (cf. NKST 1823, b) by forwarding to NKST such funds as are received by the board for this purpose.”

It might also be mentioned that the Tiv church during 1971 had 15 students enrolled at the Theological College of Northern Nigeria, 18 in the Vernacular Pastors Training class at Uavanda, and 19 in the RTCN. The Tiv leaders insist that the churches can readily absorb all these new pastors and that the nearly 50 congregations presently in existence



can be doubled in a short time. Indeed they would be organizing new congregations now were there pastors available.

Thus the board had to deal with an existential situation. In doing this an agonizing reappraisal had to be carried out. In its minute the board takes note of sobering aspects of the situation. Nonetheless, the board was convinced that the vigor and determination of the Tiv church demanded that we should no longer hinder the outworking of that conviction. It is hoped that in this way we may contribute to the healing of a long standing tension as we learn to live together as brothers united by one mutual faith and Reformed confession. It is in the light of this Christian realism that the board seeks synod's approbation.

*Evangelism.* We turn now to the more specifically missionary aspects of the Nigeria endeavor. We think back to 1945 when the number of places of worship on our field in Nigeria numbered 17, and today exceed one thousand. In the beginning the work was carried on mainly at what might be termed "bush stations". Today there are only 4 such stations left in our mission area, and here we have ordained men who work in direct evangelism and church planting. Even here, however, more and more the energies of these men are used in supportive roles and teaching. The Bible schools at Lupwe, Wukari, Baissa, and Serti are of fundamental value to the EKAS Benue Church. Likewise, the Benue Bible Institute at Harga sends forth a score of trained teachers each year to carry on the basic evangelistic task. At the Veenstra Junior Seminary, located in Lupwe, 28 students from both the Tiv and Benue churches are trained. The Tiv Vernacular Pastors Training class and the TCNN complete the current involvement of the mission in theological education. The Bible correspondence work also forms an important facet of the work since during 1971 over 4,000 people were enrolled in the course work.

The evangelistic work in recent years has put special interest on the literature and linguistic programs. The most significant publications recently have been the new Tiv hymnbook, and the book of Mark being published for the first time in some of the languages of the East Benue people. Our own publications will from henceforth be known as "Lamp and Word Books" with a bush lamp and an open Bible as the emblem.

Another emerging frontier for evangelism is that of the youth work. There is a very strong rural youth ministry in both the EKAS and NKST churches. The youth center Gboko now operates with a Nigerian in day to day charge. The churches are eager to open new youth centers at Wukari and Makurdi as well. Here the local congregations are deeply involved in the enterprise.

*Medicine.* The medical work continues at our two hospitals and leprosy settlement, in the rural health ministry, the dispensaries, the midwifery work, the nurses training school, and the civil war rehabilitation work. The increasing emphasis on mobility and flexibility in the medical ministry is a response to the new challenges of this day. The Nigerian community is gradually taking on increasing responsibility for the functioning of the medical ministry, particularly on the dispensary level.

*Education.* The educational ministry is carried on in several secondary schools as well as at Mkar Teachers' College. Approval has recently been granted for a triple streaming (that is 3 classes at each level) at Mkar Teachers' College. Bristow Secondary School has been newly triple streamed and already the government is giving some pressure for quadruple streaming. The Nigerianization of these institutions continues apace. The number of missionaries in each of them has been reduced while the number of Nigerian teachers has in each case been doubled. Mkar Teachers' College now has a dedicated Nigerian Christian as principal.

Additional ministries are performed by the aviation personnel, the agriculturalist, the treasurer, the builders, the mechanics and general secretary. Each of these perform significant tasks which often go unheralded. Without them our ministry to the one quarter million people who attend our services every Sunday would be well nigh impossible.

*Mission Reorganization.* The main event in the organizational life of the mission during 1971 was the dissolution of the Nigeria General Conference, and the formation of 3 committees which report directly to the board. The Benue Liaison Committee is formed of representatives of the East Benue denomination and equal numbers of missionary representatives. The Tiv Liaison Committee likewise is formed from appointments by the Tiv Synod and the mission. These liaison committees deal with all questions covering the ministries in their respective areas. Specifically mission functions such as Hillcrest School, missionary travel, personal accounts and the general secretary and treasurers' offices are cared for by a Nigerian Missions Services Committee. This reorganization grants much greater responsibility and authority to the Nigerian denominations, and is a long cherished goal of mission and church. Requests and budgets are now channeled directly to the board office from the liaison committees and need not pass through any intermediate committee made up solely of mission personnel.

*Nigerianization.* With the difficulty of visa acquisition during 1971, the problem of Nigerianization of our ministries became acute. In the end most of those for whom visas had been sought were granted admittance to Nigeria, and are functioning in their tasks today. Meanwhile, the Nigerian Christian community was urged to assume increasing responsibility for mission ministries. It is encouraging to report that Nigerian Christians are now engaged in several senior posts formerly held by expatriate missionaries. Large numbers of nurses come from the Nigerian Christian community, and hundreds of Bible school teachers and evangelists are provided by the churches without any financial support from the mission. Several secondary schools are also being established by the churches entirely on their own initiative. Local dispensaries are sprouting in many communities, and offer avenues of relating the ministry of compassion and healing to the local church.

In concluding this report it is fitting to reproduce the minute memorializing the historic milestone of the dissolution of Nigeria General Conference. The minute reads as follows:

"ECM 10013 . . . The Executive Committee of the Christian Reformed Board of Foreign Missions takes note of the historic milestone reached in Nigeria with the dissolution of Nigeria General Conference and with the initiation of a new organizational structure. The Executive Committee records its gratitude to God and to our missionaries for the tremendous work accomplished through the years by Nigerian General Conference and for the evident blessings on the work from God's hand. As our missionaries and our sister churches in Nigeria now enter upon a new phase of partnership in which the growth and maturity of the churches is more fully recognized, and a long cherished goal of the mission is realized, the Executive Committee craves God's blessing for this new venture. New challenges and problems now face church and mission in Nigeria, but we pray that God's grace may broaden and deepen our fellowship together as we labor to establish his kingdom."

### Section Six 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, 1971, as prepared by our auditor. A detailed account of all transactions will be presented to the budget committees of synod.

January 25, 1972

Christian Reformed Board of Foreign Missions  
Grand Rapids, Michigan  
Gentlemen:

We have examined the balance sheet of the Operating Fund, Plant Fund and the Annuity Fund of the Christian Reformed Board of Foreign Missions as of December 31, 1971, and the related statements of receipts and expenditures for the year then ended, and have prepared these concise statements from the audited report.

*Operating Fund:*

Balance Sheet  
Statement of Receipts and Expenditures

*Plant Fund:*

Balances and Changes in Fund Balances

*Statement of Annuity Fund:*

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 tests of the accounting records and such other auditing procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances. Our examination was limited to a review of the records of the home office and an examination of reports received from the fields for verification of amounts spent in conformity with field budgets. Certain tests of field funds were also made.

Subject to the limitation expressed in the above paragraph, in our opinion the accompanying balance sheets and statements of receipts and expenditures present fairly the financial position of the Christian Reformed Board of Foreign Missions at December 31, 1971, and the results of its financial operations for the year then ended, in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles applied on a basis consistent with that of the prior year.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dwight D. Ferris  
Certified Public Accountant

CHRISTIAN REFORMED BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS  
BALANCE SHEET  
OPERATING FUND  
DECEMBER 31, 1971

ASSETS

<u>CURRENT ASSETS</u>	
Operating Cash	\$(38,918.78)
Funds on Field and Advances to Field	412,994.90
Accounts Receivable - Missionaries	<u>28,638.57</u>
<u>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</u>	<u>\$402,714.69</u>
<u>OTHER ASSETS</u>	
Note Receivable	\$ 1,000.00
Investments	12,776.07
Land Contract Receivable	<u>14,555.53</u>
<u>TOTAL OTHER ASSETS</u>	28,331.60
<u>RESERVED CASH FOR SPECIAL PROJECTS</u>	<u>470,674.36</u>
<u>TOTAL ASSETS</u>	<u>\$901,720.65</u>

LIABILITIES, RESERVES AND FUND BALANCE

<u>CURRENT LIABILITIES</u>	
Accounts Payable	\$ 53,913.05
Payroll Taxes Withheld	<u>1,878.04</u>
<u>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</u>	\$ 55,791.09
<u>FUND RESERVES</u>	
Approved Projects from Prior Budgets	\$259,900.00
Reserve for 1972 Budget Deficit	170,950.00
Reserve for Special Projects	11,107.64
Reserve for Cuba Mission Funds	<u>28,716.72</u>
<u>TOTAL FUND RESERVES</u>	470,674.36
<u>FUND BALANCE</u>	<u>375,255.20</u>
<u>TOTAL LIABILITIES, RESERVES AND FUND BALANCE</u>	<u>\$901,720.65</u>

CHRISTIAN REFORMED BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS  
STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURES  
OPERATING FUND  
YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1971

<u>RECEIPTS</u>	
Classical Quotas	\$1,291,032.14
Missionary Support	622,199.05
Gifts and Offerings	
Designated Gifts	210,288.72
Non-designated Gifts	90,882.97
General Missions	102,795.30
Johanna Vecnstra Living Memorial	397.59
Legacies	24,829.30
Above Quota Offerings	87,600.61
Second Protestant Reformed Church Receipts	231.00
Field Receipts	725,456.34
Other Operating Income	133,508.51
Interest and Dividends	38,456.11
Sale of Assets	<u>20,587.35</u>
<u>TOTAL RECEIPTS</u>	<u>\$3,348,264.99</u>

EXPENDITURES

	<u>Operating</u> <u>Expenditures</u>	<u>Capital</u> <u>Expenditures</u>	<u>Total</u>
Australia	\$ 25,065.14	\$ -	\$ 25,065.14
Argentina	128,460.35	14,730.11	143,190.46
Brazil	37,893.70	16,345.82	54,239.52
Cuba	29,302.71	-	29,302.71
Guam	38,988.43	7,074.07	46,062.50
Honduras	7,125.35	-	7,125.35
Japan	342,269.51	116,211.36	458,480.87
Mexico	375,861.67	35,329.29	411,190.96
New Zealand	200.00	-	200.00
Nigeria	1,739,429.53	10,642.80	1,750,072.33
Philippine Islands	46,314.94	9,331.45	55,646.39
Puerto Rico	34,762.29	-	34,762.29
Taiwan	102,428.80	1,000.00	103,428.80
Administration	112,794.17	1,029.75	113,823.92
General	194,667.40	-	194,667.40
Promotion	69,520.28	-	69,520.28

TOTAL

<u>EXPENDITURES</u>	<u>\$3,285,084.27</u>	<u>\$211,694.65</u>	<u>3,496,778.92</u>
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EXCESS OF EXPENDITURES OVER RECEIPTS

<u>\$ 148,513.93</u>
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CHRISTIAN REFORMED BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONSPLANT FUND

DECEMBER 31, 1971

PLANT FUND

Land, Building, Furniture and Equipment	\$3,047,880.86
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	<u>827,782.78</u>

PLANT FUND BALANCE

<u>\$2,220,098.08</u>
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CHANGES IN PLANT FUND BALANCE

<u>BALANCE - JANUARY 1, 1971</u>	\$2,149,559.15
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ADDITIONS - 1971 CAPITAL EXPENDITURES

Purchases	\$211,694.65
Legacy	<u>15,000.00</u>
	226,694.65

Total

\$2,376,253.80
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DEDUCTIONS

1971 Depreciation	\$138,702.45
Sale of Assets (Net Book Value)	<u>17,453.27</u>
	156,155.72

BALANCE - DECEMBER 31, 1971

<u>\$2,220,098.08</u>
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CHRISTIAN REFORMED BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONSANNUITY FUNDBALANCE SHEET

DECEMBER 31, 1971

ASSETS

Cash in Bank	\$ 317.69
Savings Account	50,907.76
U.S. Treasury Bond - 4 1/4% (Due May 15, 1974)	<u>6,000.00</u>

TOTAL ASSETS

<u>\$57,225.45</u>
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LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE

Annuities Payable	\$42,000.00
Fund Balance - Beets Memorial	6,000.00
Fund Balance	<u>9,225.45</u>
<u>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE</u>	<u>\$57,225.45</u>

STATEMENT OF FUND BALANCE

<u>FUND BALANCE - JANUARY 1, 1971</u>	\$ 4,741.54
<u>ADDITIONS</u>	
Interest Earned	\$2,124.99
Transfer from Liability Account - Certificate cancelled	<u>5,000.00</u> 7,124.99
<u>Total</u>	\$11,866.53
<u>DEDUCTION</u>	
Annuity Payments	<u>2,641.08</u>
<u>FUND BALANCE - DECEMBER 31, 1971</u>	<u>\$ 9,225.45</u>

STATEMENT OF REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES

<u>REVENUES</u>	
Interest Earned	\$2,124.99
<u>EXPENDITURES</u>	
Annuity Payments	<u>2,641.08</u>
<u>EXCESS OF EXPENDITURES OVER REVENUES</u>	<u>\$ 516.09</u>

*B. Budget for 1973*

A complete list of budget requests for 1973 will be submitted to the officers of synod and to members of its advisory committee when synod meets. A summary of these requests follows:

<b>BUDGET 1973</b>	
<b>Budget Expenditures</b>	
Administration .....	\$ 126,100
General Expenses .....	214,200
Promotion .....	73,000
<b>Field Operations:</b>	
Salaries .....	\$1,201,100
Field Expenses .....	1,721,994
Missionary Medical Expenses .....	49,350
Travel and Freight .....	173,300
<b>Total Field Operations .....</b>	<b>\$3,145,744</b>
<b>Capital Expenditures:</b>	
Argentina .....	\$ 6,000
Brazil .....	15,500
Japan .....	127,400
Mexico .....	32,500
Nigeria .....	116,406
Philippines .....	8,250
Puerto Rico .....	19,000
Taiwan .....	16,000
<b>Total Capital Expenditures .....</b>	<b>\$ 341,056</b>
<b>Field Expansion:</b>	
Argentina .....	\$ 5,000
Philippines .....	20,000
Puerto Rico .....	20,000
<b>Total Field Expansion .....</b>	<b>\$ 45,000</b>
<b>Total Budget Expenditures .....</b>	<b>\$3,945,100</b>
<b>Estimated Income</b>	
Quota Receipts .....	\$1,437,500
Missionary Support .....	675,000
Gifts and Offerings .....	650.00
Field Receipts .....	1,030,000
Interest, Dividends, Sale of Assets .....	78,600
From Fund Balance and Released Carryovers .....	74,000
<b>Total Estimated Income for 1973.....</b>	<b>\$3,945,100</b>

*C. Request for Special Offerings*

We are requesting approval of a \$3,945,100 budget for 1973 and a quota amounting to \$1,437,500 (36½% of the total amount needed). The remaining \$2,507,600 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 Christian Reformed Board of Foreign Missions be recommended for one or more special offerings.

Therefore, we respectfully request that synod continue the Board of Foreign Missions on the list of denomination causes recommended for one or more offerings during 1973.

#### D. Request for Quota

The board is asking for approval of a quota of \$28.75 per family for 1973.

\* \* \* \*

For all this program of witnessing we ask the constant prayers of synod. We are blessed with men and women serving on our various fields in full dedication to Christ and his kingdom. We are blessed also with a loyal constituency which supports the work generously, and we have the continuing summons of our Lord to make his Gospel known to the ends of the earth.

#### Section Seven

##### Summary of Items on Which We Request Synodical Action

1. Approval of board members and alternates, Section One, B.
2. Election of member-at-large, Section One, B.
3. Approval of alternate member-at-large and Election of alternate member-at-large, Section One, B.
4. Representation at synod, Section One, E.
5. Presentation of missionaries, Section One, F.
6. Area Secretary for Latin America, Section Two.
7. Retirement of Rev. and Mrs. Edgar H. Smith, Section Two.
8. Endorsement of Manila Post, Section Three.
9. Endorsement of board decisions concerning Reformed Theological College of Nigeria, Section Five.
10. Financial Matters, Treasurer's Report for 1971, Section Six, A.
11. Financial Matters, Budget Requests for 1973, Section Six, B.
12. Financial Matters, Request for Special Offerings in 1973, Section Six C.
13. Financial Matters, Request for Quota, Section Six, D.

Respectfully submitted,

Board of Foreign Missions  
Henry J. Evenhouse, Executive Sec'y



## REPORT 4

## CHRISTIAN REFORMED BOARD OF HOME MISSIONS

DEAR BROTHERS:

## I. INTRODUCTION

It is my privilege to report to synod on behalf of the Board of Home Missions. This occasion is brilliantly illuminated by the presence of the Lord of harvest. This is an occasion for celebration. The Lord has used our frailty to accomplish his powerful work in the mission fields of Canada and the United States. His hand has upheld his servants in their work. He has sent us men and women of good judgment and great dedication to serve on the board and on the fields. "O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good . . ." Psalm 118.

There are at least two reasons for a vigorous prosecution of the home mission program by the Christian Reformed Church. The first is a scriptural reason. In many passages in the Bible, but especially in Acts 1:8, we are called upon to be witnesses "in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria . . ." So also in Luke 24:27 the people of God are charged with the proclamation of the Gospel "beginning from Jerusalem." In our tradition and heritage there can be no question regarding the necessity for obedience to that mandate. The second reason is the plight of modern man in Canada and the United States. There is a revolution underway on this continent.\* It is a revolution which is not affiliated with either Marx or Jesus. It is making its inroads into every facet of our society. We know the risen, victorious Christ to whom all power has been given. It is time to wrest the control of revolution from those who do not know Christ and return it to him who changes the heart of man and controls the destiny of nations.

Closely associated with the revolutionary trend is the inevitable approach of the super-industrial-technological age. It brings with it violent and rapid change in society, technology, industry, education, government, culture, and morals. Furthermore, the change in our western world is swift and radical.\*\*

Modern man has been described as a victim of urbanization and a rootless transience. He is mobile, lonely in the midst of crowds, afraid of any lasting relationships, cut loose from any solid theological or philosophical moorings, adrift at sea, modular man in a modular society.

It is imperative that the church confront man with the eternal word, the changeless God, and the relevant Christ who reaches out to give "rest" to the traveler beset by pressures. The message must get through—to fulfill our mandate and for our own survival and the survival of our

\**Without Marx or Jesus* by Jean-François Revel

\*\**Future Shock* by Allan Toffler

children. The *mission* is ours, by word and by “deeds of love and mercy” by which “the heavenly kingdom comes.” (Psalter Hymnal number 484)

In gratitude to God for his abundant grace and blessing, the Board of Home Missions submits this report to the Synod of 1972.

II. ADMINISTRATION AND BOARD PERSONNEL

A. *Administration Personnel:*

- Executive Secretary—Rev. Marvin C. Baarman
- Field Secretary—Rev. Nelson Vanderzee
- Field Secretary for Indian Ministries—Mr. David W. Bosscher
- Field Secretary for Urban Ministries—Rev. Duane VanderBrug
- Minister of Evangelism—Rev. Wesley Smedes
- Volunteer Program Director—Mr. Ellis Deters
- Director of Communications—Rev. Earl Schipper
- Treasurer—Mr. Gerard J. Borst
- Secretary for Church Relations—Mr. Stanley Koning
- Office Manager-Accountant—Mr. Howard G. Meyers

B. *Board Personnel:*

Classis	Delegate	Alternate
Alberta North.....	Rev. C. Bishop.....	Rev. A. Miedema
Alberta South.....	Rev. H. Wildeboer.....	Rev. R. Fisher
British Columbia.....	Rev. J. Zantingh.....	Rev. P. Kranenburg
Cadillac.....	Rev. J. Monsma*.....	Rev. P. Hogeterp
California South.....	Rev. H. Roelofs.....	Rev. W. Bierling
Central California.....	Rev. E. Marlink.....	Rev. H. Visscher
Chatham.....	Rev. J. Van Weelden*.....	Rev. C. Spoor
Chicago North.....	Rev. W. Witte*.....	Rev. J. Ebbers
Chicago South.....	Rev. A. MacLeod*.....	Rev. R. Hartwell
Columbia.....	Mr. J. Omta.....	Rev. J. Jeffers
Eastern Canada.....	Rev. H. Uittenbosch.....	Rev. J. Klumpenhouwer
Florida.....	Rev. A. Rienstra.....	Mr. R. Boerema
Grand Rapids East.....	Rev. L. Veltkamp*.....	Rev. M. Doornbos
Grand Rapids North.....	Rev. P. Vermaire*.....	Rev. M. Toonstra, Jr.
Grand Rapids South.....	Rev. H. Bossenbroek*.....	Rev. G. Holwerda
Grandville.....	Rev. H. Hoekstra*.....	Rev. A. Jongsma
Hackensack.....	Rev. A. Van Zanten.....	Rev. S. Ten Brink
Hamilton.....	Rev. J. Tangelder.....	Rev. G. Ringnald
Holland.....	Rev. W. Hofman*.....	Rev. C. Steenstra
Hudson.....	Rev. L. Tanis.....	Rev. B. Van Someren
Huron.....	Rev. P. Brouwer.....	
Illiana.....	Rev. J. Van Ryn*.....	Rev. R. Vander Ley
Kalamazoo.....	Rev. W. Huyser*.....	Rev. S. Workman
Lake Erie.....	Rev. R. Peterson*.....	Rev. W. Dykstra
Minnesota North.....	Rev. G. Kramer.....	Rev. M. Reitsma
Minnesota South.....	Rev. W. Green, Jr.....	Rev. T. Heyboer
Muskegon.....	Rev. T. Verseput*.....	Mr. H. Poel
Northcentral Iowa.....	Rev. F. Einfeld.....	Rev. F. Walhof
Orange City.....	Rev. H. De Groot.....	Mr. C. Runia
Pacific Northwest.....	Rev. J. Maas.....	Rev. H. Ouwinga
Pella.....	Rev. J. Dykstra.....	Rev. V. Verbrugge
Quinte.....	Rev. D. Habermehl.....	Rev. E. Gritter
Rocky Mountain.....	Rev. J. Vander Laan.....	Dr. J. Kamps
Sioux Center.....	Rev. J. Botting.....	Rev. C. Van Essen
Toronto.....	Rev. H. Eshuis.....	Rev. A. Dreise
Wisconsin.....	Rev. J. Olthoff.....	Rev. R. Uken
Zeeland.....	Rev. H. Van Wyk, Jr.*.....	Rev. E. Los

\*indicates members of the Executive Committee

*Members-at-Large:*

Central U.S.A.....	Mr. J. H. Fles*	Dr. F. Westendorp
	Mr. J. Simerink*	Mr. M. Van Dellen
	Mr. J. Van Eerden*	Mr. H. Soper
	Mr. W. Peterson*	Mr. E. Berends
	Mr. P. Van Putten*	Mr. J. Volkers
Eastern U.S.A.....	Mr. C. Johnson.....	Mr. W. Hommes
Western U.S.A.....	Mr. J. Vande Beek.....	Dr. W. Den Dulk
Rocky Mountain.....	Mr. E. Begay.....	Mr. E. Benally
S.W. Ontario.....	Mr. L. Batterink*	
Eastern Canada.....	Mr. H. Van Belle.....	Dr. B. Kieskamp
Western Canada.....	Mr. M. Kwantes.....	Mr. G. Monsma

\*indicates members of the Executive Committee

*C. Officers of the Board of Home Missions:*

Rev. L. Veltkamp, President  
 Rev. W. Hofman, Vice President  
 Mr. P. Van Putten, Assistant Treasurer  
 Mr. G. Borst, Treasurer  
 Rev. M. Baarman, Executive Secretary

*D. Sub-committees of the Board:*

Administration Committee: Rev. L. Veltkamp, Rev. W. Hofman, Mr. P. Van Putten  
 Evangelism Committee: Rev. R. Peterson, Rev. W. Huyser, Rev. J. Van Weelden  
 Campus Ministry Committee: Rev. W. Huyser, Dr. S. Dykstra, Rev. A. Hoksbergen, Rev. R. Westveer  
 Finance Committee: Mr. P. Van Putten, Mr. J. Simerink, Mr. J. H. Fles, Dr. W. Peterson, Mr. J. Van Eerden, Rev. P. Vermaire  
 Fields Committee: Rev. J. Monsma, Rev. H. Bossenbroek, Rev. H. Hoekstra  
 Urban Fields Committee: Rev. J. Van Ryn, Rev. F. Mac Leod, Rev. W. Witte  
 Indian Fields Committee: Rev. W. Hofman, Rev. H. Van Wyk, Rev. T. Verseput  
 Personnel Committee: The administrative staff plus Dr. F. Westendorp  
 Jewish Ministries Committee: Rev. J. Draisma, Rev. B. Madany, Mr. Huisjen

## III. FIELDS DEPARTMENT

*A. Regular Fields*

## 1. Departures from the staff:

Rev. A. Arkema, from East Islip, N.Y., to Prospect Park, N.J.  
 Rev. N. Knoppers, from El Paso, Texas, to Red Deer, Alberta  
 Rev. E. Walhout, from Webster, N.Y., to Framingham, Mass.  
 Rev. H. De Rooy, from St. Louis, Mo., to Eastern Home Missionary  
 Rev. R. Kramer, from Quincy, Wash., to South Bend, Indiana  
 Rev. W. Heynen, from Anchorage, Alaska, to Grand Rapids, Mich. (Oakdale Pk.)

## 2. Transfers:

Rev. G. Hubers, from Indian Harbour Beach, Fla., to Jacksonville, Fla.  
 Rev. W. Verwolf, from Fairbanks, Alaska, to Anchorage, Alaska

## 3. Additions to the staff:

Rev. A. Groen to Prince George, B.C.  
 Rev. P. Mans to South Windsor, Conn.  
 Rev. S. Mast to St. Louis, Mo.  
 Rev. O. Hogan to El Paso, Texas  
 Rev. J. Oosterhouse to Indian Harbour Beach, Fla.  
 Rev. N. Plantinga to Webster, N.Y.  
 Rev. R. Steen to Wanamassa, N.J.  
 Rev. R. Tjapkes to Boca Raton, Fla.  
 Rev. R. Vredeveld to East Islip, N.Y.

4. Rev. H. Sprik was declared eligible for call. Rev. J. Bonnema was granted a leave of absence for one year. Rev. G. Hubers was granted a leave of absence for one year.

5. Vacancies:

Greeley, Colo. (presently served by Rev. J. Zwaanstra, Stated Supply)  
 Quincy, Wash. (presently served by Rev. B. Bruxvoort, Stated Supply)  
 Anchorage, Alaska (presently served by Rev. W. Verwolf, applying for emeritation)  
 Jacksonville, Florida (services not yet being held)  
 Fairbanks, Alaska (vacant and field to be abandoned)

6. Fields:

Field	Missionary	Opened	Sunday		
			Families	School Worship	
Akron, Ohio.....	Rev. H. Karsten.....	1963	41	97	115
Anchorage, Alaska.....	Rev. W. Heynen.....	1953	33	117	125
Bakersfield, Cal.....	Rev. J. Versluys.....	1967	23	88	104
Bellevue, Wash.....	Rev. F. Rietema.....	1967	30	70	117
Binghamton, N.Y.....	Rev. P. Vermaat.....	1964	36	70	140
Boca Raton, Fla.....	Rev. R. Tjapkes.....	1963	19	71	72
Boulder, Colo.....	Rev. J. VanderArk.....	1961	31	66	111
Cedar Rapids, Ia.....	Rev. E. Dykema.....	1969	10	45	45
Champaign, Ill.....	Dr. M. Hoogland.....	1956	13	9	59
Corvallis, Ore.....	Rev. F. Breisch.....	1969	13	30	44
Davenport, Ia.....	Rev. S. VanderJagt.....	1965	25	59	57
Dayton, Ohio.....	Rev. N. Gebben.....	1961	11	26	42
Denver, Colo.....	Rev. D. Aardsma.....	1968	34	100	182
East Islip, N.Y.....	Rev. R. Vredeveld.....	1957	12	54	54
East Grand Forks, Minn.....	Rev. P. Lagerwey.....	1963	20	50	74
East Tucson, Ariz.....	Rev. O. Buus.....	1965	22	38	78
El Paso, Texas.....	Rev. O. Hogan.....	1960	8	27	52
Farmington, Mich.....	Rev. H. Ellens.....	1968	32	61	180
Flagstaff, Ariz.....	Rev. W. Heersink.....	1968	10	47	37
Flanders Valley, N.J.....	Rev. C. Vander Meyden.....	1965	31	58	109
Fort Collins, Colo.....	Rev. L. Van Essen.....	1963	33	89	134
Fort Wayne, Ind.....	Rev. E. Holkeboer.....	1969	9	20	42
Fountain Valley, Cal.....	Rev. R. Tadema.....	1965	34	73	131
Fresno, Cal.....	Rev. J. Vigh.....	1963	28	45	76
Greeley, Colo.....	Rev. D. Van Oyen.....	1969	24	42	63
Honolulu, Hawaii.....	Rev. C. Van Winkle.....	1967	24	81	122
Indian Harbour Beach, Fla.....	Rev. J. Osterhouse.....	1959	15	40	73
Hayward, Cal.....	Rev. J. Hekman.....	1960	29	113	133
Iowa City, Ia.....	Rev. A. Helder.....	1960	37	71	134
Jacksonville, Fla.....	Vacant				
Mason City, Ia.....	Rev. W. Stroo.....	1960	27	47	82
New Brighton, Minn.....	Rev. G. Kramer.....	1965	68	108	270
Norfolk, Va.....	Rev. J. Rickers.....	1962	25	69	78
Ogden, Utah.....	Rev. G. Hutt.....	1958	29	98	80
Olympia, Wash.....	Rev. B. Huizenga.....	1970	16	48	65
Orlando, Fla.....	Rev. J. Natelborg.....	1959	28	44	142
Portland, Ore.....	Rev. H. Spaan.....	1965	34	68	127
Quincy, Wash.....	Vacant	1963	23	44	93
Riverside, Cal.....	Rev. J. Rozeboom.....	1960	28	55	100
Salem, Ore.....	Rev. R. Posthuma.....	1961	35	59	129
Salt Lake City, Utah.....	Rev. P. Borgdorff.....	1960	25	53	95
So. St. Paul, Minn.....	Rev. D. Van Beek.....	1959	31	67	121
South Windsor, Conn.....	Rev. P. Mans.....	1962	25	68	81
St. Louis, Mo.....	Rev. S. Mast.....	1965	23	87	113
Syracuse, N.Y.....	Rev. F. Bultman.....	1966	15	59	60

Field	Missionary	Opened	Sunday		
			Families	School	Worship
Terre Haute, Ind.....	Rev. G. Beerens.....	1960	14	62	117
Tri Cities, Wash.....	Rev. H. Bouma.....	1969	8	44	47
Wanamassa, N.J.....	Rev. R. Steen.....	1966	14	17	49
Wappingers Falls, N.Y.....	Rev. F. MacLeod.....	1963	22	95	160
Washington, Pa.....	Rev. R. Broekhuizen.	1963	18	85	108
Webster, N.Y.....	Rev. N. Plantinga.....	1965	22	60	102
Yakima, Wash.....	Rev. B. Nymeyer.....	1967	20	73	73
Cochrane, Ont.....	Mr. J. Tensen.....	1950	13	14	37
Fredericton, B.C.....	Rev. A. VandenEnde	1961	18	23	69
Penticton, B.C.....	Rev. J. Versfelt.....	1969	25	16	77
New Glasgow, N.S.....	Rev. J. Binnema.....	1969	22	44	85
Prince George, B.C.....	Rev. A. Groen.....	1957	28	76	94
Windsor, Ont.....	Rev. H. De Bruyn.....	1957	20	76	53

### 7. Observations and Comments:

The listing above gives information regarding families. This figure is the count of families as of December 31, 1971. The figure "Worship" indicates the average attendance at the morning service during the year.

The home mission churches have Sunday services, plus an outreach into the community which includes one or more of the following: radio broadcast, TV broadcast as in Anchorage, rest home ministry, services at jails, prison farms, hospitals, week-day Bible clubs, service organizations, community action committees, block captains program, and a mailing ministry.

All fields have community families in attendance who are not yet members. In several instances our mission churches have more families who are regular visitors than member families.

Generally the mission churches listed have a high percentage of people who come from no church background, or from non-Christian Reformed Church background.

The Sunday school and daily vacation Bible school occupy a large place in the program of the mission church. Frequently the small home mission church has a larger Sunday school than the large church. The SWIM program and the VBS combine to make contacts in the community.

### B. Indian Fields

#### 1. Departures from the staff:

Mr. Jackson Yazzie, from Church Rock, N.M., to I Denver Indian work

Mr. Maurice Mishler, from Brigham City to continue education

Mrs. Dorothy Williams, from Brigham City to other employment

Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Swartz, from Rehoboth, N.M., to other employment (resigned)

Miss Wanda Van Klompenberg, from Zuni School due to health reasons (leave of absence)

Mr. Merle Vander Sluis, from Rehoboth School to continue education

Miss Luella Helland, from Rehoboth School to other employment

Mrs. Jean Veltkamp, from Rehoboth School to housewife duties

The board calls the attention of synod to the retirement of Miss Dora Hofstra, Rehoboth Mission, after 35 years of service. We thank God for

years of faithful service and commend Miss Hofstra to the abundant blessing of the Lord of harvest.

2. Transfers:

Mr. Charles Grey, from White Horse Lake, N.M., to Tohlakai, N.M.  
 Mr. Jerry Lineweaver, from Salt Lake City, Utah, to Brigham City, Utah

3. Additions to the staff:

Rev. Peter De Jong to Church Rock, N.M.  
 \*Mr. Frank Bakker to Los Angeles, Cal.  
 Mr. Norman Jonkman to Salt Lake City, Utah (January '72)  
 Mr. and Mrs. Gary Nederveld to Rehoboth High School (Houseparents)  
 Mr. Albert Henry to Naschitti, N.M.  
 \*Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Dykema to San Francisco Friendship House (Houseparents)  
 Mr. Ken Whitehorse to White Horse Lake, N.M.  
 Mr. R. David Baas to Rehoboth School  
 Mrs. Mary Baas to Rehoboth School  
 Miss Lois Landheer to Zuni School  
 \*Mr. Don Wierenga to Zuni, N.M. (Youth Worker)  
 Miss Mary Feyen to Rehoboth School

\*New positions

4. Fields:

Field	Missionary	Opened	Sunday		
			Families	School Worship	
Albuquerque, N.M.	Rev. A. Veltkamp	1961	16	51	50
Brigham City, Utah	Rev. E. Boer	1954	10	39	66
	Mr. J. Lineweaver				
Chicago, Ill.	Mr. H. Bielema	1963		34	49
Church Rock, N.M.	Rev. P. De Jong		15	55	70
Crownpoint, N.M.	Rev. A. Gelder	1913	24	32	45
	Mr. A. Becenti				
Farmington, N.M.	Miss L. Benally	1921	26	32	67
	Rev. S. Yazzie				
Fort Wingate, N.M.	Mr. B. Whitehorse	1965	14	110	60
	Mr. S. Siebersma				
Gallup, N.M.	Miss M. Baker	1932	37	92	117
	Rev. A. Mulder				
	Miss E. Vos				
Los Angeles, Cal.	Mr. F. Bakker	1971	— not applicable —		
Naschitti, N.M.	Mr. M. Harberts	1924	19	37	91
	Mr. A. Henry				
Phoenix, Ariz.	Rev. H. Van Dam	Cook	Christian	Training	School
Red Rock, Ariz.	Mr. B. Garnanez	1953	29	16	49
	Mr. C. Begay				
Rehoboth, N.M.	Rev. R. Veenstra	1903	31	62	250
	Religious Ed Office				
(reservation area)	Rev. G. De Velder		— not applicable —		
	Miss T. Vander Ven				
Salt Lake City, Utah	Mr. N. Jonkman	1960	— not applicable —		
San Antone, N.M.	(Cf. Crownpoint)			20	21
San Francisco, Cal.	Rev. R. Buining	1963	22	52	85
	Mr. I. Mulder				
	Mr. and Mrs. C. Dykema				
Sanostee, N.M.	Mr. F. Curley	1913	9	17	43
Shiprock, N.M.	Rev. A. Koolhaas	1936	28	61	138
	Mr. C. Brummel				
	Miss H. Nyhof				

Field	Missionary	Opened	Sunday		
			Families	School	Worship
Teec Nos Pos, Ariz.....	Rev. P. Redhouse.....	1936	30	25	67
Toadlena, N.M.....	Mr. J. Talley.....	1925	24	50	98
	Mr. G. Klumpen-				
	hower.....				
Tohatchi, N.M.....	Mr. F. Frank.....	1898	17	46	46
	Rev. E. Henry.....				
Tohlakai, N.M.....	Mr. H. Begay.....	1966	5	10	41
	Mr. C. Grey.....				
White Horse Lake, N.M.....	Mr. K. Whitehorse.....	1966	39	43	105
Window Rock, Ariz.....	Rev. S. Redhouse.....	1897	9	32	51
Zuni, N.M.....	Rev. D. Klompjen.....	1897	9	32	51
	Mr. R. Chimoni.....				
	Mr. D. Wierenga.....				

### 5. Educational Ministry:

#### *Rehoboth Mission School*

Mr. Keith Kuipers, Ed. Sup't.  
 Mr. R. David Baas  
 Mrs. Mary Baas  
 Miss Mary Feyen  
 Miss Gretta Bierma  
 Mr. Eugene Boot  
 Mr. Ted Charles  
 Miss Mary Kuik  
 Miss Rena Vander Woude  
 Mr. John Van 't Land  
 Miss Lynne Veenstra  
 Mr. James Veltkamp  
 Mr. Thomas Weeda

#### Supporting staff:

Houseparents:  
 Miss Julia Ensink  
 Miss Dora Hofstra  
 Miss Gertrude Youngsma  
 Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Apol  
 Mr. and Mrs. Julian Baas  
 Mr. and Mrs. Gary Nederveld  
 Dining Room/Kitchen:  
 Mr. William Hoekstra  
 Mr. and Mrs. Lester Dams  
 Miss Nora De Kleine  
 Mrs. Ann Boyd, Secretary  
 Mr. Steward Barton, Jr., Custodian

#### *Zuni Mission School*

Mr. Marvin J. Apol, Principal  
 Miss Marla De Jonge  
 Miss Trena Dekker

Miss Elizabeth Hendricks  
 Miss Eunice Post  
 Miss Lois Landheer

### 6. Industrial Department:

Mr. Edwin Oppenhuizen, Bus. Mgr.  
 Mr. Willie Benally  
 Mr. Edward Berkompas  
 Mr. Arthur Bosscher

Mr. Julius Den Bleyker  
 Mr. Jerald Nyhof  
 (Zuni) Mr. Neil Natewa

### C. *Urban Missions*

#### 1. Fields:

Field	Missionary	Opened	Sunday		
			Families	School	Worship
Manhattan, N.Y.					
Mission Dept.....	Mr. B. Greenfield.....	1952			
Detroit, Mich.....	Rev. H. Botts.....	1964	18	81	83
Chicago-Chinese.....	Rev. P. Han.....	1962	12	14	81
Hoboken, N.J.....	Rev. E. T. Lewis.....	1964			58
Los Angeles-Crenshaw.....	Rev. J. Hollebeek.....	1963	15	96	71
Los Angeles-Spanish.....	Rev. C. Nyenhuis.....	1969	10	94	90
New York-Chinese.....	Rev. P. Szto.....	1956	25	69	83
San Francisco-Chinese.....	Rev. P. Yang.....	1965	18	31	100
Miami, Fla.-Spanish.....	Rev. F. Diemer.....	1960	26	134	139
	Mrs. B. Izquierdo.....				

*D. Servicemen's Ministry:*

- Anchorage, Alaska—vacant
- El Paso, Texas—Rev. O. Hogan
- Fairbanks, Alaska—to be abandoned
- Honolulu, Hawaii—Rev. C. Van Winkle
- Norfolk, Virginia—Rev. J. Rickers, Mr. R. Klunder
- San Diego, California—vacant
- Seoul, Korea—Rev. J. Heerema
- Tacoma, Washington—Rev. D. Van Gent
- Wanamassa, New Jersey—Rev. R. Steen

IV. SUMMARY OF STATISTICS

	Indian	U.S. Fields	Canada	Totals
Adult Baptism .....	3	45	1	78
Infant Baptism .....	91	193	21	305
Confession of Faith .....	16	144	10	170
Reaffirmation of Faith ..	8	70	1	79

V. EVANGELISM DEPARTMENT

A. *Evangelism Thrust:*

1. In 1969 synod voted to participate in "Key '73," which is an alliance of denominations and religious groups dedicated to the goal of "confronting every person in North America with the Gospel of Jesus Christ." Participants in "Key '73" now number 104. The Christian Reformed participation is known as *Evangelism Thrust*.

2. The Evangelism Thrust strategy is being field tested in Classis Rocky Mountain and in eight core city Grand Rapids churches. Materials for the field test have been prepared, have been used and subsequently revised, and are now being readied for use throughout the denomination.

3. It is interesting to note that these materials, including the basic book, *Who In The World*, have found a wide and appreciative audience outside the Christian Reformed Church as well as within the denomination.

B. *Volunteer Program:*

The requests for Summer Workshop In Ministry teams has risen sharply. At the same time the number of seminarians available to serve as assistant field leaders has dropped to a new low. Pre-SWIM orientation has been refined to make the SWIM venture more effective in its supportive place in the mission of the church. SWIM manuals have been published and revised to aid the SWIMers and the field leaders. More than 30 Teacher Volunteers have served on the various fields as assistant field leaders. An effort is being made to recruit more teachers this year because of the shortage of seminarians. Volunteer laborers have again contributed valuable talents and time to the work of missions in Hawaii, Rehoboth, Zuni and other places.

During the past year 18 Long Term Volunteers have served in various parts of the United States and Canada.



### C. *Campus Ministry:*

#### 1. Campus Ministries directly under the board:

Rev. C. Bajema, University of Colorado and Colorado State  
 Rev. D. Bos, Purdue University  
 Rev. J. Chen, University of Iowa  
 Rev. M. Greidanus, University of Toronto and McMasters University  
 Rev. H. Post, Kent State University (Inter-Varsity)  
 Rev. H. Pott, U.C.L.A., Los Angeles (Inter-Varsity)  
 Rev. R. Van Harn, Ohio State University  
 Rev. J. Schuring, University of Minnesota  
 Rev. J. Van Til, University of Western Ontario  
 Rev. R. Westenbroek, University of Wisconsin

#### 2. Campus Ministries under grant-in-aid from the board:

Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa  
 Ferris State College, Big Rapids, Michigan  
 Michigan State University, Lansing, Michigan  
 Central Michigan University, Mt. Pleasant, Michigan  
 South Dakota State University, Vermillion, South Dakota  
 Western Washington State University, Bellingham, Washington

#### 3. Intern on campus:

Mr. William De Vries, Detroit, Michigan (Inter-Varsity)

#### 4. Campus Ministry Assistance Grants (Program):

Ames, Iowa	Iowa City, Iowa
Big Rapids, Michigan	Lansing, Michigan
Boca Raton, Florida	Mt. Pleasant, Michigan

### D. *Grants-In-Aid:*

Oak Harbor, Washington .....	\$4,500	Vermillion, South Dakota .....	\$6,000
Rapid City, South Dakota .....	2,500	Toronto, Ontario .....	8,000
Paterson, New Jersey—		Washington, D.C. ....	7,000
Madison Ave. CRC. ....	7,000	Vancouver, B.C. ....	5,000
Ames, Iowa .....	3,000	Los Angeles, California—	
Eastern Ontario (Seaway) .....	3,500	First CRC - Staff ....	7,000
Cl. Cadillac—Mt. Pleasant .....	7,000	Denver, Colo.—First CRC—	
Lansing, Michigan .....	6,000	Indian Work ....	7,500
Denver, Colo.—Third CRC ....	7,400	Chicago, Ill.—Lawndale CRC ....	9,000
Oshawa, Ontario—Zion CRC		Cl. Hamilton—Campus .....	7,700
(YES) ....	5,500	Holland Marsh, Ont.—Spring-	
Bellingham, Washington .....	6,000	dale CRC (special category)	3,000
Paterson, New Jersey—		Visalia, California .....	2,500
Bethel CRC (1st man)	7,500		
(2nd man)	2,500		

## VI. FINANCE DEPARTMENT

The year 1971 can be classified as a "good" year in terms of denominational support of home missions. For this we feel a sense of deep gratitude to God—he has again abundantly provided for the needs of our program. We are thankful for the prayerful support given to home missions by our people.

### A. *General Information*

#### 1. Quotas

Income from quotas generally increased from 83.0% in 1970 to 83.7% in 1971. During 1971 the percent of quotas received from U.S. churches was the same as the 1970 figure of 95.8%, whereas the percent of quotas

received from Canadian churches increased 3.5%. The percent of quota received over the last seven years is as follows:

	Total	U.S.	Canada
1965	85.5%	97.3%	41.0%
1966	86.2%	97.8%	43.3%
1967	86.6%	97.8%	45.3%
1968	85.1%	97.4%	41.5%
1969	85.0%	97.1%	42.8%
1970	83.0%	95.8%	38.8%
1971	83.7%	95.8%	42.3%

2. Salary support:

Income from salary support continued to increase in 1971 as follows:

1965	\$210,154	1969	278,631
1966	228,719	1970	295,353
1967	261,299	1971	311,023
1968	256,633		

176 (25%) churches participated in the salary support program during 1971. Of this number, 170 were U.S. churches and six were Canadian churches. At the end of 1971 there were 70 home missionaries without any supporting church. Only two missionaries have their salary fully subscribed.

3. Above quota gifts:

Income from above quota sources reflected an overall increase during 1971 as follows:

	Total	General	Armed Forces
1965	\$145,628	\$131,073	\$14,555
1966	158,944	124,800	34,144
1967	249,592	157,575	92,017
1968	252,578	157,290	95,288
1969	251,349	173,187	78,162
1970	217,277	161,765	55,512
1971	218,811	173,568	45,243

An analysis of the number of churches taking offerings for above quota needs and the Armed Forces Funds discloses the following:

	Total		Above Quota		Armed Forces	
	1971	1970	1971	1970	1971	1970
U.S. Churches —						
Number	549	548	365	279	248	269
Percent	100%	100%	66%	51%	45%	49%
Canadian Churches —						
Number	152	148	42	30	3	2
Percent	100%	100%	27%	20%	2%	1%
Total of all Churches						
Number	701	696	407	309	251	271
Percent	100%	100%	58%	44%	36%	39%

It is evident from the above comparison that a decreasing number of churches feel constrained to support the Armed Forces Fund. Without a doubt the "wind-down" of U.S. involvement in Vietnam and the substantial decrease in the number of Christian servicemen are the principle reasons for this declining interest within the denomination. It may well

be that this will have an effect on our future program in ministering to servicemen.

#### 4. Building programs:

Activity on the field in building programs decreased during 1971 since the number of new fields has been sharply reduced. The following list reflects current building program activity.

##### *Fields with building programs completed*

Terre Haute, Indiana  
Fort Wayne, Indiana  
Syracuse, New York  
Farmington, Michigan

##### *Fields with building programs in progress*

Cedar Rapids, Iowa  
Flagstaff, Arizona  
New Glasgow, Nova Scotia  
Olympia, Washington  
Chicago, Illinois—Hyde Park  
Corvallis, Oregon

##### *Fields with site selection in progress*

Greeley, Colorado  
Windsor, Ontario  
Jacksonville, Florida

At the request of many missionaries, we are attempting to produce a "Handbook for Church Building Programs." We have gathered a great deal of material for this and are deeply interested in this project since we believe this is an area of real need in all our churches. We do receive many requests for assistance from non home mission churches. It appears that many of our churches are entering a stage where "rebuilding" has become necessary. We feel that we have developed a certain expertise in church building programs and financing and can be of service in this way.

#### B. Calling and/or Supporting Churches:

Ada, Michigan  
Akron, Ohio  
Alameda, California  
Alamosa, Colorado  
Albuquerque-Chelwood, New Mexico  
Allendale-I, Michigan  
Allendale-II, Michigan  
Anaheim, California  
Anaheim-Latin-American, California  
Anchorage-Trinity, Alaska  
Ann Arbor, Michigan  
Bakersfield, California  
Bauer, Michigan  
Bellflower-Bethany, California  
Beaverdam, Michigan  
Bellevue, Washington  
Borculo, Michigan  
Burnaby, British Columbia  
Byron Center-I, Michigan  
Byron Center-II, Michigan  
Byron Center-Heritage, Michigan

Champaign, Illinois  
Chicago-Roseland-III, Illinois  
Chula Vista, California  
Cincinnati-Parkview Heights, Ohio  
Cleveland-East Side, Ohio  
Cleveland-Maple Heights, Ohio  
Cochrane, Ontario  
Columbus-Olentangy, Ohio  
Comstock Park, Michigan  
Coopersville, Michigan  
Crookston, Minnesota  
Dayton-Kettering, Ohio  
Dearborn, Michigan  
De Motte, Indiana  
Denver-Fairview, Colorado  
Denver-Hillcrest, Colorado  
Denver-I, Colorado  
Denver-II, Colorado  
Denver-III, Colorado  
Denver-Ridgeview Hills, Colorado  
Denver-Trinity, Colorado

Detroit, Michigan  
Dispatch, Kansas  
Drenthe, Michigan  
East Martin, Michigan  
East Palmyra, New York  
Edgerton-Bethel, Minnesota  
Edgerton-I, Minnesota  
Escondido, California  
Everett, Washington  
Evergreen Park-I, Illinois  
Falmouth-Prosper, Michigan  
Farmington, New Mexico  
Fort Collins, Colorado  
Fort Lauderdale, Florida  
Fountain Valley, California  
Fredericton, New Brunswick  
Fremont-I, Michigan  
Fremont-II, Michigan  
Fresno, California  
Fulton-I, Illinois SS  
Fulton-Bethel, Illinois  
Gallup, New Mexico  
Graafschap, Michigan  
Grand Haven-II, Michigan  
Grand Rapids-Alger Park, Michigan  
Grand Rapids-Alpine Avenue, Michigan  
Grand Rapids-Beckwith Hills, Michigan  
Grand Rapids-Beverly, Michigan  
Grand Rapids-Brookside, Michigan  
Grand Rapids-Burton Heights, Michigan  
Grand Rapids-Calvin, Michigan  
Grand Rapids-East Paris, Michigan  
Grand Rapids-Faith, Michigan  
Grand Rapids-I, Michigan  
Grand Rapids-Fuller Avenue, Michigan  
Grand Rapids-Grace, Michigan  
Grand Rapids-Grandville Ave., Michigan  
Grand Rapids-Highland Hills, Michigan  
Grand Rapids-Kelloggsville, Michigan  
Grand Rapids-LaGrave Ave., Michigan  
Grand Rapids-Lee Street, Michigan  
Grand Rapids-Millbrook, Michigan  
Grand Rapids-Neland Avenue Michigan  
Grand Rapids-Oakdale, Michigan  
Grand Rapids-Plymouth Hgts., Michigan  
Grand Rapids-Seymour, Michigan  
Grand Rapids-Shawnee Park, Michigan  
Grand Rapids-Sherman Street, Michigan  
Grand Rapids-Westview, Michigan  
Grand Rapids-Woodlawn, Michigan  
Grandville-South Grandville, Michigan  
Goshen, Indiana  
Goshen, New York  
Hamilton, Michigan  
Hanford, California  
Harrison, South Dakota  
Hayward, California  
Highland-II, Indiana  
Hoboken, New Jersey  
Holland-Bethany, Michigan  
Holland-Central Avenue, Michigan  
Holland-Fourteenth Street, Michigan  
Holland-Harderwyk, Michigan  
Holland-Holland Heights, Michigan  
Holland-Maple Avenue, Michigan  
Holland-Maranatha, Michigan  
Holland-Montello Park, Michigan  
Holland-Ninth Street, Michigan  
Holland-Pine Creek, Michigan  
Holland-Prospect Park, Michigan  
Holland-Providence, Michigan  
Honolulu, Hawaii  
Hudsonville-Hillcrest, Michigan  
Hudsonville-Immanuel, Michigan  
Hudsonville-Messiah, Michigan  
Hull-I, Iowa  
Hull, North Dakota  
Imlay City, Michigan  
Inkster-Cherry Hill, Michigan  
Iowa City-Trinity, Iowa  
Jackson, Michigan  
Jamaica, New York  
Jamestown, Michigan  
Jenison-Baldwin, Michigan  
Jenison-Ridgewood, Michigan  
Jenison-Trinity, Michigan  
Jenison-Twelfth Avenue, Michigan  
Kalamazoo-Alamo Avenue, Michigan  
Kalamazoo-Faith, Michigan  
Kalamazoo-Grace, Michigan  
Kalamazoo-Milwood, Michigan  
Kalamazoo-II, Michigan  
Kalamazoo-Westwood, Michigan  
Kemptville, Ontario  
Lacombe-Bethel, Alberta  
Lafayette, Indiana  
Lake Worth, Florida  
Lansing-Bethel, Illinois  
Lansing-I, Illinois  
Lansing-Oak Glen, Illinois  
Leighton, Iowa  
Le Mars-Calvin, Iowa  
Leota, Minnesota  
Listowel, Ontario  
London-I, Ontario  
Los Angeles-I, California  
Luctor, Kansas  
Lynden-Bethel, Washington  
Lynden-II, Washington  
Lynden-III, Washington  
Madison, Wisconsin  
Manhattan-Bethel, Montana  
Mason City, Iowa  
Miami, Florida  
Midland Park-Irving Park, New Jersey  
Minneapolis-First, Minnesota  
Muskegon-Allen Avenue, Michigan  
Muskegon-Bethany, Michigan  
Muskegon-Calvin, Michigan  
Muskegon-First, Michigan  
New Brighton Faith, Minnesota  
New Era, Michigan  
Newton, Iowa  
New Westminster, British Columbia

Niekerk, Michigan	Seattle-Calvary, Washington
Noordeloos, Michigan	Sheboygan-Calvin, Wisconsin SS
Norfolk, Virginia	Sioux Center-Bethel, Iowa
North Blendon, Michigan	South Holland-Bethany, Illinois
Oakland, Michigan	South Holland-Cottage Grove, Illinois
Oak Park, Illinois	South Olive, Michigan
Ogden, Utah	South St. Paul-South Grove, Minnesota
Olympia, Washington	Spring Lake, Michigan
Orange City, Calvary, Iowa	St. Louis, Missouri
Orange City-I, Iowa	Sully, Iowa
Orland Park, Illinois	Sunnyside, Washington
Orlando, Florida	Sussex, New Jersey
Oskaloosa-I, Iowa	Toronto-I, Ontario
Overisel, Michigan	Truro, Nova Scotia
Palos Heights, Illinois	Tucson-Elim, Arizona
Paterson-I, New Jersey	Walnut Creek, California
Paterson-II, New Jersey	Wayne, New Jersey
Paterson-IV, New Jersey	Webster, New York
Pella-Calvary, Iowa	West Olive, Michigan
Pella-I, Iowa	West Sayville, New York
Pella-II, Iowa	Wheaton, Illinois
Penticton, British Columbia	Winnipeg, Transcona, Manitoba
Peoria, Iowa	Woden, Iowa
Phoenix-I, Arizona	Yakima, Washington
Phoenix-Orangewood, Arizona	Zeeland-Bethel, Michigan
Pinellas Park, Florida	Zeeland-I, Michigan
Portland-Calvin, Oregon	Zeeland-Haven, Michigan
Prairie City, Iowa	Zeeland-North Street, Michigan SS
Prince George, British Columbia	Zeeland-III, Michigan
Prospect Park, New Jersey	Zillah, Washington
Rehoboth, New Mexico	Zutphen, Michigan
Riverside, California	
Rochester, New York	<i>Classis:</i>
Rock Valley-Calvin, Iowa	California South
Rusk, Michigan	Central California
Salem, Oregon	Chatham
Salt Lake City, Immanuel, Utah	Minnesota North
San Francisco-Golden Gate, California	Rocky Mountain
San Jose, California	

### C. Report of the Auditors

We have examined the statements of fund balances of the Christian Reformed Board of Home Missions, Grand Rapids, Michigan, as of December 31, 1971, 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 statements of fund balances and statement of changes in fund equity present fairly the financial position of the Christian Reformed Board of Home Missions at December 31, 1971, 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

D. Financial Statements, 1971

CHRISTIAN REFORMED BOARD OF HOME MISSIONS

STATEMENT OF GENERAL FUND BALANCE

December 31, 1971

ASSETS

<u>CURRENT</u>			
Operating funds cash (Note A)	\$	407,338	
Designated funds cash (Note B)		333,000	
Prepaid expenses		5,001	
Marketable securities -- at cost		<u>2,822</u>	\$ 748,161
<u>REAL ESTATE AND NOTES RECEIVABLE</u>			
United States	\$4,266,474		
Canada	432,416		
Urban fields	<u>1,318,575</u>		6,017,465
<u>REAL ESTATE AND EQUIPMENT -- INDIAN FIELD</u>			
Land and buildings	\$2,018,172		
Furniture and equipment	87,593		
Trucks and automobiles	<u>79,761</u>		
	\$2,185,526		
Less allowance for depreciation	<u>786,025</u>		1,399,501
<u>OTHER ASSETS</u>			
Mortgages and contracts receivable	\$	128,590	
Furniture and fixtures -- Grand Rapids -- net		<u>5,879</u>	<u>134,469</u>
			<u>\$8,299,596</u>

LIABILITIES AND FUND EQUITY

<u>LIABILITIES</u>			
Notes and mortgages payable	\$	147,725	
Withheld taxes and other payables		<u>12,981</u>	\$ 160,706
<u>FUND EQUITY</u>			
Balance at end of year			<u>8,138,890</u>
			<u>\$8,299,596</u>

Note A -- By action of the Board of Home Missions, \$110,000 of the operating funds on hand at December 31, 1971 are to be used to provide the necessary funds for the 1972 synodically approved budget.

Note B -- At December 31, 1971, \$333,000 was committed and budgeted for additional capital expenditures but not spent at the end of the year.

STATEMENT OF RESTRICTED FUND BALANCES

December 31, 1971 and 1970

	Balance December 31, 1970	Additions	Deductions	Balance December 31, 1971
<u>ASSETS</u>				
Cash (Note C)	<u>\$427,304</u>	<u>\$298,278</u>	<u>\$192,597</u>	<u>\$532,985</u>
<u>FUND BALANCES (Note C)</u>				
Missionary training fund	\$143,033	\$ 11,722	\$ 1,070	\$153,685
Indian tuition assistance	30,526	2,059	2,963	29,622

## REPORTS OF BOARDS

	Balance December 31, 1970	Additions	Deductions	Balance December 31, 1971
Hoboken seamen's home	126	-0-	126	-0-
Cuban and Indian Children	4,276	-0-	3,618	658
Indian field expansion fund	214,608	28,245	8,278	234,575
Medical insurance fund	5,162	-0-	-0-	5,162
Jewish evangelism	9,450	-0-	-0-	9,450
Zuni fire	-0-	249,527	153,694	95,833
Other specified projects	18,123	4,725	22,848	-0-
Annuity fund	<u>2,000</u>	<u>2,000</u>	<u>-0-</u>	<u>4,000</u>
	<u>\$427,304</u>	<u>\$298,278</u>	<u>\$192,597</u>	<u>\$532,985</u>

Note C - The restricted funds represent amounts received for specific projects, the use of which is restricted either by synod or the donor.

## CHRISTIAN REFORMED BOARD OF HOME MISSIONS

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN GENERAL FUND EQUITY

Year ended December 31, 1971

BALANCE -- JANUARY 1, 1971		\$7,827,314
<b>ADDITIONS</b>		
Budgeted additions:		
Quota receipts	\$2,094,131	
Salary support	311,023	
Above quota gifts	218,811	
Indian field revenue	49,357	
Other income	<u>87,984</u>	
	\$2,761,306	
Other additions:		
Transfer from restricted funds	<u>175,360</u>	
TOTAL ADDITIONS		<u>2,936,666</u>
TOTAL AVAILABLE		\$10,763,980
<b>DEDUCTIONS</b>		
Budgeted expenses:		
Administration	\$ 237,105	
General home missions	52,232	
Evangelism	385,781	
Regular outreach	714,118	
Urban fields	300,615	
Indian field	<u>851,673</u>	
	\$2,541,524	
Other deductions:		
Loss on disposal of fixed assets	\$ 4,407	
Depreciation	<u>79,159</u>	
TOTAL DEDUCTIONS		<u>2,625,090</u>
BALANCE -- DECEMBER 31, 1971		<u>\$8,138,890</u>

E. Real Estate and Notes Receivable

CHRISTIAN REFORMED BOARD OF HOME MISSIONS

REAL ESTATE AND NOTES RECEIVABLE -- UNITED STATES

December 31, 1971

<u>CALLING CHURCHES</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Albuquerque, New Mexico	\$ 92,809.38
Anaheim, California	23,569.15
Bellingham, Washington	45,000.00
Chula Vista, California	50,000.00
Colorado Springs, Colorado	55,874.95
Columbus, Ohio	51,002.45
Des Moines, Iowa	509.56
Ft. Lauderdale, Florida	39,400.00
Franklin Lakes, New Jersey	33,150.00
Indianapolis, Indiana	33,616.17
Inkster, Michigan	35,000.00
Jackson, Michigan	41,062.18
Lake Worth, Florida	11,308.60
Lakewood City, California	30,986.90
Lemars, Iowa	2,250.00
Madison, Wisconsin	42,251.75
Matteson, Illinois	59,343.44
Miami, Florida	50,350.00
Milwaukee, Wisconsin	7,330.00
Minneapolis, Minnesota - First	10,613.22
Minneapolis, Minnesota - Calvary	50,000.00
Monsey, New York	8,625.00
Palo Alto, California	49,011.12
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	61,972.74
Pompton Plains, New Jersey	15,000.00
Portland, Oregon	51,000.00
Sacramento, California	47,500.00
St. Petersburg, Florida	55,400.00
Salt Lake City, Utah	44,058.41
San Jose, California	9,000.00
Scottsdale, Arizona	85,609.43
South Bend, Indiana	41,336.93
Tacoma, Washington	50,000.00
Toledo, Ohio	49,960.91
Tucson, Arizona	12,743.00
Visalia, California	55,000.00
Walnut Creek, California	39,940.76
Wanamassa, New Jersey	61,208.39
Washington, D.C.	20,560.00
Willmar, Minnesota	600.00
	<u>\$3,523,954.44</u>

TOTAL CALLING CHURCHES

REGULAR FIELDS

	<u>Balance</u>
Akron, Ohio	\$ 56,000.00
Anchorage, Alaska	115,585.01
Bakersfield, California	63,200.00
Bellevue, Washington	78,500.00
Binghamton, New York	60,000.00
Boca Raton, Florida	52,000.00
Boulder, Colorado	51,766.20
Cedar Rapids, Iowa	81,000.00
Champaign, Illinois	22,284.67



REAL ESTATE AND NOTES RECEIVABLE - UNITED STATES (continued)

December 31, 1971

<u>REGULAR FIELDS (continued)</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Chester, New Jersey	58,400.00
Corvallis, Oregon	1,250.00
Davenport, Iowa	63,728.00
Dayton, Ohio	50,000.00
East Grand Forks, Minnesota	30,000.00
East Islip, New York	51,005.30
East Tucson, Arizona	63,192.50
El Paso, Texas	50,000.00
Fairbanks, Alaska	136,791.38
Farmington, Michigan	61,046.00
Flagstaff, Arizona	73,500.00
Ft. Wayne, Indiana	69,000.00
Fresno, California	63,128.59
Garden Grove, California	89,000.00
Greeley, Colorado	10,000.00
Hartford, Connecticut	50,000.00
Hayward, California	50,000.00
Indian Harbor Beach, Florida	60,893.57
Iowa City, Iowa	50,000.00
Mason City, Iowa	55,276.00
New Brighton, Minnesota	50,000.00
Norfolk, Virginia	56,800.00
Ogden, Utah	48,964.76
Olympia, Washington	78,000.00
Orlando, Florida	58,154.55
Poughkeepsie, New York	50,000.00
Quincy, Washington	4,500.00
Riverside, California	50,000.00
St. Louis, Missouri	66,500.00
Salem, Oregon	50,000.00
South Grove, Minnesota	51,516.82
South Salt Lake City, Utah	50,000.00
Syracuse, New York	57,920.00
Terre Haute, Indiana	63,416.66
Tri Cities, Washington	50,000.00
Washington, Pennsylvania	58,000.00
Webster, New York	60,000.00
West Portland, Oregon	56,000.00
Yakima, Washington	66,200.00
TOTAL REGULAR FIELDS	<u>\$2,742,520.01</u>

SUMMARY OF REAL ESTATE AND NOTES RECEIVABLE - UNITED STATES

Calling churches	\$1,523,954.44
Regular fields	<u>2,742,520.01</u>
TOTAL	<u>\$4,266,474.45</u>

CHRISTIAN REFORMED BOARD OF HOME MISSIONS

REAL ESTATE AND NOTES RECEIVABLE - CANADA

December 31, 1971

<u>CALLING CHURCHES</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Aylmer, Ontario	\$ 699.96
Brockville, Ontario	6,438.85
Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island	50,000.00
Coburg, Ontario	7,947.50
Grand Prairie, Alberta	50,945.73
Halifax, Nova Scotia	50,000.00
High River, Alberta	10,000.00
Kemptville, Ontario	5,074.90
Stratford, Ontario	25,446.75
Truro, Nova Scotia	9,459.47
Vernon, British Columbia	<u>16,809.21</u>
TOTAL CALLING CHURCHES	<u>\$232,822.37</u>

<u>REGULAR FIELDS</u>	
Fredricton, New Brunswick	\$ 49,993.81
New Glasgow, Nova Scotia	64,900.00
Prince George, British Columbia	49,700.00
Windsor, Ontario	<u>35,000.00</u>
TOTAL REGULAR FIELDS	<u>\$199,593.81</u>

SUMMARY OF REAL ESTATE AND NOTES RECEIVABLE - CANADA

Calling churches	\$232,822.37
Regular fields	<u>199,593.81</u>
	<u>\$432,416.18</u>

<u>URBAN FIELDS</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Albuquerque, New Mexico - Indian	\$ 78,752.74
Chicago, Illinois - Chinese	53,779.25
Chicago, Illinois - Indian	20,000.00
Chicago, Illinois - Lawndale	75,000.00
Detroit, Michigan	86,872.33
Harlem, New York City	233,763.16
Honolulu, Hawaii	70,000.00
Los Angeles, California - Chinese	59,500.00
Los Angeles, California - Inner City	24,200.00
Los Angeles, California - Spanish	31,000.00
Miami, Florida - Spanish	188,291.38
Norfolk, Virginia	36,298.65
Queens, New York - Chinese	71,562.83
Salt Lake City, Utah - Indian	17,750.00
San Francisco, California - Indian	76,095.30
San Francisco, California - Chinese	67,459.20
San Francisco, California - Friendship House	<u>128,250.00</u>
	<u>\$1,318,574.84</u>

## F. Proposed Budget for 1973

The budget for 1973 is summarized below. A more detailed list of budget requests for 1973 will be submitted to synod's Finance Committee.

## 1973 Proposed Budget

## Estimated Receipts

Quota payments	\$ 2,111,500	
Salary support	335,000	
Above quota	275,000	
Indian field revenue	45,000	
Real estate repayments	90,000	
Other income	60,000	
From cash balance	<u>180,000</u>	
Total Estimated Receipts		<u>\$ 3,096,500</u>

## Budgeted Disbursements

Operating:		
Administration and promotion	\$ 278,800	
General Home Missions	53,700	
Evangelism	536,500	
Regular fields	836,200	
Urban fields	321,100	
Indian fields	<u>975,200</u>	
Total Operating		\$ 3,001,500
Real estate and capital:		
Indian fields	\$ 90,000	
Equipment	<u>5,000</u>	
Total real estate and capital		<u>95,000</u>
Total Budgeted Disbursements		<u>\$ 3,096,500</u>

## VII. MATTERS FOR SYNODICAL ACTION

A. The Board of Home Missions respectfully requests synod to grant the privilege of the floor to the board's president, the executive secretary, and treasurer when matters pertaining to home missions are discussed.

B. The board urgently requests synod to approve the Armed Forces Fund for one or more offerings from the churches.

C. The board urgently requests synod to place the Board of Home Missions on the list of denominational causes recommended for one or more offerings.

D. The board requests synod to approve the schedule of grants-in-aid for evangelism as presented in section V, D of this report.

E. Re relationship between the Luke Society and the Board of Home Missions, the following is submitted for consideration and action:

*Background:* In 1965 synod authorized transfer of the administration of Rehoboth Hospital to the Luke Society, Inc. (cf. Acts 1965, p. 34-36). It also specified, among other things, that the Board of Home Missions would be responsible for the spiritual care of the patients. In other words, the hospital was to be run by professional medical people, the spiritual care of patients to be provided by the Board of Home Missions until the hospital became self-sustaining, with such funds designated for care of indigent Indians, Rehoboth students and, for a time, the Board

of Home Missions personnel. These decisions were made, along with others, in the context of the tradition of Indian missions as then known.

Since that time many changes have taken place. The hospital ministry, with synodical endorsement, was broadened to include paying patients regardless of race, color or creed. A fine new hospital has been built about one mile west of the Rehoboth Campus. In addition to personnel employed directly by the Rehoboth Christian Hospital Association (a subsidiary of the Luke Society, Inc.), a contractual agreement has been made by the Luke Society with fine Christian doctors practicing in Gallup to serve the hospital. The hospital staff has been increased, numerous services are now available, and the institution continues to carry an excellent reputation in the community. In summary, Rehoboth Christian Hospital is no longer an Indian mission hospital serving primarily Indian people. Today, it has become an effective Christian "community" hospital serving many different people—non-Indian as well as Indian. At the same time, there has been a decrease—both numerically and percentage-wise—in the number of Indian patients admitted to the hospital. (E.g., in 1971 less than 25% of the patients admitted to the hospital were Indian.) Throughout this period the Board of Home Missions has provided for the spiritual care of patients through the Rehoboth pastor—initially the Rev. E. Cooke and currently the Rev. R. Veenstra. In addition, local missionaries/pastors are encouraged to visit their patients in the hospital.

The request from the Luke Society to the Board of Home Missions for a full-time chaplain at the hospital is of long standing. Discussion has been held with representatives of the Luke Society on various occasions. In summary, based on our observations as well as the information supplied to us by the Luke Society (statistical, job description, etc.), the Board of Home Missions is convinced that the spiritual care of patients at the Rehoboth Christian Hospital has been adequately provided for. We do not feel circumstances warrant the hiring of a full-time missionary for this ministry at the present time. The position of "chaplain" envisioned by the Luke Society is somewhat broader than that normally construed as a missionary at the hospital. In view of the foregoing, as per our agreement, we have agreed to bring this matter before synod.

#### *Recommendations:*

1. That the Board of Home Missions request "synod's approval to allow the Luke Society to seek the assistance and cooperation of the denominational Chaplain Committee in their effort to acquire a hospital chaplain. It is understood that this would entail a shift in responsibility for the spiritual care of patients from the Board of Home Missions to the Luke Society, Inc., the latter then working in harmony with the area classis as well with the Chaplain Committee." Until such a position is filled, the Board of Home Missions shall continue the present arrangement for spiritual care of the patients.

#### *Grounds:*

- a) The shift of responsibility for spiritual care of patients has been requested by the Luke Society (cf. LS letter of 1-14-72 containing the above quoted recommendation).

b) The job description of the proposed hospital chaplain is better evaluated by the denominational Chaplain Committee.

2. That the present arrangement between the Board of Home Missions and the Luke Society re "subsidy" for indigent patients be phased out by December 31, 1974, according to the following schedule: 1973—\$20,000; 1974—\$10,000.

*Ground:* As a synodically approved organization, the Luke Society can solicit financial support directly from the denomination for its total program—thus allowing our constituency to support such a ministry directly, rather than via the Board of Home Missions.

*F. Regarding Evangelism Thrust:*

1. The Board of Home Missions requests synod to emphasize a commitment to evangelism in the synodical prayer service and include prayers for Evangelism Thrust.

2. The board requests synod to designate Sunday, September 10, 1972, as Evangelism Thrust Sunday throughout the denomination and urge the churches to recommit themselves to evangelism by appropriate sermons and prayers.

3. Inasmuch as synod has encouraged every congregation to establish evangelism as a priority, the Board of Home Missions requests that synod set aside a time in which Evangelism Thrust progress can be reported to all of the delegates.

4. The board requests synod to urge every classis to conduct a workshop on Evangelism Thrust for pastors in connection with the fall classis meetings or soon thereafter. Note: The purpose of these seminars is to provide assistance in pastoral preparation for leadership in Evangelism Thrust and help in establishing goals for the project.

G. The Board of Home Missions requests synod to require that all classical delegates to the Board of Home Missions ordinarily be members of the classical home mission committees.

H. Regarding the training of home missionaries (cf. Overture, Classis Quinte, Acts 1970, p. 115, Art. 162, II), the board reports progress but due to the difficulty of the assignment and the illness of the executive secretary, the study is not yet completed. We beg permission of synod to report on this matter in 1973.

I. The board requests synod to approve the budget for 1973 and the quota request of \$41.10 for 1973 (no increase over 1972).

Respectfully submitted,

Marvin C. Baarman, Executive Secretary

REPORT 5

CHRISTIAN REFORMED BOARD OF PUBLICATIONS

DEAR BROTHERS:

The Christian Reformed Board of Publications submits the following report to synod for consideration. Some items are presented as information while others will require synodical action.

The board operates under the mandate of synod which authorizes it to supervise and implement the church's program of religious education and publication. It has now completed its third year of operation since synod consolidated the work of the former Education, Sunday School and Publications Committees under one denominational board. During the past year the board and its committees have sought to carry on the work assigned by synod and to discharge the responsibilities entrusted to the board by synod. We now wish to report our activities of the past year and present our plans for the future.

I. ORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD

A. *Membership*

The membership of the board is composed of one delegate elected by each classis of the denomination. The annual meeting of the board was held February 22-24, at which all the classes were represented except Classis Quinte. The current roster of delegates and alternates is herewith presented for the approval of synod

Classis	Member	Alternate
Alberta North.....	Rev. Jack Westerhof.....	Rev. John Vriend
Alberta South.....	Rev. Peter Van Tuinen.....	Rev. M. Lise
British Columbia.....	Mr. Syrt Wolters.....	Mr. G. W. J. Ensing
Cadillac.....	Rev. Fred Van Dyk.....	Rev. Stanley Bultman
California South.....	Rev. Clarence Nyenhuis.....	Rev. Robert Evenhuis
Central California.....	Rev. James Versluys.....	Mr. Kune Maliepaard
Chatham.....	Rev. Klaas Hart.....	Mr. J. Vander Heyde
Chicago North.....	Mrs. E. Van Reken.....	Mr. George Mulder
Chicago South.....	Dr. Alexander C. De Jong.....	Rev. Richard Hartwell
Columbia.....	Rev. Harry H. Boer.....	Rev. Francis Breisch
Eastern Canada.....	Rev. Dirk J. Hart.....	Mr. Reinder J. Klein
Florida.....	Mr. Kenneth Tanis.....	Mr. Roger Sikkenga
Grand Rapids East.....	Rev. Clarence Boomsma.....	Rev. James Kok
Grand Rapids North.....	Mr. John Brondsema.....	Mr. Richard Hoekstra
Grand Rapids South.....	Rev. William Buursma.....	Rev. H. Bossenbroek
Grandville.....	Rev. Willard Van Antwerpen.....	Rev. L. Bossenbroek
Hackensack.....	Miss Dorothy Kelder.....	Miss Wilma Knoll
Hamilton.....	Rev. William Vander Beek.....	Rev. D. C. Los
Holland.....	Mr. Raymond Holwerda.....	Mr. Don Zwier
Hudson.....	Dr. Roger Van Heyningen.....	Mr. A. Frieling
Huron.....	Rev. Gerard Nonnekes.....	Mr. H. Bouwers
Illiana.....	Rev. John Piersma.....	
Kalamazoo.....	Rev. John A. Mulder.....	Dr. Sidney Dykstra
Lake Erie.....	Rev. Donald Postema.....	Mrs. Lois Faram

Minnesota North.....	Rev. Simon Viss.....	Rev. John O. Schuring
Minnesota South.....	Rev. Peter Brouwer.....	Rev. Henry Entingh
Muskegon.....	Rev. Tymen E. Hofman.....	Rev. John A. Pott
Northcentral Iowa.....	Mr. A. Cooper.....	Mr. C. Den Ouden
Orange City.....	Mr. George De Vries, Jr.....	Mr. Jack Werkema
Pacific Northwest.....	Rev. Jerome Batts.....	Rev. Bartel-Huizenga
Pella.....	Rev. G. Vander Plaats.....	Mr. C. Hein
Quinte*.....	Rev. Riemer Praamsma.....	Mr. Walter Vos
Rocky Mountain.....	Dr. Richard Post.....	Rev. Gary De Velder
Sioux Center.....	Rev. Leonard Van Drunen.....	Dr. James Veltkamp
Toronto.....	Dr. H. Hart.....	Rev. L. Tamminga
Wisconsin.....	Mr. Arthur Meeter.....	Rev. E. Vanden Einde
Zeeland.....	Rev. Arthur Besteman.....	Rev. Enno Haan**

\*Classis Quinte was not represented to the annual board meeting.

\*\*Rev. Haan served at the annual board meeting because of Rev. Besteman's illness.

The board elects its officers annually, and this year the following were chosen to serve:

President: Rev. Clarence Boomsma  
 Vice President: Mr. Raymond Holwerda  
 Secretary: Rev. John A. Mulder  
 Treasurer: Mr. John Brondsema

The officers and five additional board members constitute the Executive Committee.

The board appointed the following to serve:

Rev. William Buursma  
 Rev. Tymen E. Hofman  
 Rev. Donald Postema  
 Rev. William Vander Beek  
 Mrs. E. Van Reken

The Executive Committee meets on the first Thursday of the month, after the sessions of the Education Committee, Periodicals Committee and Business Committee have been completed earlier in the day. The subcommittees of each regular committee meet as the work load requires so that the assignment of the board can be carried out as expeditiously as possible. The recommendations of each subcommittee are submitted to the regular committee under which it serves. These regular committees in turn submit their recommendations and decisions to the Executive Committee for either approval or as information, as the case may require. The Education Committee, Periodicals Committee and Business Committee each appoint their own subcommittees, but synod approves the membership of the regular committees.

The Education Committee consists of the following members:

Dr. Gordon J. Spykman, chairman (1970-73)  
 Dr. J. Marion Snapper, vice chairman (1971-74)  
 Rev. John A. Mulder, secretary (Executive Committee member)  
 Rev. Tymen E. Hofman (Executive Committee member)  
 Rev. William Vander Beek (Executive Committee member)  
 Mr. Herman Baker, Business Committee representative (1970-73)  
 Mr. Bernard Scholten, Business Committee representative (1970-72)  
 Dr. Arnold De Graaff (1970-73)  
 Rev. Earl Schipper (1970-72)  
 Mr. Marion Vos (1970-72)  
 Dr. Gordon Werkema (1971-74)  
 Mr. Peter Vander Kamp (1970-73)

Since the terms of appointment for Mr. Bernard Scholten, Mr. Marion Vos and Rev. Earl Schipper expire this year, the board requests synod to make the following reappointments:

Mr. Bernard Scholten for a period of 3 years  
 Mr. Marion Vos for a period of 3 years  
 Rev. Earl Schipper for a period of 1 year

The following subcommittees, (appointed annually at the first regular meeting of the Education Committee after the annual meeting of the board) have served the Education Committee the past year:

*Catechism Committee*

Dr. Gordon Spykman, chairman	Mr. Hero Bratt
Rev. Tymen Hofman, reporter	Dr. Anthony Hoekema
Dr. Arnold H. De Graaff	Rev. William Vander Beek
Rev. Milton Doornbos	

*Sunday School Committee*

Mr. Marion Vos, chairman	Mr. Frank Deppe
Rev. John Mulder, reporter	Dr. Marion Snapper
Rev. John Bergsma	Miss Dorothy Westra
Rev. Paul Brink	

*Adult Education Committee*

Mr. John Knight, chairman	Rev. Earl Schipper
Dr. Louis Vos, secretary	Dr. Paul G. Schrottenboer
Mr. James P. Hoekenga	Rev. Jacob Uitvlugt
Dr. Dennis Hoekstra	

*Youth Evangelism Committee*

Mr. Peter Vander Kamp, chm.	Mrs. Jacob Huizinga
Miss Jo Last, secretary	Dr. Donald Oppewal
Miss Johanna Boomsma	Rev. Earl Schipper
Mr. Barry Foster	

*Spanish Literature Committee*

Dr. Gordon Werkema, chairman	Rev. Juan S. Boonstra
Mr. Herman Baker, reporter	Rev. Carlos Cortina
Mr. Stephen Bellin	

*Personnel Committee*

Mr. Marion Vos, chairman	Dr. Gordon J. Spykman
Dr. J. Marion Snapper	

The Periodical Committee takes care of all matters pertaining to the publication of the denominational periodicals, the Psalter Hymnal, The Yearbook (in consultation with the Synodical Interim Committee through the office of the Stated Clerk who serves the Periodicals Committee in the determination of editorial policy) and related matters. The members who have served on the Periodicals Committee this past year are:

Rev. William Buursma, chairman (Executive Committee member)  
 Dr. Alexander C. De Jong, vice-chairman (Executive Committee member)  
 Rev. John Medendorp, secretary (Executive Committee member)  
 Dr. Andrew Bandstra (theologian)  
 Dr. E. William Oldenberg (journalist)  
 Mr. Joseph T. Daverman (businessman)  
 Mr. C. M. Wondergem, Jr. (businessman)

Dr. A. C. De Jong has asked to be relieved of his assignment on this committee as well as being designated as Executive Committee member. Rev. John Medendorp has become the pastor of the Princeton Christian



Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, and has moved from Classis Grandville to Classis Grand Rapids East. Therefore he is no longer able to serve on the Executive Committee and the Periodicals Committee. The terms of Mr. Daverman and Dr. Bandstra expire this year. Therefore the board requests synod to make the following reappointments:

Dr. Andrew Bandstra for a period of 3 years.

Mr. Joseph T. Daverman for a period of 3 years.

The Executive Committee will make recommendations to synod in a supplementary report concerning the nominations to fill the two vacancies noted above.

The Business Committee meets monthly to consider and act on the reports and requests of the Education Committee and the Periodicals Committee as these come to its attention through the representatives of these committees who are also members of the Business Committee. The Business Committee acts on all matters relating to the business functions of the board, making its report and the necessary recommendations to the Executive Committee. The members of the Business Committee are:

Mr. Joseph T. Daverman, chairman (Periodical Committee representative)

Mr. Gordon Quist, vice-chairman (Member at large—1970-72)

Mr. Raymond Holwerda, secretary (Executive Committee member)

Mr. John Brondsema, treasurer (Executive Committee member)

Mr. Herman Baker (Education Committee representative)

Mr. Bernard Scholten (Education Committee representative)

Mr. Casey Wondergem, Jr. (Periodicals Committee representative)

Mr. John Hekman (Member at large—1971-74)

Since the term of Mr. Gordon Quist expires at this time, the board recommends his reappointment for a period of three years.

The following subcommittees, appointed annually at the first regular meeting of the Business Committee after the annual meeting of the board, have served the Business Committee the past year:

*Advertising Committee*

Mr. John Hekman, chairman

Mr. Casey Wondergem, Jr.

*Building and Grounds Committee*

Mr. Joseph T. Daverman, chairman

Mr. Raymond Holwerda

*Finance Committee*

Mr. Gordon Quist, chairman

Mr. John Brondsema

Mr. Joseph T. Daverman

Mr. Bernard Scholten

*Personnel Committee*

Mr. Raymond Holwerda, chairman

Mr. Joseph T. Daverman

Mr. Gordon Quist

Mr. Peter Meeuwssen, Business Manager, is advisory member of all committees.

**B. Summary of appointments requiring synodical approval:**

1. The classical delegates and alternates.

2. Education Committee members:

Mr. Bernard Scholten for a term of 3 years

Mr. Marion Vos for a term of 3 years

Rev. Earl Schipper for a term of 1 year

3. Periodicals Committee members:
  - Dr. Andrew Bandstra for a term of 3 years
  - Mr. Joseph T. Daverman for a term of 3 years
4. Business Committee member:
  - Mr. Gordon Quis† for a term of 3 years

### C. *Request for Restructuring the Present Organization*

In 1968 synod consolidated the former Publication Committee and Education Committee under a new Board of Publications, composed of elected delegates from each of the classes. The Board of Publications was to elect an Executive Committee to function on behalf of the board between sessions of the board. The responsibilities of the board were to be carried out by three committees: an Education Committee, a Periodicals Committee, and a Business Committee.

A standing committee of the Executive Committee was appointed early to observe the functioning of the new organization and draw up an order for the proper functioning of the committees in their relationships and responsibilities. It was deemed wise, however, to allow the organization to function within the general guidelines adopted by synod for a period of time in order to observe the efficiency and effectiveness of the present structure.

In the judgment of the Executive Committee some changes ought to be made for increased efficiency, avoiding some of the delays and duplications that are inherent in the present structure. After a discussion of several recommendations made by the ad hoc committee, the board adopted the following motion:

“A motion is made that the Board of Publications request synod for permission to realign the structure and duties of its working committees.

#### *Grounds:*

a) The Synod of 1968 gave such specific details of the composition and duties of the Education Committee, Periodicals Committee and Business Committee that we do not have authority to make changes in this structure.

b) The board feels that the mandate which synod has given can better be achieved by a reconstruction.

c) Denominational boards are best able to determine the method by which they can function most efficiently.

d) The specifics of the restructuring of the committees will be available for synod if synod desires to go into the matter more fully.”

Art. 72-A42 of board minutes

## II. FINANCIAL REPORT

The board has adopted a fiscal year of September 1 to August 31 rather than following the calendar year. This is more adaptable to the entire program of the board and facilitates budgeting for the following year. The board presents the following information to synod as prepared by our auditor. A detailed account of all transactions is available to the budget committees of synod.

October 12, 1971

To the Board of Publications of  
the Christian Reformed Church,  
Grand Rapids, Michigan.

We have examined the balance sheet of the Board of Publications of the Christian Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan as of August 31, 1971 and the related statements of income and contributed capital 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 statements of income and contributed capital present fairly the financial position of the Board of Publications of the Christian Reformed Church at August 31, 1971, 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 period.

Pruis, Carter, Hamilton & Dieterman  
Certified Public Accountants

BALANCE SHEET  
BOARD OF PUBLICATIONS OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH  
GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN  
August 31, 1971

ASSETS

Current			
Cash	\$	8,442	
Certificates of deposit		180,000	
Accounts receivable		112,649	
Land contract receivable (Note A)		12,777	
Accrued interest receivable		3,699	
Inventories		118,957	
Prepaid expenses		<u>25,632</u>	\$ 462,156
Other			
Land contract receivable (Note A)	\$	54,723	
Rental property - net		7,159	
Inventory - supplies		<u>8,408</u>	70,290
Property, plant and equipment (at cost)			
Land, building and improvements (Note B)	\$	843,684	
Machinery, office furniture and fixtures and automotive		<u>408,865</u>	
		\$1,252,549	
Less - allowance for depreciation		<u>388,520</u>	<u>864,029</u>
			<u>\$1,396,475</u>

LIABILITIES

Current			
Mortgage payable (Note B)	\$	40,000	
Accounts payable		10,945	
Accrued expenses		<u>10,795</u>	\$ 61,740
Deferred income			186,313
Reserve for future repairs			2,409

EQUITY

From operations			
Balance - September 1, 1970	\$	740,477	
Net income for the year ended August 31, 1971		<u>7,927</u>	
	\$	748,404	
Contributed			
Balance - August 31, 1971		<u>397,609</u>	<u>1,146,013</u>
			<u>\$1,396,475</u>

NOTES TO BALANCE SHEET  
BOARD OF PUBLICATIONS OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH  
August 31, 1971

NOTE A - During the current year, a portion of the land was sold for \$75,000. The land contract, with an unpaid balance of \$67,500 at August 31, 1971, requires quarterly payments of \$3,500 including interest at 6%. The contract may be paid in full anytime after two years but must be paid in full within five years.

NOTE B - The land and buildings are subject to a real estate mortgage having an unpaid balance of \$40,000 at August 31, 1971. The mortgage is payable in quarterly installments of \$10,000 plus interest at 5 1/2%. The Synod of the Christian Reformed Church has approved a denominational family quota of \$1 for the years 1966 through 1972. From 1966 through August 31, 1971, \$272,578 has been received from the Synodical Treasurer.

NOTE - Effective January 1, 1971, the funding of the employees' pension plan was changed to the Retirement Plan for the Unordained Workers of the Christian Reformed Church.

STATEMENT OF CONTRIBUTED CAPITAL  
BOARD OF PUBLICATIONS OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH  
August 31, 1971

Building				
Balance - September 1, 1970		\$ 93,092		
Loss - depreciation on portion of the original building		<u>2,608</u>		\$ 90,484
Building addition				
Balance - September 1, 1970		\$153,294		
Synodical quotas received	\$ 52,499			
Less:				
Depreciation on building addition and improvements	\$ 7,803			
Interest	3,754			
Other expenses	<u>71</u>	<u>11,628</u>	<u>40,871</u>	194,165
Other				
Excess of assets over liabilities assumed in the merger of the Committee on Education of the Christian Reformed Church		\$112,856		
Synodical quotas received		<u>104</u>		<u>112,960</u>
				<u>\$397,609</u>

STATEMENT OF INCOME  
BOARD OF PUBLICATIONS OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH  
Year ended August 31, 1971

Income				
Subscriptions and sales				\$856,063
Costs				
Material		\$323,113		
Direct labor and artist		104,778		
Manufacturing expenses		116,242		
Writers		20,420		
Mailing expenses		69,775		
Other		<u>4,742</u>		<u>639,070</u>
Gross margin				\$216,993
General and administrative				
Direct (clerical-editorial-managerial)		\$160,022		
Indirect (depreciation-insurance-office supplies-postage, etc.)		<u>58,430</u>		<u>218,452</u>
Operating income (loss)				(\$ 1,459)
Other income				<u>9,386</u>
Net income				<u>\$ 7,927</u>

Currently we are mailing approximately 44,500 copies of *The Banner* each week to readers in the United States, Canada and around the world. Complimentary copies are furnished to the student dormitories of Calvin, Dordt and Trinity Colleges and the Reformed Bible College during the academic year. A number of copies are also being sent to libraries of seminaries that have indicated interest; six copies are presented for the use of Calvin Seminary students as well.

The Every-Family Plan for *The Banner* was first offered to our churches in 1969. There are now 101 congregations participating in the plan, totaling 6,178 subscribers. Churches are encouraged to consider this possibility for the future.

### III. MATTERS RELATING TO PERIODICALS AND PUBLICATIONS

#### A. *The Yearbook*

In 1971 synod declared that *The Yearbook* is the responsibility of the Synodical Interim Committee and the denominational Stated Clerk. The Synodical Interim Committee informed the Board of Publications that it had taken the following action:

"S.I.C.M. 12—The committee takes note of the fact that the Synodical Interim Committee has been designated by synod to be responsible for *The Yearbook* as well as for the Agenda and Acts. The Synodical Interim Committee recognizes the interest of the denomination in the publication and the responsibility to exercise surveillance over our denominational statistics. The Synodical Interim Committee takes note of the fact that the work has been done in excellent fashion for many years by the Publication Committee and the staff of our publication office, and that the staff compiling these statistics ought to be supported by the proceeds of the sale of *The Yearbook*. It is decided, therefore, to request the Publications Committee to continue its function in the publication and distribution of *The Yearbook*, maintaining liaison with the Synodical Interim Committee through the office of the Stated Clerk who will serve the Publications Committee in the determination of editorial policy.

This is now the arrangement under which *The Yearbook* is being published.

#### B. *De Wachter*

Rev. William Haverkamp continues to serve as the editor of our Holland language denominational paper, and is making an outstanding contribution to the life of the church through his work in this area. However, the publication of *De Wachter* continues to result in a deficit for the board. In 1971 there were 2700 subscribers; as of January 1, 1972, the number had decreased to 2,650. In 1947 there were 5,400 subscriptions, and the deficit for that year was \$3,182.42. With the steady decline in circulation and the rising costs in an inflated economy, the deficit in 1971 amounted to \$12,642.00. From 1947 through 1971 the total loss amounted to \$261,114.50. In view of this fact, the board recommended in 1971 "that synod authorize the board to make preparations to phase out the production of *De Wachter* so that its publication will terminate at the time when Rev. Haverkamp's present term expires." After some debate on the floor of synod in which some very fine things were said about the editorial work of Rev. Haverkamp and other contributors and

the role De Wachter was still playing in the life of the church, synod voted down the proposal. Now the board requests synod, in view of the continuing financial loss entailed in the publication of De Wachter and the inability of the board to continue to sustain this loss, that if synod is still of the same mind as last year, a quota of 25¢ per family be granted De Wachter.

### *C. The Banner*

Dr. De Koster has functioned as the editor of *The Banner* since October of 1970. Many expressions of appreciation for his work have been received. With the change of editorship a slight dip in circulation was noted, but now the total number of subscribers is again increasing, and at Jan. 1 stood at 43,350. *The Banner* was awarded first place in the denominational category by the Evangelical Press Association, for which fact Dr. De Koster and his staff deserve commendation. Favorable response was also accorded the photo contest, in which more than 400 persons participated. This project also elicited a good reader reaction.

Dr. De Koster is ably assisted by his staff and Mr. Peter Meeuwssen, our business manager, in the production of *The Banner*. He has a full time editorial assistant in the person of Miss Gertrude Haan, while Mr. Wayne De Jonge serves as the staff artist. Through their combined efforts *The Banner* continues to function as intended, and makes a valuable contribution to denominational life.

### *D. The Editor of The Banner*

The editor functions under a set of rules that were approved by synod a number of years ago. Since then some changes have been made, and at its annual meeting the board approved a revised and updated version of the rules regulating the office of the editor. Since no basic changes have been made, we are simply calling this to the attention of synod, indicating that if synod desires to go into this matter in detail, a copy of the revised rules is available.

According to the rules of appointment set by synod, Dr. De Koster's present term as editor of *The Banner* expires this year. Therefore the board recommends that synod reappoint Dr. De Koster for a period of 4 years.

## IV. MATTERS PERTAINING TO THE EDUCATION STAFF AND MATERIALS

### *A. The Director of Education*

Rev. William Vander Haak has served as Director of Education since 1962, first for the Education Committee as then constituted by synod, with the title of Education Secretary. When synod consolidated the Education Committee and Publication Committee under one board, he was appointed as Director of Education. Last year synod appointed a Theological Editor and Pedagogical Editor to serve on the Education Staff together with an editorial assistant with journalistic competence. The staff was to work under the supervision and authority of the Director of Education. In view of the need of developing the Unified Church School Curriculum as authorized by synod the board was pleased to have a full staff working together competently and harmoniously. The Rev.

Andrew Kuyvenhoven serves as theological editor, Mr. Robert Rozema as pedagogical editor and Mrs. Ruth Vander Hart as editorial assistant.

However, after Rev. Vander Haak was convinced of the competence of the staff to carry on the work, he decided that this was an opportune time to return to his first love, the parish ministry. He indicated that for personal reasons as well as reasons connected with his work as Director of Education he desired to make himself available for a call. It was with regret that the Executive Committee acquiesced in his decision when he announced he had accepted the call to become pastor of the Prospect Park Christian Reformed Church of Holland, Michigan. The denomination owes Rev. Vander Haak a debt of gratitude for the nine years he devoted to the task of education in the church and for the catechism books that were produced under his direction and editorship.

Faced with the vacancy in the office of Director of Education, the board approved the following plans as presented by the Education Committee:

- a) That the Rev. Andrew Kuyvenhoven be appointed acting director until September 1, 1973.
- b) That the Rev. Mr. Kuyvenhoven retain the position of theological editor, with the prerogative of shifting to other staff members tasks and duties which might make it impossible for him to function effectively as theological editor.
- c) That beginning immediately, assessment be made of the kind of function(s) needed to complement and/or restructure the responsibilities of the staff in addition to the proposed full-time artist.
- d) That in case urgent need would demand the appointment of an assistant to the staff before February, 1973, the Executive Committee be authorized to make such an interim appointment.

The Rev. Andrew Kuyvenhoven has consented to serve under this arrangement.

### *B. The Unified Church School Curriculum*

In 1970 the Board of Publications submitted to synod a document entitled TOWARD A UNIFIED CHURCH SCHOOL CURRICULUM (cf. Acts of Synod, 1970, Supplement 13, p. 206). The board further reported that "upon the approval of the above Revelational Directives, Educational Principles and Curriculum Guidelines, the Education Committee and its subcommittees will proceed to plan the curriculum in detail, setting forth at each level the aims and objectives of each unit, materials to be studied, lesson outlines, suggested teaching procedures, and so on, that will seek to do justice to all the principles stated above. In the event synod approves the document TOWARD A UNIFIED CHURCH SCHOOL CURRICULUM, the board has instructed the Education Committee to give serious consideration as to how such a program of education can be implemented by working on a basic curriculum to present to the next annual meeting of the board. The adoption of a unified curriculum will require extensive revision of much of the educational materials now being produced by the Education Committee and new materials will have to be written. However, the Education Committee is confident that the education program within the church can be improved through this approach." (idem. p. 211)

Synod approved the document TOWARD A UNIFIED CHURCH SCHOOL CURRICULUM as a working document for the development

of a Unified Church School Curriculum with a few minor amendments that have been incorporated into the revised directives under which the educational staff proceeded with its task. The board at its annual meeting this year received additional curriculum guidelines, a statement of objectives and a suggested curriculum plan. The board approved these as presented by the Education Committee, with the added stipulation that the curriculum plan be approved subject to whatever revisions will have to be made by the staff as it seeks to work out the plan, these changes to be made effective through the channels of the Education and Executive Committees. The board now presents these additional guidelines and the suggested curriculum plan to synod for approval.

### ADDITIONAL CURRICULUM GUIDELINES

(Now presented to the board for approval)

In response to the Revelational Directives and as an outcome and embodiment of the Educational Principles previously articulated in the document "Toward a Unified Church School Curriculum," the following "Additional Curriculum Guidelines" are presented:

#### I. THE FOUR MAIN ELEMENTS OF CURRICULUM

Curriculum is here defined as that planned program of instruction designed to achieve the educational objectives of the church. It includes four main elements:

##### A. *Concept(s)*

This term refers to the formative idea(s) based on the Word of God which constitute(s) the substance of the lesson. In some cases the concept can be stated in the words of a specific Bible text; in other cases a summary statement could be used.

##### B. *Content*

This term refers to the material which is used to develop the concept and to achieve the objectives of the lesson.

1. Every lesson shall include content from the Scriptures. The textual source of the stories and/or directives shall be indicated.

2. The appropriateness of content from Scriptures shall be determined with a view to:

- a. the objectives for which the content is to be used;
- b. the inherent purpose of the scriptural passage;
- c. the developmental level of the learner.

3. Any lesson may include content from creation and history for the purpose of explanation and/or application, provided such content supports the biblical teaching.

4. The complete list of content shall demonstrate that the curriculum covers the areas specified in the document previously approved by synod ("Toward a Unified Church School Curriculum," III, E.F.).

##### C. *Process*

By process we understand the activities of the learner by which the objectives are achieved.



1. Process is subject to the revelational directives: it takes place in an atmosphere of openness, is characterized by Christian qualities of justice, love, patience and respect.

2. The process must demonstrate sensitivity to the world of the learner and the way learning takes place.

3. Process ordinarily includes dialogue, that is, a series of interpersonal exchanges on different levels: teacher—learner, or learner—teacher, as well as learner—learner. The dialogic process must give recognition to the fact that each learner is a unique individual:

a. in how he perceives the Word; his own experience colors the initial meaning of the Word received;

b. in how he applies the Word; his unique life situation, personality, social relationships, calling, etc.

4. Process must be learner-centered and objective-centered. The main question in planning and executing the teacher-learning process is: What activity (listen, imagine, infer, draw, memorize, role-play, etc.) must the learner engage in so that the objective of the lesson will be realized in his life? The role of the teacher depends on the answer to this main question.

5. In process planning the best knowledge available from the sciences must be utilized. Since much of the teaching which takes place in the church-school, is concept-teaching, we might borrow such useful models as *Woodruff's* model for teaching a concept or *Dale's* hourglass model for teaching a concept. According to a typical pattern, adapted from Woodruff, the teaching-learning process goes through four steps:

a. "Show" To insure that the concept is meaningfully related to the child's life, the referents must be as concrete as possible. E.g.

"Shepherd"—an actual shepherd—best

—picture or ikonic representation—next best

—word pictures—acceptable only if the words have active referents in the learner's experience—poorest.

b. "Discuss" To clarify, organize, make inferences, etc., from the "show." Involves dialogue, discussion, to make sure that there is understanding.

c. "Summarize" To pull together, reinforce, focus, etc.

d. "Apply" (Very close to, if not always identical with objectives.) What does the learner do with what he has learned? It may not be narrowly prescriptive, but does ask for some kind of response: recite, sing, do, feel, say, express, etc.

6. Process must be adapted to the limitations of church-school education. This requires that we keep in mind:

a. Time limitations. The church-school class meets only once a week for less than fifty minutes.

b. Facilities, staff and equipment limitations. Several classes of the church-school will meet simultaneously in facilities of uneven quality. Therefore, expensive or uncommon equipment should not be required by the process. Neither should the process be such that the non-professional teacher, with the help of a manual, could not teach the lesson.

c. Influence limitations. The church program must recognize that other institutions, agencies, and persons have a greater influence on the learner. For example, the younger the learner, the greater the influence of the home; therefore the process must enlist the formative influence of the home. For adolescents the peer group becomes very influential. For adults the influence of the vocational group is a power with which one ought to reckon, etc.

7. Since the teacher is such a crucial factor in the process, all publications must be accompanied by adequate directions to the teacher, so that the intended process will occur. These directions may come in the form of a manual, but workshops should also be conducted for teachers who are to use the materials.

#### D. Objectives

These are the changes we wish to effect in the lives of the learners—changes in knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, values, behavior, etc.

1. In lesson planning objectives should specify as concretely as possible what change is sought in the lives of the learners.

2. The degree of concreteness is dependent on the nature of the objective. For example, a physical skill can be very narrowly specified. But a behavior resulting from the work of the Spirit through the Word in the life of an individual cannot be so narrowly defined. Nevertheless, illustrative behaviors can and should be stated (e.g. show love to mother by washing . . . or . . . or . . .).

3. Objectives for the church's educational program must be consistent with the biblical directives for faith-knowledge. A minimum requirement for insuring this is that every lesson or unit shall state objectives which include at least categories 1, 2 and 3 of Bloom's *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*. (See page 14.)

4. Unlike some other areas of education, all objectives are most significantly determined by the content. Ultimately the Scriptures determine the behavioral expressions of the life of faith.

5. The appropriateness of objectives is also determined by the nature of the learner and his level of development. The objective must always be one that can be realized in the life of the learner.

6. The objectives of lessons, units and courses must, each for its part, contribute to achieve the main objective of our total program: "The goal of the educational curriculum . . . is to impart to all who come under its nurture a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ . . ." ("Toward a Unified Church School Curriculum," III, A.).

## II. PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES FOR CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND PRODUCTION OF CURRICULUM MATERIALS

A. In view of the complexities of curriculum development, particularly the tentativeness of all specifics (of objectives, content, process) prior to the actual writing of the lessons; and in view of the inevitable delay caused by the fact that we have to work through committees that meet monthly, a board and a synod which meet annually; the following procedures will be followed:

1. Prior to engaging authors for the development of materials, the Board of Publications will give approval based on the following submissions by the staff and the Committee of Education:

- a. Titles and objectives for the quarterly units;
- b. A list of concepts which will be taught during the quarter;
- c. Representative samples of lesson prescriptions for each quarter.

2. Concurrent with the field-testing of materials, they will be submitted to the board for approval.

The (incomplete) curriculum plan which follows, is an exemplar of this procedure. It does not include all the details but is submitted as evidence that staff understands its guidelines and is competent to go ahead and develop materials.

B. Relationship between staff and author. The staff will clearly specify the objectives for all units and, wherever feasible, for all lessons that make up a unit. It is the author's responsibility to devise lessons to achieve the objectives. An author may refer an objective back to the staff on the ground that a lesson cannot be developed to achieve that particular objective in the lives of the learners for whom it is intended. Further discussion between author and staff may lead to revision or restatement of objectives and content for particular lessons. An author is not permitted to make such changes without concurrence of the staff.

### OBJECTIVES

<i>Categories of Objectives (Bloom)</i>	<i>Illustrations</i>
1. <i>Knowledge.</i> All that is required is to reproduce from memory. Facts, verses, etc. (define, describe, identify, label, list, match name, outline, reproduce, select, state.)	The learners will be able to . . . : Recite John 3:16 from memory. List in proper order the events of the six creation days. Match the disciples' names with . . . . Identify who said the following . . . .
2. <i>Comprehension.</i> Ability to grasp meaning; translating, interpreting, etc. (defend, distinguish, estimate, explain, give examples, paraphrase, predict, rewrite, summarize).	Tell theory of Joseph . . . in his own words . . . . Draw a picture showing the events of the six days . . . . Write a play for Joseph . . . sold into Egypt. State the text, using other words.
3. <i>Application.</i> Ability to use learned materials in new and concrete situations (compute, demonstrate, discover, predict, rewrite, produce, solve, use).	Share two things he plans to do in response to . . . . Find a text in the Bible, using the Concordance. Give two contemporary illustrations of . . . . Apply the meaning of a text to the following situation . . . . Produce biblical passages to answer . . . .
4. <i>Analysis.</i> Ability to break down, diagnose, (diagram, differentiate, discriminate, distinguish, relate, select, subdivide, infer, break down, separate).	Make correct inference from five biblical passages . . . . Outline Paul's arguments for . . . . Reconcile apparent conflicts between Paul . . . James . . . . Point out the mis-use made of text . . . .
5. <i>Synthesis.</i> Putting together into a new whole (classify, compose, create, devise, design, explain, modify, organize, write, reconstruct, rearrange).	Write a play which expresses the truth . . . . Develop a plan of getting neighborhood children to . . . .
6. <i>Evaluation.</i> Ability to judge events, things, using definite categories (appraise, compare, contrast, criticize, discriminate, justify, support).	Criticize doctrinal conclusion by analyzing the inferences drawn from . . . Using the biblical account, analyze the accuracy of the lyrics of "Jesus Christ Superstar."

YEAR ONE

YEAR TWO

	Fall Quarter	Winter Quarter	Spring Quarter	Summer Quarter	Fall Quarter	Winter Quarter	Spring Quarter	Summer Quarter
Primary Grades 1 & 2	My God and I	Jesus Our Savior	People Around Me	God's Great World	God Takes Care of Us	Who Is Jesus ?	Living With Jesus	When We Worship
Intermediate Grades 3 & 4	Period of Beginnings  (Old Testament)	Building A Nation  (Old Testament)	The Promised Land  (Old Testament)	Fall of the Nation  (Old Testament)	Jesus Came to do God's Will  (Gospels)	People Called Him Master  (Gospels)	Following a Faithful Savior  (Gospels)	Carrying on the Work of Jesus  (Acts)
Junior Grades 5 & 6	God's Revelation— The Bible	God's Revelation— Jesus Christ	The Holy Spirit in Your Life	Relationships	The Gospel According to John	The Great Conflict	Sharing in Christ's Victory	We and Our Church
Junior High Grades 7 & 8	God's Government	Prophecy	The Kingdom	Church History  (character studies)	Children of God	The Covenant	Discipleship	
Grades 9 & 10	Study of a Creed (Heidelberg Catechism)				Study of a Creed (continued)			
Grades 11 & 12	The Christian Life				Living Members			

If the plan is approved and the board and its Education Committee are authorized to proceed with the production of the new curriculum materials, it is estimated that funds in amount of \$200,000 will be required for research, development, production and implementation of the new educational materials.

As the staff proceeds with the production of presently approved materials and considers the plans for preparing and publishing new courses in the curriculum it has become very evident that the addition of a graphic artist to the staff is imperative. The Education Committee carefully weighed the presentation of the staff in its request for the appointment of a full-time graphic artist and recommended securing the services of a qualified person in this area on the following grounds:

- a) A comparison of our publications with those of most other publishers indicates that we are lacking in the quality of eye appeal of our productions.
- b) Present illustrations are added to the completed writing and as such are frequently not an integral nor significant part of the finished products.
- c) Frequently illustrations should be a part of the communication of material to further the learning process. This is especially true of youthful materials.
- d) Appropriate and good quality appearance enhances the appeal of the publication and not infrequently becomes a criterion for selecting materials.
- e) Present limited artist resources are inadequate for good quality illustration and impose an added burden on the editorial staff. It is projected that increased annual production of educational materials in all areas, and especially with the introduction of the Unified Church School Curriculum materials, the requirements for illustration and layout will far exceed present requirements.

Since an artist should be involved on all levels of planning a production in order that the best possible integrated product of highest quality may result, the presence of an artist on the staff who can be consulted at all times is imperative. Therefore the board approved appointing such a person.

Besides the artist a number of competent writers and resource people will have to be involved in the production of the new curriculum. Since finances derived from the sale of educational materials are inadequate to cover the initial expenditure in the production of the new curriculum series and these funds are not available until well after the work has been produced, the Board of Publications is requesting synod to grant a quota of \$2 per family per year for 1973 and 1974 in order that funds may be made available for the necessary research, the development and production of the materials, the subsidizing of writers' conferences that will have to be held, and the many incidental costs that will be involved in the implementation of the new curriculum plan.

### C. *Catechism Materials*

Following the field test of the 11th grade catechism course, "The Christian Life," a writers conference was held to review the reactions received. The writers then revised their materials and the course was printed up in booklets covering each of the units. The decision to print this material in separate units rather than a single volume stemmed from the inability of the writer assigned to Unit V to complete his work. In addition to this, the booklets lend themselves to the exercise

of options by the teacher in the event that he chooses to deal with certain units in depth with the possible exclusion of part of the course. Booklets also lend themselves to dealing with certain subjects in a retreat setting.

With the approval of the Education and Executive Committees, Dr. Gordon Spykman has now been assigned to write Unit V on Society, Justice, and Government.

The 12th grade catechism course entitled "Living Members" is presently being field tested. This is a pastoral type of course which permits the teacher to deal honestly with the problems and concerns of young people and their relationship with the church.

The major part of the material consists of an extensive teachers manual. A student manual has been produced in which the area for discussion has been stated and questions for study and discussion have been added. The field-test has run hard on the heels of the writer, Rev. Tymen Hofman. The first 13 lessons were mailed out last fall. The rest of the course, except the last two lessons not yet written, was mailed out at the beginning of the year. Reaction and appraisal sheets for each lesson have been provided for the field-test teachers. After these have been returned, the Catechism Committee will be able to determine whether or not revisions are necessary. We hope to have this course available for general use next fall.

Presently a survey is being conducted to study the acceptability and effectiveness of the course "Never On Your Own." Some reports have been received indicating the possible need for improving the two student manuals. When the survey has been completed the Catechism Committee will assess the need for change or possible alternative materials for this course.

We have had a request from our mission staff in Japan seeking permission for the Reformed Church of Japan to translate and print our catechism materials. Their request stated in a letter sent by Rev. Harvey A. Smit, Corresponding Secretary, includes the following: "The General Assembly Committee has approached our mission to ask assistance in the publication of their first two volumes ("Teach Me Thy Way" and "With All My Heart"), and we have decided to go ahead with the publication of "Teach Me Thy Way" and hope to follow it soon with the other volumes; at least over the next years as money comes back in from sales.

"The Christian Reformed Japan Mission is taking responsibility for the publication and financing it, and after reasonable returns to the Christian firm that will be doing the publishing and distribution for their time and efforts and publicity, the returns will accrue to the Christian Reformed Japan Mission. We have good prospects of breaking even on the first 3,000 copies printed."

The Education and Executive Committees have approved this request with the understanding that arrangements will be made to properly safeguard our copyright. We are grateful for this opportunity to assist in the teaching of the Word in Japan.

#### *D. Sunday School Materials*

Graded Sunday school material was introduced to our churches in September. This was true for all departments except that primary (grades 1 and 2) and intermediate (grades 3 and 4) used the lesson plan presented last year for the intermediate department. This is a Bible story lesson plan following the chronology of the Bible—Old Testament the first year and New Testament the second year. This has been a reprint from former years with some condensing of the Sunday school "Key" as the teacher's manual and continuing the "Bible Stories" and "Bible Light" as weekly papers. It was impossible to initiate the primary plan approved at the last board meeting (after extensive discussion) due to the limitation of time. It was also considered advisable to restudy the plan in the light of the board's discussion. A revised schedule of lessons is being presented under the new curriculum plan. If this plan is approved, the new primary materials (teacher's manual and student material) should be available by fall.

The intermediate Sunday school materials will be produced for next fall following the Unified Church School Plan pending the board's approval of this plan.

New materials for the junior department (grades 5 and 5) were introduced in September following the plan approved by the board last year. This material consists of a quarterly teachers' manual and also a quarterly student manual. This new material is a step toward the Unified Church School Plan, and in a sense, a field-test for the final junior curriculum material under the Unified Church School plan. A survey will be conducted this spring to study the effectiveness of this material after the churches have had sufficient time to use the new quarterlies.

With board and synod approval, Great Commission materials were introduced at the junior high and senior high levels in September. You will recall that this was approved for a one-year trial period. A survey was mailed out in December to churches using the material, requesting a return in January. It was realized that this survey would suffer from the limited time the churches have had to use the new quarterlies. However, some response was considered necessary before the board meeting in order to advise whether or not we should continue this co-operative venture. At the time of the writing of this report several returns have been received, but the survey is not complete. The evidence of the returns thus far indicates a good reception by churches using the material. At the present time it seems warranted to request the extension of the trial period for one year. Continuing the arrangement with the Great Commission Publications will give another year of time for the possible introduction of the junior high materials under the Unified Church School Plan, which the staff would be hard pressed to initiate next September. Therefore the board recommends the use of Great Commission Publications for an additional year.

#### *E. Spanish Educational Material*

Mrs. Ann Schlink has been working diligently in bringing the vacation Bible school materials to completion. Three courses (for three

years) on three department levels are in the final stages of completion. The first course was marketed this past year and was enthusiastically received although sales were limited due to a lack of time for extensive promotion.

Mrs. Schlink has also completed translation of the catechism course "Teach Me Thy Way" (5th grade materials). This work is presently awaiting publication.

The question of initiating the publication of Spanish Sunday school material at this time was discussed extensively by the committee. Our missionaries were once again surveyed for information regarding materials presently being used and the measure of urgency that exists for providing new and better materials. While the need continues, the committee discussed our ability to undertake the program at this time since it involves an extensive commitment.

It was decided not to proceed with a full Sunday school program at every level at the present time for the following reasons:

A. An analysis of the selling price of Sunday school materials produced by other publishers (very nominal) compared with a very high cost of producing our materials (based upon a cost estimate) indicates that a program such as this would have to be heavily subsidized by the church in order to compare favorably with the selling price of other publishers. Before we can justify, and be assured by the church of such financial backing, further exploration is required, i.e., possible interdenominational cooperation, reassessment of priorities in the total urgent need of Spanish educational materials, etc.

B. The committee must first study whether we have sufficient staff, competent through our present translator is, to undertake the total program.

C. A study must be made of possible channels through which new materials can be promoted and sold. We must be assured of sufficient market beyond mission areas served by our missionaries to warrant engaging in this program.

D. An analysis should be made as to the best means of having Spanish material printed.

Mrs. Schlink was able to attend a conference in Lima, Peru, on March 6, while enroute to Argentina where she spent her vacation. This conference involved representatives of Spanish denominations and missions allied with the Reformed Ecumenical Synod. While at the conference she planned to gather information concerning the greatest needs in Spanish educational work and seek added openings for promoting our materials. She was urged to analyze the need for educational materials for young adults and adults. The Education Committee is eager for her report and hopes to take action on the basis of her findings.

Synod has designated a quota of 75c per family in 1970 and 1971. In view of previous commitments and present work in progress, the board seeks synod's approval for continuing the quota of 75c for 1973.



### F. *Adult Education Materials*

The project approved by the last meeting of the board to cooperate with the Evangelism Thrust program of the Board of Home Missions was completed on schedule. The seven authors completed their assignments. However, it was the judgment of the Adult Education committee that the form in which the chapters were presented was not conducive to maintain the interest of discussion groups nor a stimulant to discussion. This was also the reaction of the consultants of Classis Rocky Mountain designated by home missions as the field-test area for the Thrust program. With the approval of the Education, Business, and Executive Committees, Dr. Marion Snapper was employed to rework the material into a different format, improve the pedagogical dimensions of the book, and address it more specifically to a discussion setting. This discussion manual, "Called To Serve," has been tested in the churches of Classis Rocky Mountain and some Grand Rapids churches. Reactions received indicate that the manual requires rework. Dr. Snapper has revised the book in the light of criticism and suggestions received. The scheduled date for the final publication of this project is June 1, 1972.

### V. THE DENOMINATIONAL BUILDING EXPANSION

The Synod of 1970 was alerted to the fact that requests were coming from several boards having offices in the Denominational Building for added office space. A Long Range Planning Committee was appointed to make a thorough study of present needs and a projection of future requirements. Since that time the committee has worked diligently in making and carrying out plans for remodeling to meet the most pressing needs of the moment and in contacting the various boards as to their future plans. The Long Range Planning Committee now indicates that the need for increased space in the Denominational Building is urgent and of great importance. Therefore the board requests synodical approval for permission to proceed with immediate expansion of the Denominational Building and that:

1. an architect be engaged and plans drafted.
2. the costs be liquidated through the continuation of the synodical quota of \$1.00 per family.

Since the committee is continuing work on this project, more information will probably be available at the time synod meets. Therefore the board hopes to be able to provide synod with as much information as possible in a supplementary report at that time.

### VI. THE MORRIS REPORT

Last year the board reported to synod that the Morris Business Engineering Services had been engaged to survey and analyze the procedures in the business office and plant. A number of recommendations had been made which at that time were under study by the Business Committee. The most far-reaching recommendation was reported to synod at that time which read: "We strongly recommend that the Board

of Publications phase out all press and bindery operations, farming out the work to commercial printing firms through competitive bids on a yearly contract for regularly published periodicals and magazines and on a job basis for all other publication jobs." The board empowered the Executive Committee in consultation with the Business Committee to exercise its judgment both in making the study and in the possible implementation of the recommendations of the Morris report to the extent deemed best for the interests of the Board of Publications and the denomination.

In carrying out this instruction of the board bids were obtained from six different companies while an analysis was being made of what the printing and binding were costing us in our own plant. The study revealed that our costs would be appreciably increased if we were to discontinue the press and bindery operations. In the light of this study Mr. Morris withdrew his recommendation. The committee also had the cost analysis studied by our accountant to ascertain its accuracy so that it could be determined that the comparison between our costs and the bids submitted were bona fide. On the basis of all the data received the Executive Committee decided to continue the printing and binding operations for the foreseeable future.

A number of other recommendations have been made for business and plant procedures which hopefully will result in improved efficiency and more economical operation. This matter is reported to synod as information.

#### VII. BOARD REPRESENTATION AT SYNOD

The board requests that synod permit the president of the board, the Rev. C. Boomsma, and the secretary, the Rev. J. A. Mulder, to represent the board in all matters pertaining to the board coming before synod; that the acting Director of Education, the Rev. A. Kuyvenhoven, be permitted to speak on all matters relating to education, and the Business Manager, Mr. P. Meeuwssen, in all matters pertaining to the business aspects of the board's operation.

#### VIII. SUMMARY OF MATTERS REQUIRING SYNODICAL ACTION

1. Approval of the membership of the board (I, A)
2. Approval of appointments to the Education Committee, Periodical Committee and Business Committee as recommended by the board (I, B)
3. Approval of the request for the restructuring of the present organization of the committees of the board (I, C)
4. Approval of a quota of 25c per family for subsidizing the continued publication of De Wachter (III, B)
5. Reappointment of Dr. Lester De Koster as editor of The Banner for a term of 4 years (III, D)
6. Approval of "Additional Guidelines" and the suggested curriculum plan of the "Unified Church School Curriculum" (IV, B)

7. Approval of a quota of \$2 per family for 1973 and 1974 for the necessary research, development and production of the education materials of the "Unified Church School Curriculum" (IV, B)

8. Approval of the continued use of Great Commission Publications for the junior and senior high Sunday school classes for an additional year (IV, D)

9. Approval of the continuation of the quota of 75c per family for the production of Spanish Literature (IV, E)

10. Approval of the immediate expansion of the Denominational Building (V)

11. Approval of the continuation of the Denominational Building Fund Addition Quota for 1973 (V)

12. Approval of board representation at synod (VII)

Respectfully submitted,

John A. Mulder, Secretary  
Board of Publications of the  
Christian Reformed Church, Inc.

**REPORT 6**  
**CHRISTIAN REFORMED WORLD RELIEF COMMITTEE**

DEAR BROTHERS:

**I. INTRODUCTION**

A review of each year points up a measure of similarities and differences with the preceding year. Occasionally a single year will bring out significant factors. This was such a year. It is our tenth report to synod. For this we express our profound thanks to our Lord and Savior and to his church whom we have diligently sought to serve by "giving a cup of cold water" in Christ's name.

The changing nature of our benevolent outreach is distinctly noticeable when one compares our first report of 1962 activities with those of a decade later. At that time our chief concerns were medical work in Korea and Cuban Refugee care in Miami, Florida. Today our medical involvement in Korea is confined to a very modest financial support of Christian Korean doctors. By the end of this year we contemplate no direct financial support of medical work. In the past decade additional outreaches in agriculture and child care work have been abundantly blessed by the Lord and now also give encouraging signs of being taken over by Christian groups.

In 1962 and for several years following an extensive outreach to the Cuban refugees was diligently provided. During the past year the Lord directed a series of events that led to what appears as of this writing a termination of the twice daily flights from Cuba to Miami. Such flights were bringing nearly 900 refugees each week. Obviously this has a bearing on the need for CRWRC in Miami.

In the meantime the Lord has opened doors of service in Mexico, Nigeria, Philippines, and in our own country. Such needs were met after and by continued close consultation with our boards of foreign and home missions as well as area diaconal conferences and local diaconates.

Most recently an area of need has been called to our attention by the Back to God Hour in their Arabic Radio outreach to a growing number of listeners in the Middle East. Many of their listeners are Palestinian refugees living in refugee camps in Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. Their daily lot is a trying one and their prospects are even more discouraging. Following a visit by CRWRC representatives to the area, meetings with the Back to God Hour have led to a plan for a Christian outreach to be submitted to this synod. Such a plan includes a medical outreach which was reviewed with the board of the Luke Society to learn of their interest and willingness to participate. Other matters relating to joint programming and a minimization of duplicate outreaches were reviewed with the Luke Society.

## II. ADMINISTRATION

Such an exciting and historic year required more than the customary share of board and committee meetings. The annual meeting of the entire board was held in Grand Rapids on February 15, 16 and 17, 1972. Diaconal representatives from all parts of Canada and the United States convened for a busy but rewarding meeting.

The following served on the CRWRC Board during 1971:

Classis	Delegate	Alternate
Alberta North.....	J. Vanden Born.....	H. De Bree
Alberta South.....	J. Kreeft.....	D. Vander Wekken
British Columbia.....	M. Blok.....	A. Breedveld
Cadillac.....	P. Schierbeek.....	J. Gernaat
California South.....	C. De Kruyf.....	B. De Young
Central California.....	D. Roubos.....	H. J. Veneman
Chatham.....	P. Berghuis.....	A. Bisschop Jr.
Chicago North.....	C. Taylor.....	H. Buurma
Chicago South.....	G. Jousma.....	F. Iwema
Columbia.....	J. Braaksma.....	H. E. Dykema
Eastern Canada.....	J. Snippe.....	H. Luimes
Florida.....	A. Gritter.....	R. Van Kley
Grand Rapids East.....	D. Bosscher.....	P. Brouwers
Grand Rapids North.....	K. Holtvluwer.....	P. Reiffer
Grand Rapids South.....	C. Rietberg DDS.....	J. F. Kuiper Jr.
Grandville.....	H. De Jong.....	F. Visser
Hackensack.....	R. Van Essendelft.....	
Hamilton.....	K. Mantel.....	P. De Vries
Holland.....	J. Vander Meulen.....	K. Beelen
Hudson.....	A. Malefyt.....	Dr. R. Rosendale
Huron.....	H. Exel.....	M. Dijkstra
Illiana.....	P. Groot.....	C. Boender
Kalamazoo.....	J. J. Vander Ploeg.....	H. Van Hamersveld
Lake Erie.....	C. J. Vrieland.....	P. Bouman
Minnesota North.....	H. Ahrenholz.....	D. Groen
Minnesota South.....	H. Schaap.....	H. Vander Bosch
Muskegon.....	L. Van Rees.....	C. Van Coevering
Northcentral Iowa.....	C. Henze.....	H. Eiten
Orange City.....	D.W. Van Gelder.....	F. Ten Napel
Pacific Northwest.....	J. Tjoelker.....	J. Van Ry
Pella.....	L. Nugteren.....	H. Nieuwsma
Quinte.....	W. Piersma.....	E. Rhebergen
Rocky Mountain.....	H. Hubers.....	J. Hanenburg
Sioux Center.....	L. Nyhof.....	Dr. W. Alberda
Toronto.....	W. Rekker.....	J. Gehrels
Wisconsin.....	W. Navis.....	H. De Vries
Zeeland.....	O. Aukeman.....	R. Kalmink

Members at Large	Delegate	Alternate
Medical.....	A. De Boer MD.....	J. Rienstra MD
Businessman.....	T. Prins.....	P. Kool
Sociologist.....	P. Van Heest.....	D. Hoekstra, Ph.D.
Attorney.....	H. Meyers Jr.....	D. Vander Ploeg
Accountant.....	C. Ackerman.....	D. Pruis
Minister.....	Rev. W. Van Dyk.....	Rev. J. Kok

Officers during 1971 were:

- J. Vander Ploeg—President
- P. Van Heest—Vice-President
- K. Holtvluwer—Secretary
- D. Bosscher—Treasurer

T. Prins—Asst. Secretary  
Rev. W. Van Dyk—Minister Boardmember

### III. DISASTER AND EMERGENCY OUTREACH

Within months after CRWRC's organization by the Synod of 1962, CRWRC was called on to meet the Guam Typhoon need which devastated the facilities of our Foreign Missions Book Store and office facilities. An urgent appeal for funds brought a generous outpouring by our people through diaconal offerings. Since that time disasters caused by a variety of natural disturbances, floods, tornadoes, and wars have been met in a prompt Christlike and orderly manner.

Each year has its disasters. They come without warning. CRWRC stands ready to assist in both small and major needs. When tragedies of a lesser nature strike CRWRC provides prompt help through cash grants from our \$50,000 Standing Disaster Fund. Blankets, clothing and other supplies if needed are promptly available from our Clothing Center in Chicago.

Two major needs confronted CRWRC during 1971, the Pakistan refugee emergency and the fire of the mission school and chapel in Zuni, New Mexico. Our people responded generously in meeting both needs. The Zuni fire was met through a cash grant to cover the difference between the rebuilding costs and amounts recovered through insurance. The new facilities were dedicated on March 25 with appropriate ceremonies of thanksgiving to the Lord and enthusiasm for new challenges in the years ahead. CRWRC's involvement amounted to \$89,827.

The Pakistan needs were tragic, complex, and of long duration. Christians from around the world responded to massive aid efforts. Actual involvement through field personnel was limited to relief agencies which had on-going programs in East Pakistan and India. CRWRC judged that our assistance could best be given through the Mennonite Central Committee and Church World Service. Both of these agencies provided us with regular and comprehensive reports that indicated greatest utilization of Christian personnel in helping the hard pressed refugees. We were assured of a sincere Christian spirit of giving in our Savior's name. Cash gifts of \$21,820 were made in 1971. An additional \$10,000 has already been provided in February of 1972. We continue to keep alerted to needs and will watch for further opportunities. More than 75,000 lbs. of clothing plus some 2,000 new blankets were shipped from our clothing center in Chicago. It is estimated that these shipments had a commercial value in excess of \$125,000.

The last weekend of February 1972 saw the bursting of the Buffalo Creek Dam in West Virginia. Needs were confined mainly to cash for assistance to bereaved and displaced families. As of the writing of this report CRWRC provided the Mennonite Central Committee with a \$2,000 cash grant from our Standing Disaster Fund.

1971 has once again demonstrated the unique role that CRWRC can serve as the agency for our denomination to meet unexpected tragedies in a responsible outreach of quiet compassion.

#### IV. PROGRAMMED CHRISTIAN BENEVOLENCE

Each year sees new challenges called to our attention. Increasingly needs are being highlighted by our mission programs and diaconal conferences. Some are extensions of work already begun while others represent new opportunities. Existing programs are evaluated regularly.

##### A. Korea

The trend toward an increased role by national Christians saw further progress this year. This was observed as an encouraging situation. Progress was noted in the increased roles of carrying on the day to day tasks, particularly in the medical and the in-country adoption work. It was not confined to this area only but was also evident in the strengthening of planning and administration of the total program.

A juridical body (Korean Non-Profit Corporation) was established a few years ago. Such an organization is allowed to own property and to conduct specified social and community improvement. Composition of the board is made up of a majority of nationals. We are grateful that the efforts of our dedicated western staff resulted in a truly Christian outreach of the quality and character that it not only won government respect but also the appreciation of eminently qualified professional national Christians. The result has been that the board includes in addition to two of our western staff members, Messrs. S. Byma and C. Vander Sloot, fine qualified Christian nationals. They are, Mr. Pak San Jin, long time CRWRC evangelist; Rev. Suk Jung Woon, who was trained at our Calvin Seminary and presently serves as Chaplain of Soong-jun College in Taejon, Professor Chu Myung Kwan who is principal of a girl's school and recognized as an outstanding Christian scholar; Dr. Lee Won Sul who is dean of the college of economics and political science at Kyung Hee University and Dr. Lee Myung Soo who has long been affiliated with our medical work and a leader in the Korean Christian Medical Evangelical Association.

The fact that nationals are willing to become associated with a western project is significant. It is even more significant that Christian nationals through their daily calling and through their planning and effort should make it their own. This gives a promising outlook for the future. There is assurance that the outreach to the needy will be carried out in a positive scriptural manner.

At the beginning of 1971 our western staff was comprised of:

Sydney Byma, MSW—Social Worker  
 Robert G. Faber—Agriculturist  
 Calvin D. Hekman, MSW—Social Worker  
 Date J. Mulder, M.D.—Physician  
 Elvinah Spoelstra, MSW—Social Worker  
 Charles Vander Sloot—Field Director

During the year progress in the medical and child care programs made it possible for Dr. Mulder, Mr. Hekman, Mr. dMiss Spoelstra to turn over their tasks to Korean Christian workers. It was a situation that evoked mingled feelings of gratitude and dismay. The board of CRWRC felt that it was the Lord's leading and blessing on the

work. The prayers for Korean Christian workers were being answered. It was with considerable reluctance that their terms of service were concluded.

Each one of them contributed significantly and uniquely, but most importantly by their dedicated selfless Christian character and talents. Dr. Mulder did much in instructing and encouraging Korean nurses and doctors to help their countrymen. Miss Spoelstra introduced a new and a Christian concept that abandoned and orphaned children are best cared for in a home and by Christian parents. Mr. Hekman won acceptance of Korean participation in a foster home program that is so essential to a sound adoption effort. All three of them have made lasting contributions to the Christian Adoption Program of Korea—CAPOK. Miss Spoelstra was singularly recognized and honored by the news media and was a guest of Mrs. Park, the wife of the President of Korea. We are sure they will treasure their memories of serving in the Lord's kingdom and we wish them the Lord's blessings as they pursue new endeavors of service.

The CAPOK program expanded its outreach to the city of Taegu—approximately 200 miles south of Seoul. Work is also growing at an encouraging rate. Mr. Syd Byma provides professional relinquishment counselling and instruction for both offices. This phase of the work represents a sound approach in responsible child care. It gives our staff early access to newly born children, thereby minimizing need for corrective health measurers and provides opportunities for positive Christian counselling of unwed mothers.

The increase of Korean Christians' involvement in the work has necessitated the introduction of a new discipline or approach in the work. Community and congregational willingness to "help your neighbor" is strange to our Korean friends. As they grow in grace and strength they have a deeper appreciation of utilizing—the opportunity to work that which is good to all men (Gal. 6:10). They need training and encouragement in developing the Christian grace of "helping" and "how to help."

To achieve this CRWRC is pleased with the acceptance of Mr. Kenneth Venhuizen, MSW, a graduate of Calvin College and the University of Washington, to serve as a Social Worker and Administrative Aide in Korea to stimulate and train the Christian staff and constituency toward a greater measure of self support. Through his efforts we hope and pray that our Korean Christian brethren may see their duty to pray for and to support programs of Christian benevolence in their communities and their country.

The agricultural outreach continues under the direction of Mr. Robert Faber. Indigenization is also the goal of the "self help loan" efforts in providing small crop and livestock loans to deserving farmers. Such help is granted along with sympathetic and sincere efforts in evangelism by members of the staff.

The evangelistic outreach is directed by Mr. Pak SanJin who has served our program during the past decade. We thank the Lord for his zeal and tireless efforts in reaching his people with God's Word and his



invaluable help in giving our staff people a sympathetic insight into the Korean mind and customs. He aptly describes his work in his annual report:

“Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice’ (Phil. 1:18). In bringing you this report of our evangelistic efforts during 1971, we rejoice that our Lord Jesus Christ has been presented as Savior to some 11,500 children and about 7,250 adults. At 122 meetings and gatherings in which I participated on behalf of CRKM, there was an average attendance of 154 persons per meeting. These people were shown gospel films, given or sold tracts, booklets and portions of the gospel and told about Christ.

“At the present time, we are also having the privilege of presenting the gospel to 1,300 soldiers who are guarding against night infiltrators from the North. Lt. Col. Kim of this battalion invited us to show his soldiers our Christian films. Several times he thanked us; and now among these soldiers, sixty are studying the Scriptures through correspondence courses. We thank God for the way he is using us.

“In ten villages we held our meetings in vacant lots. People in the rural areas are so interested in our films that they are willing to sit on the ground to watch—even if it is raining quite heavily. Last winter, on Kanghwa Island, 300 persons sat on the ground for over an hour to watch these films while the temperature was well below freezing.

“I believe this is the only way to get the gospel to the rural people. With film, we find we are able to get the attendance and then get Christian literature and the printed gospel into interested hands. However, in all this, the Holy Spirit must do the regenerating work, so we invite you to participate in this by regularly remembering the work in prayer.

“Christ is being exalted and souls are being saved.”

The work of coordinating and supervising program objectives along with integrating the efforts of the national staff continue to be effectively carried out by our field director, Mr. Charles Vander Sloot. A national staff of twelve trained social workers supported by several foster care workers, office personnel, drivers and an agricultural team comprises our national work force. Contacts with other Christian social agencies and many governmental offices are all a part of the necessary direction of a thriving program.

*CRWRC requests synod to continue the work as described above.*

*Grounds:*

1. The need continues for our involvement in a responsible program of phasing over the work and of its support.
2. The program is continually reassessed and evaluated to meet demonstrated needs.
3. There is evidence of substantial involvement on the part of Christians in Korea to continue the program.

**B. Mexico**

In response to a request from the missionaries and concurrence by the Board of Foreign Missions, CRWRC provided an instructor in

agriculture for the Mexico City Bible Institute and the John Calvin Seminary. Mr. Duane Bajema began this outreach in the fall of 1971. It was felt that training seminary and Bible institute students in basic agricultural concepts and methods was a responsible and worthy way to prepare them for meeting the total needs in parish evangelism. It is consistent with seeking an early and progressive measure of self-support by the rural Mexican communities.

The field training and self-help loan efforts of Mr. Calvin Lubbers in the Merida, Yucatan area, which were begun in 1969, have provided urgently needed help to many in the village served by our mission staff and the local Presbyterian pastors and evangelists. Much assistance has been provided in clearing unused land for increased corn planting. Improved seed, stock and effective use of fertilizers has neatly enhanced the farm production. Such expressions of Christian concern for the needy provides a tangible dimension to the sincerity and totality of the Christian message.

CRWRC has also been the beneficiary of a year of volunteer service provided by Mr. and Mrs. Allen Wassenaar of our Boulder, Colorado, Church. Mr. Wassenaar is a graduate engineer and his wife Carol is a dental hygienist. They are dividing their time between the Mexico City area and Merida in the Yucatan. Their contribution has been significant and has been well received by the missionaries and our Mexican friends. Our board and fellow staff members have deeply appreciated their help and companionship.

*CRWRC requests synod's approval for a continued outreach in Mexico.*

*Grounds:*

1. The work has proven helpful in the total mission outreach of our denomination.
2. A vast unmet need confronts our mission personnel.
3. The Mexico General Conference and Board of Foreign Missions endorse the outreach.

*C. Nigeria*

Last year's goals for involvement of Christian nationals in a promising agricultural program are beginning to be realized. Not only have competent national intermediate grade area leaders been added to the staff, but a large measure of "grass roots" planning and supervision has been emerging. The clear expression of a "felt need" by those whom we intend to help is a basic requirement in planning and implementing a successful outreach.

Under the recently adopted plan for field organization by the Board of Foreign Missions and General Conference, the flow of administration of the agricultural program begins with the "Agricultural Advisory Committee." This group consists of national pastors and deacons representing the five classes of the Benue churches and is chaired by a national ordained pastor. CRWRC and BFM personnel serve in an advisory and resource capacity. Findings of this committee are relayed to the Benue Liaison Committee which is composed of representatives of the BFM staff and nationals. Their recommendations are forwarded through the mission field secretary to the Board of Foreign

Missions and CRWRC. Close liaison and cooperation prevail on all levels.

Since 1969 Lou Haveman has provided excellent direction and counselling in CRWRC's agricultural outreach. The program emphasizes a "self-help loan program" and an extension outreach through the use of a growing number of agents who presently serve thirty or more communities by providing agricultural supplies and counselling at a modest cost.

The effectiveness of the approach is recognized by the Benue Liaison Committee who at their January meeting requested CRWRC to provide an additional expatriate agriculturalist. Both the Board of Foreign Missions and CRWRC concurred in the request at the February meetings. The size of the area served and the need for a more comprehensive outreach led to their approval. Agricultural aid has proven a most effective aid in the building of vigorous Christian communities and their ability to support a professional Christian witness through national pastors and Bible workers.

*CRWRC request synod's approval for continuation of the Nigerian Agricultural Program.*

*Grounds:*

1. There has been an encouraging response by the national Christian church to such a program for meeting a demonstrated need.
2. The Benue Liaison Committee, the Nigerian Field Administration and the Board of Foreign Missions have endorsed the program.

*D. The Philippines*

Increasing cooperation and integration of programs by the missionaries and CRWRC agriculturist, Fred Schuld, characterize an eventful year in the Philippines. The extent of spiritual and physical needs is only fully evident after a personal encounter with communities served by our denominational servants. Both our preaching and benevolence work bring encouraging responses.

Mr. Fred Schuld has completed his first full year of service in the planning and administration of direct aid, self-help loan projects and vocational training programs. The residents of the Negros Province are almost entirely dependent on the single crop of sugar cane for their livelihood. Such work is extremely seasonal and low paid. Remnants of land ownership by the rich and the few make for almost insurmountable obstacles in efforts by nationals to have their own farms.

Programming is aimed at supplementing income of hundreds of families through livestock projects, poultry flocks, organization of cooperative stores, sewing and tailoring classes, and cottage industry.

The Philippines Conference and the Board of Foreign Missions have requested CRWRC to provide a second expatriate to serve in a community development and social work outreach. The Mission Conference is presently defining the character of the task and the geographic area in which it can best be carried out.

*CRWRC requests that synod approve a continued outreach in the Philippines.*

*Grounds:*

1. There is a clearly demonstrated need.
2. The work has proven to be an effective supplement to a challenging missionary outreach to the total needs of the needy people in the Philippines.
3. The Philippine General Conference and the Board of Foreign Missions endorse the outreach.

*E. Cuban Refugee Aid**Grounds:*

This is an area in which change has taken place in a very substantial manner. At the beginning of the year refugee flights from Cuba were bringing 900 refugees to Miami each week. Many of these were making one or more visits to our Good Samaritan Center for emergency medical care, family and/or vocational counselling and were receiving varying amounts in emergency grants for rent, utilities, food and clothing. Resettlement of refugees was to California, Michigan, New Jersey and other areas and was taking place at a rate of two to four families per month.

This need was being taken care of by a busy and dedicated staff:

*Miami—Good Samaritan Center*

Carol Boersma, MSW—Social Worker (until May)  
 Sara Menchaca—Receptionist and Interviewer  
 Orphelina Ravelo—Secretary  
 Omelia Ruano—Medical Technologist  
 James Tuinstra, MSW—Director of Center  
 Geertje Turk—Social Worker  
 Dr. T. Vega—Physician

*Los Angeles Resettlement Work*

Donald Kuiper—Resettlement Aide

In August the first interruption of the twice daily flights took place. From then on flights were irregular and came less often. As of this writing only six flights were recorded so far this year. Prospects for resumption are uncertain and very unlikely. CRWRC like other agencies who were meeting these needs, promptly reassessed the propriety and stewardship aspects of continuing an outreach for a declining need.

In the meantime local agencies—both private and governmental—were beginning to assume a greater share of needs confronting the refugees. This along with the fact that the Cuban community was becoming more self reliant and able to help their own people led the board of CRWRC to confer with interested parties such as our Board of Home Missions, our English and Spanish speaking churches in Miami, the Florida Deacons Conference, the Florida Home Missions Committee and with each of the staff members at the center. It was clear to all that conditions did not warrant the continuation of the Good Samaritan Center. It was agreed that the need could continue to be

met by a referral center arrangement. Mrs. Sara Menchaca, our receptionist-interviewer with six years of experience at the center and a member of the Good Samaritan Christian Reformed Church, will be retained to work from an office in the Spanish speaking church at 4585 West Flagler Street in Miami. The work will continue as the responsibility of CRWRC with the advisory aid and consultation of the Miami deacons, Rev. Fred Diemer and Rev. Andrew Rienstra, pastors of our Miami churches. Such an arrangement recognizes the continuing existence of declining needs and will be evaluated periodically for an effective Christian outreach.

It is with mixed feelings that one observes such changes. A reasonable observation is that during the ten years of the center some 25,000 refugees have received Christ-like compassion at a time when it meant so much to them. The center has been a real factor in the growth of the Good Samaritan CRC (Spanish speaking) in Miami. Only the Lord knows how many cups of cold water were a small factor in leading those who received to the great blessing of drinking of the water that leads to a "well of water springing up to eternal life." (John 4:14)

We are pleased that satisfactory arrangements were concluded with present staff members to terminate their services at the end of April. Their diligent and faithful work will long be remembered. The Cuban refugees' need also brought a blessed opportunity to the deacons and members of more than 100 of our congregations who opened their hearts and doors in resettling nearly 400 families (more than 1,000 persons) during the decade of the 60's. Spanish speaking congregations flourish today in New Jersey; Holland and Grand Rapids, Michigan; Miami, Florida; and Los Angeles, California. Names such as Gonzales, Fernandez and Morales are interspersed with DeVries, Dykstra and Vander Molen. The experience has been a rewarding one to all who were privileged to take part. One of those helped has attained to ordination and has been a source of encouragement and spiritual enrichment to all who have come to know him. We refer to Rev. Carlos Cortina who ministers to the Spanish speaking worshippers in Grand Rapids.

The experiences of helping our Cuban brethren also provided blessed rewards in the form of productive mutual cooperation between CRWRC and the Board of Home Missions and deacons conferences throughout our denomination. It was truly a vindication of Paul's observation:

"In all things I gave you an example, that so laboring ye ought to help the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that he himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20:35)

#### *F. Domestic Needs*

In addition to meeting numerous emergency needs in the United States and Canada, CRWRC has been seeking to establish closer contacts with our deacons conferences and congregational diaconates by encouraging and supplementing their involvement in meeting local and area needs.

Progress was made in working out support to the Eastern Deacons Conference who addressed themselves to a drug rehabilitation program known as Northside Addicts Rehabilitation Center.

Involvement in programs being developed by the Grand Rapids Deacons Conference and the Montreal, Canada, deacons appears likely in 1972.

The possibility of an agricultural outreach to the Navajo Indians residing on the New Mexico reservation is being investigated.

To achieve maximum Diaconal Conference participation in an ever-growing number of community needs, CRWRC has appointed Mr. Cornelius Molenaar of our Olympia, Washington, Church to the position of Domestic Program Advisor. His training and experience qualify him for this new assignment. He served as corrections coordinator for the State of Washington for the past several years. He is expected to join our program during April and will be available to our Diaconal Conferences in a consultative capacity for studying areas of need and assisting in the programming of a diaconal outreach. We welcome him to our staff and are happy to make his services available to our deacons.

#### V. MATERIAL AID FACILITIES

Shipment of material goods to needy parts of the world requires much painstaking effort in getting them ready. The continued faithful work of our deacons in holding their annual clothing drives is an important first step. Nearly 100 tons of clothing were handled at our center in Chicago. Mr. Art Schaap, Manager, assisted by Mr. Neil Klemp on a part time basis utilizes the services of many volunteer workers from the Chicago area societies and young people's groups. A sincere word of thanks goes to them for their important role in making possible clothing and supplies to the needy.

Commercial firms also contributed shoes, clothing, medicines, seeds and a variety of sundry items. Much of this is the result of valuable contacts made and maintained by Mr. Richard Baukema, Coordinator of Business and Promotional Affairs. Such contacts require time and ingenuity but are extremely worthwhile in extending our range of help for those in need.

#### VI. ADMINISTRATION

Along with our sister denominational boards, CRWRC benefits from well maintained office facilities in our Denominational Building at 2850 Kalamazoo Ave. S.E. in Grand Rapids. Richard Baukema efficiently administers our business and promotional affairs. We maintain a fine movie and slide library. Requests for visual aids and program materials are promptly provided. Our secretarial staff makes a valuable contribution to our daily activities by its efficient services.

#### VII. FINANCES

The audited report for the year ending December 31, 1971, is submitted herewith

## CHRISTIAN REFORMED WORLD RELIEF COMMITTEE

STATEMENTS OF FUND BALANCE

December 31, 1971

GENERAL FUNDASSETS

Cash:			
Korean imprest fund	\$ 25,000.00		
Demand deposits	68,530.41		
Savings accounts	<u>90,477.88</u>		\$184,008.29
Marketable securities (Market value \$1,056.00)			<u>1,655.50</u>
			<u>\$185,663.79</u>

FUND EQUITY

Balance at December 31, 1971:			
General Fund		\$130,663.79	
Disaster Fund		<u>55,000.00</u>	
			<u>\$185,663.79</u>

FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT FUNDASSETS

Furniture and equipment - at cost		\$ 24,828.51	
Less allowance for depreciation		<u>9,658.94</u>	
			<u>\$ 15,169.57</u>

FUND EQUITY

Balance at December 31, 1971			<u>\$ 15,169.57</u>
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STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN FUND EQUITY

Year ended December 31, 1971

Balance, January 1, 1971:			
General Fund		\$ 98,315.71	
Disaster Fund		<u>25,000.00</u>	
Receipts:			\$123,315.71
Contributions:			
General	\$380,214.33		
Clothing centers	4,827.06		
Korean relief	128,284.95		
Cuban relief	8,110.45		
Nigeria	9,277.53		
Mexico	17,831.45		
Philippines	2,432.73		
Other countries	1,576.88		
Disasters	<u>191,699.53</u>		
		\$744,254.91	
Freight refunds		4,717.28	
Insurance refunds		3,115.10	
Interest and dividends		5,095.22	
Gain on sale of stock		<u>763.53</u>	
TOTAL RECEIPTS			757,946.04
TOTAL AVAILABLE			<u>\$881,261.75</u>

Disbursements:			
Program services:			
Korean relief - Seoul office		\$208,920.74	
Korean relief - Grand Rapids office		69,196.69	
Cuban relief		78,208.97	
Clothing processing		20,374.36	
Nigeria		18,572.71	
Mexico		63,036.51	
Philippines		23,712.75	
Emergency relief:			
Unusual benevolent aid	\$ 6,357.25		
Japan	17,152.00		
Other countries	2,155.00		
Zuni disaster	89,827.54		
Other disasters	<u>26,908.21</u>	142,400.00	
TOTAL PROGRAM SERVICES			\$624,422.73
Supporting services:			
Management and general	\$ 45,928.68		
Fund raising	<u>25,246.55</u>		
TOTAL SUPPORTING SERVICES		71,175.23	
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS			<u>695,597.96</u>
Balance, December 31, 1971:			
General Fund		\$130,663.79	
Disaster Fund		<u>55,000.00</u>	<u>\$185,663.79</u>

February 10, 1972

Christian Reformed World Relief Committee,  
Grand Rapids, Michigan

We have examined the statements of fund balance of the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee, Grand Rapids, Michigan, as of December 31, 1971, 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.

The information in the detail of disbursements related to the office in Seoul, Korea, was obtained from reports from the field, and we are unable to express an opinion on the financial information with respect to that office.

In our opinion, the accompanying statements of fund balance and statement of changes in fund equity present fairly the financial position of the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee at December 31, 1971, 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.

In addition to cash received and disbursed for relief programs during the year, the records of the committee indicate that 149,604 pounds of used clothing with an estimated value of \$224,406.00 was distributed during 1971, as well as \$169,947.00 worth of donated food, medicine, drugs, transportation and new clothing.

CRWRC had a good year. We are grateful to the Lord for the generous outpouring of gifts by our people. Our deacons were faithful in providing opportunities to contribute. Almost one-fourth of our congregations held four offerings or more for CRWRC during the year. The number of congregations holding three or more offerings during the year has increased to nearly half of the churches in the denomination. There



were 213 congregations that held only one or no offerings during the year. CRWRC still has as its goal 100% participation by all our congregations.

Expenditures were modestly higher than the prior year. Continued careful stewardship by our field personnel kept expenditures commensurate with needs that were carefully assessed with typical diaconal scrutiny.

### VIII. NEW AREAS OF CONCERN

Everyone is likely to agree that needs beckon us from almost every corner of the world. This was true in Christ's time. It is equally true today. Our constitution emphasizes the priority of working in areas where other denominational mission outreaches are active. CRWRC welcomes these opportunities to serve. In April of 1971 the Back to God Hour requested CRWRC to investigate the possibility of providing aid for the needy areas served by their Arabic and English broadcasts in the Palestine area.

After preliminary investigation a field trip by representatives of CRWRC disclosed both the seriousness of the need of more than one million Palestinian refugees in such areas as Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. It was judged that an effective Christian outreach could be instituted in the Amman, Jordan, area. The matter was extensively discussed at our annual meeting after which it was decided that CRWRC seek synod's approval for undertaking an aid program.

*CRWRC requests synod's approval for an aid program for Palestinian refugees to begin during the last half of 1972 on the east bank of the Jordan (an area extending east from the Jordan River to Amman, Jordan) for:*

A. Rebuilding of homes in the Karameh area through loans to refugees for materials at an approximate cost of \$10,000 during 1972.

B. Assisting in a medical outreach in the Amman-Karameh area through the recruitment of a western (expatriate) doctor or Christian national doctor and assist with procurement of medical supplies at an approximate cost of \$12,500 in 1972.

C. Rehabilitating one or more damaged school buildings in the Karameh area to make possible regular classes in areas that need school buildings at a cost not to exceed \$12,500 in 1972.

#### *Grounds:*

1. An outreach of mercy through CRWRC has been requested by the Back to God Hour.

2. There is a great need in this area for assistance in making it possible for refugees to return to the fertile and productive Jordan Valley.

3. Such an outreach is consistent with CRWRC's constitution (Arts. IV and V).

4. This is an area in which the Back to God Hour (Rev. B. Madany) concurs. There are possibilities of employing Christian refugees for work in these programs. The Back to God Hour has listeners in this area.

5. Self-help through loans and occupational training have proven effective means of rehabilitation in Korea, Mexico, Nigeria and the Philippines.

6. Such programs permit a high degree of person to person contact and provide many opportunities for Christian witnessing.

*CRWRC also requests* that such an outreach be implemented through the appointment of a western staff member at an early date to make contacts with governmental agencies, church groups—both western and national—to initiate the above programs and continue to investigate and develop a sound Christian outreach.

*Grounds:*

1. Effective supervision and responsible stewardship can best be exercised through a western staff person.

2. Appointment of a western staff member will permit study and refinement of program goals and implementation and permits careful recruitment and selection of Christian nationals for involvement in the program.

To prepare for such a possible outreach CRWRC—

A. Has requested Rev. B. Madany of the Back to God Hour to investigate on his planned April, 1972, trip various established church (denominational) groups and suggest to CRWRC those groups with whom we should seek closest affiliation and from whose fellowship we should seek Christian national staff people.

B. Has conferred with the Luke Society to ascertain their interest in recruiting a doctor and other possible interest in a medical program.

C. Has investigated sources of free medicines and medical supplies through existing contacts in making these available to established UNRWA medical clinics on the condition that overseas shipping can be obtained at no cost to CRWRC.

D. Has inquired from the National Union of Christian Schools as to their interest in an eventual participation of member Christian schools in soliciting funds for rebuilding bombed out schools for Palestinian refugee children.

E. Has shared our Field Trip Report with the Back to God Hour and the Board of Foreign Missions and requested them to confer with CRWRC on the matter of a maximum and effective program of Christian witnessing.

CRWRC will apprise synod of further pertinent matters as they develop.

IX. PROPOSED OUTREACH IN 1972

The board submits the following projection for program costs in 1972:

General Administration .....	\$ 74,255
Promotion .....	47,500
Clothing Center .....	22,270
Korea .....	249,815
Cuban Aid .....	35,725

Nigeria .....	38,185
Mexico .....	64,540
Philippines .....	46,340
Unusual Benevolent Needs .....	11,000
Domestic programs in cooperation with Diaconal Conferences .....	39,920
Palestine Refugees (pending approval of program) .....	35,000
	\$664,550

To achieve these amounts we will need an average contribution of \$10.00 per family by each of our congregations during the year.

*We request synod to:*

A. Commend the work of mercy to our churches and urge them to take offerings on a regular and sustained basis to provide the necessary funds for this ministry.

B. Continue CRWRC as the denominational benevolent cause for one or more offerings.

#### X. APPOINTMENT TO BOARD MEMBER-AT-LARGE POSITIONS:

Terms of the following expire:

Medical Delegate—Dr. A. De Boer (He has completed two terms and is not eligible for reappointment.)

Attorney Delegate—Mr. Hannes Meyers Jr. (He is eligible for reappointment to a second term.)

CRWRC will provide synod with nominations from which appointments can be made for the above positions.

#### XI. MATTERS REQUIRING SYNOD'S ATTENTION

##### A. *Representation at synod*

CRWRC requests that its President, Mr. Tunis Prins; Ministerial Board member, Rev. W. Van Dyk; and its Executive Director, Louis Van Ess, be granted the floor when matters pertaining to our work are discussed.

##### B. *Approval of Fields of Work*

1. Korea (IV-A)
2. Mexico (IV-B)
3. Nigeria (IV-C)
4. Philippines (IV-D)
5. Palestinian Refugee Aid (VIII)

##### C. *Approval of Offerings (IX)*

D. *Appointment to Board Positions* from nominees to be submitted. (X).

Respectfully submitted,

CHRISTIAN REFORMED WORLD RELIEF COMMITTEE  
Louis Van Ess, Executive Director

# REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

## REPORT 7

### BACK TO GOD TRACT COMMITTEE

DEAR BROTHERS:

The Back to God Tract Committee submits the following annual report to synod:

#### I. PERSONNEL AND ADMINISTRATION

A. Personnel: the Rev. Eugene Los, pres., Mr. Willis Timmer, vice-pres., Mr. Marvin De Boer, sec., Mr. Bruce Cheadle, treas., the Rev. William Masselink, Messrs. Peter Brink, Stuart Ellens, Willard Willink and the Rev. John Wieggers.

Two members, the Revs. G. Postma and I. Apol, left our committee during the year as they assumed pastorates in other areas. We hereby recognize their contribution, as both had served the committee for several years, and experienced members of a committee are always essential to a well functioning committee.

B. Administration: Our committee meets monthly at the denominational building. We are divided into three subcommittees which also meet prior to our full committee. The tracts are produced at the denominational building and the assistance given us by the staff at the denominational building is important to us. The printing, storage, and handling of tracts is taken care of by the staff.

#### II ACTIVITIES

##### A. Tracts distributed

A total of 1,064,782 tracts were distributed during the 1971 calendar year. If these 191,410 free tracts were given to various service agencies. The following organizations used these:

SWIM .....	66,745
Tract Teams .....	16,758
Chaplains .....	18,291
Wayside Chapels .....	35,306
Miscellaneous .....	54,310

A total of 873, 372 tracts were sold to different groups and individuals.

##### B. New Tracts

Several thousand cartoon posters were published and distributed to the youth groups of the Christian Reformed Churches and sev-

eral Reformed Churches. These posters were enthusiastically received at the Young People's Convention last August in Bozeman, Montana.

The following new tracts have been added to our inventory:

- No. 295 Where It's At
- 296 I Don't
- 297 Happy Talk
- 298 Drop Out
- 326 Some Kind of Radical
- 327 This Is a Drug Culture, Man
- 328 I'm So Hung Up
- 329 I Tried Drugs For Escape
- 350 On Ecology
- 351 God Loves to Have You Pray
- 352 Conquering Our Grief

#### C. Promotion

An article entitled "Cartoon Tract Story" was sent to 130 religious news editors listed under the Evangelical Press Association. It is evident that this story has been published since several requests for tracts have referred to the story. Several organizations both in the United States and in foreign countries have been given permission to reprint some of our materials.

### III. FINANCES:

A. The treasurer's report for 1971 is attached to this report.

B. Our committee is a non-profit organization. We receive help from churches and individuals and we thank them for this. Our tract outreach relies on these gifts, without this help this method of reaching unsaved souls would have to be dropped.

### IV. MATTERS REQUIRING SYNODICAL ACTION:

A. The committee requests synod to recommend the Back to God Tract program to our churches for one or more offerings.

B. Nominations: Three members are to be elected: one from each group.

#### Group I

- Mr. Willis Timmer (eligible for re-election)
- Mr. John Borst

#### Group II

- Mr. Willard Willink (eligible for re-election)
- Mr. Herb Kramer

#### Group III

- Rev. Eugene Los (eligible for re-election)
- Rev. H. Jongsma

Respectfully submitted,  
 Back To God Tract Committee  
 Marvin De Boer, Secretary

BACK TO GOD TRACT COMMITTEE

STATEMENT OF CASH RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

12 months ended Dec. 31, 1971

Balance, January 1, 1971	Last YTD	This Year
Receipts		
Contributions-churches	\$14,885.45	\$14,708.04
Contributions-others	571.00	193.88
Sales - tracts	8,612.73	7,338.62
Interest	498.67	359.38
	<u>\$24,567.85</u>	<u>\$22,599.92</u>
Disbursements		
Printing & Engraving	\$12,706.68	\$12,230.05
Clerical & Distribution	6,413.50	6,481.24
Postage	1,427.10	2,239.38
Advertising	2,159.44	3,490.37
Art Work	635.00	500.00
Honoraria	-----	350.00
Meals & Mileage	463.03	381.88
Tract Racks	375.00	375.00
Misc. Expense	169.30	200.25
Writing	175.00	357.00
	<u>\$24,524.05</u>	<u>\$26,605.17</u>
Total Receipts (opening plus receipts)		\$23,061.17
Less Disbursements		<u>26,605.17</u>
		<u>\$(3,544.00)</u>
Transferred from savings during year		<u>3,500.00</u>
		<u>\$ (44.00)</u>
Savings:		
Michigan National Bank-Golden Passbook	\$ 5,057.60	\$ 1,611.10
Michigan National Bank-Time Certificate	5,000.00	5,000.00
	<u>\$10,057.60</u>	<u>\$ 6,611.10</u>

Bruce Cheadle, treas.

**REPORT 8**  
**BIBLE TRANSLATION COMMITTEE**

DEAR BROTHERS:

In accord with the procedure approved by synod (*Acts*, 1971, p. 39), our review of *Today's English Version* was published in *De Wachter* (Aug. 17, 1971) and in *The Banner* (Nov. 26, Dec. 3, 1971).

During the past year we have been engaged in a review of *The Living Bible: Paraphrased*. We decided to devote a year to a review of this paraphrase, rather than to a more standard version, because *The Living Bible* (including the New Testament edition called *Reach Out*) is being used so widely, and often uncritically, by our people. Since part of our mandate is to "inform the churches concerning the quality of new translations" (*Acts*, 1969, p. 49) we thought it important that a review of this version not be delayed.

We intend to follow the procedure approved last year, and thus to submit a review of *The Living Bible: Paraphrased* for publication in *The Banner* and *De Wachter*. Although synod is not being asked to approve this review since it has no official status, if synod or one of its committees should wish to see the review before it is published, the committee will make that review available to synod when it convenes.

Our next project will be a review of the *New English Bible*. We have received several requests for our opinion on this version, especially from persons associated with our Canadian churches. This projected review will require considerable effort and time, probably two years.

Since Prof. Van Elderen plans to be in Jordan for the next two years, we request synod to appoint a replacement for him on our committee. In addition, since the Old Testament is so large and since it will be necessary to pay close attention to it in our review of the *New English Bible*, we request synod to appoint an additional member to our committee with special competence in Old Testament. The committee would appreciate having the opportunity to discuss these appointments with the Synodical Committee on Appointments.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Bandstra, Chairman  
David Holwerda, Secretary  
Stanley Bultman  
David Englehard  
Bastiaan Van Elderen  
Marten Woudstra

## REPORT 9

### CHAPLAIN COMMITTEE

DEAR BROTHERS:

The Chaplain Committee is thankful and happy to be able to report a year of many blessings upon our efforts in the field of the denominational chaplaincy, both in the military and the institutional spheres. Lives have been spared and used for the welfare of those with whom we were concerned. The reports of our chaplains, coming in at regular intervals, indicate the working of the Holy Spirit, blessing their efforts. We have no chaplains in the combat area of Vietnam since Chaplain Louis Kok returned in October of 1971, and none in Korea since August when Chaplain Jan Friend returned. Those were strategic places and we are confident that our men filled them well as men of God.

Since military recruitment is at a standstill at present, much of our time and efforts are being spent in the field of the institutional chaplaincy. This is a growing field. There are many openings that could and should be filled, but special training is required and we are very limited in the assistance we are able to give those interested in preparing for these fields.

Several men are busy with the required clinical pastoral education program at present, and a number have filled the clinical training requirements and are now gaining their necessary pastoral experience. We hope to be able to have a few more men ready for appointment in the near future. Naturally, not all pastors are equally qualified for this specific type of service and they must therefore be selected with great care and receive special training.

It would be a great asset if we were able to select qualified men who are interested in this phase of kingdom service, now serving a pastorate, and to assist them in obtaining the required clinical pastoral education to prepare them for the institutional chaplaincy. We are putting forth real efforts to promote this work and to seek out and guide those who indicate genuine interest and special qualifications.

Meanwhile, we keep close touch with all military and institutional chaplains on active duty, especially with those far from home and church. This is done particularly through monthly newsletters and personal correspondence. When feasible, a member of the committee seeks to visit them on their posts of duty and to meet with their superiors for consultation.

In our work, we are in close contact and cooperation with the Home Mission Board through its representative, the Rev. Duane VanderBrug, who usually meets with us, and with the Young Calvinist Federation through the Rev. James Lont, also present at most committee meetings. The Rev. Harold Dekker, member of the General Commission on Chaplains and Armed Forces Personnel, and, together with the



Rev. James Lont, our denominational representation on that commission, is also regularly at our meetings. These men serve us with counsel and guidance.

Our new office facilities, provided for us in the new U.C.Y. building, have greatly facilitated our work. We are happy with this arrangement and opportunity.

The Rev. Carl D. Tuyl is our Canadian representative member, and keeps close touch with the Canadian situation in the field of institutional chaplaincy, watching the movements, following the work of the clinical training program there, and keeping us informed as to openings, men in training, and prospects.

Two of our members have served one 3-year term on the committee. Both of them, Mr. Jack Holwerda and Rev. Jim Kok, are eligible for another term of service and will be nominated by our committee in view of their excellent service. Two alternates will also be presented to synod.

#### I. MILITARY CHAPLAINCY

Christian Reformed ministers on active duty as United States military chaplains as of March, 1972 were as follows:

(Parentheses give the year of entering upon active duty.)

##### *Air Force*

Chaplain Harold Bode, Major, USAFR (1962) Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio.

Chaplain Ralph W. Bronkema, Major, USAFR (1966) Hamilton AFB, Calif.

Chaplain Henry Guikema, Major, USAF (1962) L. G. Hanscom Field, Mass.

Chaplain Louis E. Kok, Major, USAF (1962) Luke AFB, Ariz.

Chaplain Arlan D. Menninga, Capt, USAFR (1968) USAF Academy, Colo.

##### *Army*

Chaplain William Brander, Capt., USAR (1968) Frankfurt, Germany.

Chaplain Jan Friend, Major, USAR (1959) Herbornseelbach, Germany.

Chaplain Bruce C. Hemple, LTC, USAR (1959) Stuttgart-Ludwigsburg, Germany

Chaplain John Hoogland, LTC, USA (1959) Ft. Meade, Md.

Chaplain Herman Keizer, Jr., Capt., USAR (1968) Ft. Carson, Colo.

Chaplain Marvin Konynenbelt, Major, USAR (1965) U.S. Army Chaplain School, Ft. Hamilton, N.Y.

Chaplain Paul H. Vruwink, Major, USAR (1958-60; 1964) U.S. Army Chaplain School, Ft. Hamilton, N.Y.

##### *Navy*

Chaplain Herbert L. Bergsma, LCDR, USN (1966) USS BRYCE CANYON, FPO San Francisco, Cal.

Chaplain Robert Brummel, LCDR, USNR (1966) National Naval Medical Center, Washington, D.C.

Chaplain Albert J. Roon, LCDR, USNR (1966) USS O'HARE FPO New York, N.Y.

Chaplain Raymond C. Swierenga, LCDR, USN (1960) Marine Corps Supply Center, Albany, Ga.

Chaplain Jerry Zandstra, LCDR, USNR (1967) USS DULUTH, FPO San Francisco, Ca.

You will note that this totals 17 active duty chaplains, the same as in 1971. You will also note that none are serving in combat areas, and all are either in the United States or Germany except 3 who are on sea duty in the Navy, Chaplains Herbert Bergsma and Jerry Zandstra in the Pacific and Chaplain Albert J. Roon in the Mediterranean.

We are happy to inform you that several have received special honors or promotions. Chaplain John J. Hoogland has been appointed to the U.S. Army Chaplain Board; Chaplains Marvin Konynenbelt and Paul H. Vruwink have been sent to the Chaplain School for advanced training and Chaplain Robert Brummel has been granted leave for special Clinical Pastoral Education at the National Naval Medical Center. We are justly proud of our men and the esteem in which they are held by the leaders in Washington.

The annual PRESBYTERIAN-REFORMED RETREAT for our servicemen in Europe was held again last May in Berchtesgaden, Germany. We appreciate the measure of cooperation on the part of the home congregations on behalf of our men for this retreat and it was a successful one. However, it became evident that we should have our own retreat for our own service personnel while the Presbyterian Church will also hold its own. Hence, we are now planning our retreat for May 1-5. The Reformed Church in America has accepted our invitation to join us in this retreat. Chaplain Jan Friend serves as our coordinator and the Rev. James Lont will be the retreat master and speaker. We are looking forward to a very blessed and profitable retreat for our men and again seek the cooperation of all our consistories, especially those with their men involved. Every effort will be put forth.

In view of the real need of our military chaplains for contact with other ministers and with one another, we are again planning a Chaplain's Retreat in Grand Rapids immediately after the annual Ministers' Institute. This is for state-side chaplains and their wives. (Travel expense is paid for the chaplains only. All reserve chaplains are also invited to attend but at their own expense.) This retreat has proved to be a real blessing and so worthwhile. However, last year we could not carry out our plans as only a very few would have been able to attend. Most of the men were overseas or otherwise detained by duty.

We wish to inform synod, that, though our chaplains are all assigned to a specific military unit as their "parish", and are almost entirely limited to this unit, they do seek to do what they can for our church servicemen who may be in other units in the vicinity as time and occasion permit. Their own homes, stateside or abroad, are always

open to our men and their friends. Small retreats are arranged and sponsored when possible, as well as Young Calvinist groups. However, our men can best be served by our chaplains when the men themselves seek out the chaplains. Here again we recognize the invaluable aid given the chaplains through our Home Mission Board and the Young Calvinist Federation. In addition to the active duty military chaplains, 19 of our ministers are serving in military reserve chaplain assignments.

They are:

#### *Air Force*

- Rev. A. Rienstra, Major—MacDill AFB, Fla.
- Rev. R. Tadema, Capt.—Inactive
- Rev. J. Vander Ark, Major—Ent AFB, Colo.
- Rev. D. Wisse, Major—McGuire AFB, N.J.

#### *Army*

- Rev. J. H. Ellens, Major—323rd General Hospital, Inkster, Mi.
- Rev. D. Oostenink, Colonel—322nd General Hospital, Newark, N.J.
- Rev. H. Ouwinga, Major—Washington National Guard
- Rev. Jay R. Pruim, 1st Lt.—Michigan National Guard
- Rev. H. Smit, Major—USARJ, Japan
- Rev. D. Van Halsema, LTC—U.S. Army Chaplain School
- Rev. T. Verseput, Major—Michigan National Guard

#### *Navy*

- Mr. Donald Belanus—Student Program
- Rev. D. P. Bergsma, CDR—USNRTC, Chicago, Ill.
- Rev. P. Boertje, LCDR—23rd Marines, Seal Beach, Calif.
- Rev. D. Den Dulk, Lt.—Naval Reserves, Los Angeles, Calif.
- Rev. P. Mans, Lt.—South Windsor, Conn.
- Rev. G. Meyer, LCDR—USNRTC, Grand Rapids, Mich.
- Rev. E. Shuart, LCDR—USNRTC, Chicago, Ill.
- Rev. A. Van Anandel, LCDR—NROS, Muncie, Ind.

Two of our ministers are serving in Veterans Administration Hospitals. These are:

- Chaplain Thomas Vanden Bosch—V.A. Hospital, Sioux Falls, S.D.
- Chaplain Adrian Van Anandel—V.A. Hospital, Marion, Ind.

Two of our ministers are serving our country as part-time chaplains in the vicinity of their parishes in the Civil Air Patrol. These are:

- Rev. Kenneth R. Slager—CAP, Vancouver, Wash.
- Rev. Samuel Vander Jagt—CAP, Davenport, Iowa

We are indeed grateful to God for opening these opportunities of service for us and for these men who are very ably filling them for God and country. The reserve military chaplains are called to brief periods of active duty service monthly and/or for a short time each year as are those with the Army National Guards, and perform a very valuable

spiritual ministry with the reserve Army, Air Force and Navy reserve personnel, or with the Army National Guard units of their state. They are subject to call to full time active duty should a national emergency arise. We are also sincerely thankful to their respective consistories and congregations for making this added service possible.

## II. INSTITUTIONAL CHAPLAINCY:

Christian Reformed ministers are also on active duty as chaplains in various institutions. As of March 1972, they were as follows:

Rev. Ralph Heynen, Pine Rest Christian Hospital, Grand Rapids, Mi.

Rev. Theodore Jansma, Christian Sanatorium, Wyckoff, N.J.

Rev. Frank Kaemingk, Bethesda Hospital, Denver, Colo.

Rev. Gordon Kieft, Bethesda Hospital, Denver, Colo.

Rev. Jim Kok, Pine Rest Christian Hospital, Grand Rapids, Mi.

Rev. William Swierenga, Michigan Veterans Facility, Grand Rapids, Mi.

Rev. Adrian Van Anel, Veterans Administration Hospital, Marion, Ind.

Rev. Ralph Heynen, Pine Rest Christian Hospital, Grand Rapids, Mi.

Rev. Larry Vande Creek, Indiana University Medical Center, Indianapolis, Ind.

Rev. Thomas Vanden Bosch, Veterans Administration Hospital, Sioux Falls, S.D.

Rev. Duane Visser, Calvary Rehabilitation Center, Phoenix, Ariz.

You will note that this totals 10 active duty chaplains, the same as in our 1971 report. Three (3) of these are in military-related institutions: The Veterans Administration hospitals and the Michigan Veterans Facility; one (1) is in a University Medical Center; and the other six (6) are in Christian Reformed church-related institutions.

In 1971 the Institutional Chaplains sub-committee worked with six ordained ministers in guiding and assisting them in getting clinical pastoral education. Each of these men has made a commitment to enter institutional ministry upon completion of their training. It is gratifying to note that financial assistance was given to four men in Canada. This makes our hopes to establish men in permanent chaplaincy positions in Canada look very bright.

Also in 1971 plans were completed for a cooperative arrangement with the Reformed Church of America pastor in Rochester, Minn., whereby he and his church will offer pastoral care to Christian Reformed patients in the hospitals of Rochester, Minn., affiliated with the Mayo Clinic.

For the first time all of the institutional chaplains of the Christian Reformed Church will meet together to discuss matters of mutual interest. This retreat is scheduled for April 5, 1972, for one day in conjunction with the annual convention of the Christian Association for Psychological Studies convening in Chicago at the University of Chicago Convention Center. This meeting is anticipated to be an experimental session to explore the advantages of such meetings in the future and to gain from each other such consultation as will be helpful in planning

the future of institutional chaplaincies in the Christian Reformed Church.

The Rev. Larry Vande Creek is the only chaplain to have made a change in position during 1971. He was appointed to the Chaplaincy Department of the University of Indiana Medical Center at Indianapolis, Indiana. In addition to patient care he conducts educational programs for the benefits of all persons at the hospital who are directly involved in patient care. Previous to this Chaplain Vande Creek had been on the staff of the health centers affiliated with the Indianapolis Methodist Hospital.

The Institutional Chaplains sub-committee has solicited correspondence from all ministers of the denomination who have had clinical pastoral education experience. This information was sought in order to establish a mailing list to offer information about further opportunities to men in clinical pastoral education or hospital and prison chaplaincy.

Also this phase of the work of your committee has been blessed of the Lord and we are seeking to prepare to meet the needs as they are opened before us.

### III. SPIRITUAL AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Your committee again desires to express our sincere appreciation of the continued support of the synod and of the congregations which we have experienced through the years. The contributions and the prayers of our people have been a very essential and vital part of our entire program.

We are deeply thankful that the Synod of 1971 adopted the general outline of the Chaplains' Deposit Fund and approved the quota to make this possible. This has indeed opened the way for the solution of the very knotty problem of the chaplains' pensions. We are now working out the administrative details with the Pension Fund Committee, as mandated, and are very happy with the progress being made.

As for financial aid in the future, for our regular program, the expansion of our Institutional Chaplaincy Program and the service to our Armed Force Chaplains, it is necessary for us to ask synod for a renewed recommendation of the work of the Chaplain Committee to the denominational congregations for an annual offering.

### IV. RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. *Representation at Synod:* We request that the chairman of our committee be permitted to speak at synod in matters pertaining to the Chaplain Committee.

B. *Presentation of Chaplains:* We request that both active duty military and institutional chaplains who may be present during synod's sessions be presented to the synod and that one of each category so designated by the committee be granted the privilege of a brief word to synod.

C. *Offerings:* We request that synod place the Chaplain Committee on the approved list for one or more offerings for 1973 for the work

of the chaplaincy of the Christian Reformed Church, other than the Chaplains' Deposit Fund (the pension plan).

*Ground:* Our responsibility continues due to the expansion of the Institutional Chaplaincy Program and services to the men of the Armed Forces.

D. *Quotas:* We refer synod to the decision of the Synod of 1971 re the Chaplains' Deposit Fund (Acts 1971 Art. 49-III-B-4, page 38, and Art. 151-III-A-3, page 121) and remind synod of the need for the continued quota of fifty cents (50¢) per family.

E. *Personnel:* Mr. Jack Holwerda and the Rev. Jim Kok have completed one 3-year term on the committee. Both are eligible for another term of service. The Chaplain Committee suggests the following nomination to synod:

a. Mr. Jack Holwerda, Insurance, Elder at Brookside Christian Reformed Church. (Incumbent)

Mr. Ronald E. Hofstra, Teacher, member of Lee Street Christian Reformed Church.

b. Rev Jim Kok, Chaplain at Pine Rest Hospital (Incumbent).

Rev. Harold T. DeJong, Pastor of the Cutlerville Hills Christian Reformed Church.

#### V. FINANCIAL REPORT

The treasurer's annual statement and an auditor's report are attached to this report of your committee.

Respectfully submitted,

The Chaplain Committee  
 Theodore Verseput, Chairman  
 Cornelius M. Schoolland, Secretary  
 Jack Holwerda, Treasurer  
 Warren J. Boer  
 Jim Kok  
 Galen Meyer  
 Carl D. Tuyl  
 Nicholas Van Andel  
 Floyd Westendorp

March 13, 1972

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, 1971. 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.

In my opinion, the accompanying financial report present fairly the financial position of the Chaplain Committee at December 31, 1971, and its recorded

receipts and disbursements for the year ended December 31, 1971, on a cash basis of accounting consistent with that of the preceding year.

No fidelity bond coverage is carried on the treasurer.

Gerard J. Borst, C.P.A.

**CHAPLAIN COMMITTEE OF THE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH**  
**Financial Report**

Year Ended December 31, 1971

**BALANCE, January 1, 1971:**

Checking account .....	\$ 3,003.16	
Savings account .....	2,547.36	\$ 5,550.52

**RECEIPTS:**

Contributions and gifts .....	\$12,327.37	
Interest on savings accounts .....	163.18	12,490.55

Total Available .....		\$18,041.07
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**DISBURSEMENTS:**

Travel and recruitment .....	\$ 1,236.22
Training allowances .....	2,862.20
General Commission dues .....	1,675.00
Secretary and clerical .....	1,643.05
Retreats .....	779.94
Air Force Easter Offering distributed .....	340.00
Literature .....	345.40
Supplies and postage .....	495.13
Office furnishings .....	121.28
Miscellaneous administrative expenses .....	130.96

Total Disbursements .....		9,629.18
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**BALANCE, December 31, 1971:**

Checking account .....	\$ 701.35	
Savings accounts .....	7,710.54	\$ 8,411.89

**REPORT 10**  
**CHURCH HELP FUND, INC.**

**DEAR BROTHERS:**

The following is a report of the work performed by the Church Help Committee in aiding weak and needy churches in their building programs during the year 1971. Regular meetings were scheduled and held throughout the year. Due to rising interest rates and construction costs a large number of churches applied for aid or made inquiry concerning the possibility of such aid. The fact that churches as large as 152 families requested a loan indicates that not all our churches understand that the Church Help Fund is intended only for the "weak and needy" church.

During the year approximately 21 applications for aid were considered. After a careful review of the information submitted and the evaluation of the endorsing classes, loans were promised to 15 congregations totaling \$183,000.00. These requests ranged from refinancing and renovating of present facilities to the construction of new church buildings and parsonages. Although we were once again forced to operate with a deficit throughout the year, we were able to pay monies to all churches requesting their loans. This was made possible with the cooperation of the churches in not calling for their loans until actually needed. Several of the loans approved have not yet been called for due to rising construction costs forcing the delay or postponement of building programs. We are grateful to those churches who have made advance payments on their loans. This is helpful to the committee and permits us to be of assistance to other churches in need of funds. Short-term loans have also been beneficial since the larger repayments enable us to be of assistance to more congregations. We regret that some churches failed to meet their obligations which jeopardizes the revolving nature of our fund.

A large number of churches have made inquiry about the possibility of obtaining a loan from our fund. The committee feels, however, that the yearly repayments received, together with the cooperation of the churches, will enable us to meet the anticipated requests.

At present, a total of 293 churches have loans from the Church Help Fund. Your committee would urge those churches that have been blessed with substantial growth to make more rapid repayment of their loans so that other churches can be given aid. We are grateful to those who have done this. We also urge the classes to review applications more carefully. In some instances large churches with no indebtedness have been endorsed for assistance from our fund when they are obviously not "weak and needy."

The following figures present a brief account of the financial condition of the Church Help Fund as of December 31, 1971:



Total receipts from repaid loans .....	\$ 278,423.62
New loans paid during 1971 .....	233,000.00
Total loans outstanding .....	2,243,449.04
Balance on hand (cash & savings accounts) .....	83,705.64
Loans promised but not called for .....	82,000.00
Balance on hand .....	1,705.64

The financial regulations of synod regarding the safety of bank accounts are being followed by the Church Help Fund Committee.

Your committee requests that the secretary, Rev. J. Engbers, be consulted on matters pertaining to the Church Help Fund, and that he be given the privilege of the floor when such matters are being decided.

*Matters Requiring Action by Synod*

1. We recommend that Rev. Willard De Vries be reappointed to another term on the Church Help Fund Committee.

*Ground:* He has served one term and is eligible for reappointment.

2. Since Rev. D. Tinklenberg has moved to another field of labor there is no ministerial alternate to our committee. We present the following nomination for your consideration:

Rev. E. Blankespoor and Rev. D. Houseman.

Humbly submitted,

Church Help Fund Committee

Rev. W. De Vries, President

Rev. J. Engbers, Secretary

Mr. M. Wiersma, Treasurer

Rev. J. H. Rubingh

Mr. S. Holtrop

Mr. G Post

**THE CHURCH HELP COMMITTEE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH**

Upon your request, an examination was made of the financial reports of the CHURCH HELP FUND of the CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH, as of December 31, 1971, including

Schedule A, Cash Receipts and Disbursements, 1971

Schedule B, Analysis — Loans Outstanding

Schedule C, Administrative Expenses

The examination was made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, and accordingly included tests of the records as were considered necessary in the circumstances, except that notes receivable were not confirmed by direct correspondence (balances are published annually in the Acts of Synod for verification by individual churches). The accompanying reports are presented subject to the above limitation.

In our opinion, the accompanying statements present fairly the financial condition of the CHURCH HELP FUND of the CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH as of December 31, 1971, and the results of operations for the year then ended, in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

Henry J. DeGroot

Certified Public Accountant

THE CHURCH HELP FUND  
CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH  
ORANGE CITY, IOWA

Schedule "A"

CASH RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

Cash on hand December 31, 1970			
General checking account		\$ 60,942.86	
Savings account, NW State Bank, Orange City, Iowa		<u>23,000.00</u>	
Total			\$ 83,942.86
Receipts:			
Repayment of loans - Schedule "B"	\$ 278,423.62		
Interest on Savings accounts	1,462.73		
U.S. - Canadian exchange	711.79		
Classis, gifts and miscellaneous	<u>490.78</u>		
Total			<u>281,088.92</u>
			\$365,031.78
Disbursements:			
New loans disbursed - Schedule "B"	\$ 233,000.00		
U.S. - Canadian exchange	592.34		
Administrative expense - Schedule "C"	<u>2,012.78</u>		
Total			\$ 235,605.12
Cash on hand December 31, 1971			
General checking account		4,426.66	
Bank balance - \$44,38.86			
less outstanding check - 12.20			
Savings accounts:			
NW State Bank, Orange City	\$65,000.00		
Security National Bank, Sioux City, Iowa	30,000.00		
First National Bank, Sioux Center, Iowa	<u>30,000.00</u>	<u>\$125,000.00</u>	
Cash on hand			\$ 129,426.66
Outstanding loans to churches			\$ 2,243,449.04

THE CHURCH HELP FUND  
ORANGE CITY, IOWA

Schedule "B"

ANALYSIS - LOANS OUTSTANDING

No.	Church	Balance 12-31-70	New Loans	Repay	Balance 12-31-71
1.	Abbotsford, D.C. - 1st	3,125.00		605.25	2,519.75
2	Abbotsford, B.C. - 2nd	30,000.00			30,000.00
3	Ackley, Iowa	21,000.00		3,000.00	18,000.00
4	Acton, Ont.	6,150.00		718.75	5,431.25
5	Ada, Michigan	3,375.00		500.00	2,875.00
6	Agassiz, B.C.	28,433.34			28,433.34
7	Albuquerque, New Mexico - 1st Chelwood Community	16,000.01		1,333.33	14,666.68
8	Alliston, Ont.	9,665.68		833.33	8,833.35
9	Alto, Wisconsin	8,665.00		670.00	7,995.00
10	Anchorage, Alaska - Trinity	30,000.00		2,000.00	28,000.00
11	Ann Arbor, Michigan	6,900.00		200.00	6,700.00
12	Arcadia, California	660.00		370.00	290.00
13	Athens, Ont.	4,875.00		687.50	4,187.50
14	Austinville, Iowa	1,000.00		1,000.00	none
15	Aylmer, Ont.	250.00			250.00
16	Barrhead - Westlock, Alta.	4,955.72		700.00	4,255.72
17	Barrie, Ont. - 1st	4,062.50		687.50	3,375.00
18	Bayou, Minnesota	485.00		220.00	265.00
19	Belleville, Ont. - Maranatha	6,750.00		750.00	6,000.00
20	Bellevue, Alta.	10,000.00			10,000.00

## ANALYSIS - LOANS OUTSTANDING

No.	Church	Balance			Balance 12-31-71
		12-31-70	New loans	Repay	
21	Bigelow, Minnesota	1,950.00		325.00	1,625.00
22	Blenheim, Ont.	17,250.00		1,250.00	16,000.00
23	Bloomfield, Ont.	5,500.00		500.00	5,000.00
24	Blyth, Ont.	3,250.00	15,000.00		18,250.00
25	Boulder, Colorado - Crestview	6,000.00		1,000.00	5,000.00
26	Bowmanville, Ont. - Maranatha	18,000.00		2,000.00	16,000.00
27	Bowmanville, Ont. - Rehoboth	3,750.00		600.00	3,150.00
28	Brempton, Ont. - Immanuel	2,600.00		700.00	1,900.00
29	Brandon, Man. - 1st	9,345.00		1,206.25	8,138.75
30	Brantford, Ont.	1,343.65		52.50	781.15
31	Britt, Iowa	7,675.00		825.00	6,850.00
32	Brockville, Ont. - Bethel	1,875.00		375.00	1,500.00
33	Brooks, Alta.	11,295.00			11,295.00
34	Brooten, Minnesota	3,800.00		1,000.00	2,800.00
35	Burdett, Alta.	5,750.00		500.00	5,250.00
36	Burlington, Ont.	7,000.00		625.00	6,375.00
37	Burlington, Ont. - Aldershot		10,000.00		10,000.00
38	Burnaby, B.C.	9,250.00		825.00	8,425.00
39	Byron Center, Michigan - 2nd	4,000.00		500.00	3,500.00
40	Cadillac, Michigan	12,000.00		1,000.00	11,000.00
41	Caledonia, Michigan	20,167.00		520.00	19,647.00
42	Calgary, Alta. - 2nd Emmanuel	16,550.00		1,500.00	15,050.00
43	Calgary, Alta. - 1st	3,600.00		600.00	3,000.00
44	Calgary, Alta. - Maranatha	7,750.00		750.00	7,000.00
45	Cedar, Iowa	2,753.25		500.00	2,253.25
46	Cedar Falls, Iowa	16,750.00		750.00	16,000.00
47	Cedar Springs, Michigan - Pioneer	8,375.00		725.00	7,650.00
48	Chatham, Ont. - Grace	17,375.00		3,000.00	14,375.00
49	Chilliwack, B.C.	9,229.30		1,000.00	8,229.30
50	Chula Vista, California	20,000.00		8,000.00	12,000.00
51	Clara City, Minnesota	1,300.00		625.00	675.00
52	Clarkson, Ont.	3,487.50		656.25	2,831.25
53	Cleveland, Ohio - Maple Heights	4,000.00		500.00	3,500.00
54	Clinton, Ont.	4,012.50		543.75	3,468.75
55	Cobourg, Ont. - Grace	10,600.00		1,100.00	9,500.00
56	Cochrane, Ont.	3,619.80		531.25	3,088.55
57	Collingwood, Ont.	21,950.00			21,950.00
58	Columbus, Ohio - Olentangy	2,000.00		290.00	1,710.00
59	Comstock Park, Michigan	8,500.00		500.00	8,000.00
60	Conrad, Mont.	8,860.00		705.00	8,155.00
61	Cornwall, Ont. - Immanuel	4,812.50	15,000.00	1,250.00	18,562.50
62	Crown Point, Indiana	9,500.00		1,500.00	8,000.00
63	Cutlerville, Michigan - Cutlerville Hills	9,000.00		1,000.00	8,000.00
64	Cutlerville, Michigan - East	2,500.00		500.00	2,000.00
65	Decatur, Michigan	11,267.16		1,500.00	9,767.16
66	De Motte, Indiana - Bethel	28,000.00		2,000.00	26,000.00
67	Denver, Colorado - Fairview	8,925.00		675.00	8,250.00
68	Denver, Colorado - Hillcrest	3,000.00		1,500.00	1,500.00
69	Denver, Colorado - Ridgeview Hills	30,000.00		2,333.33	27,666.67
70	Denver, Colorado - Trinity	24,750.00			24,750.00
71	Des Moines, Iowa	12,000.00		1,500.00	10,500.00
72	Drayton, Ont.	3,600.00		600.00	3,000.00
73	Dresden, Ont.	3,375.00		625.00	2,750.00
74	Duncan, B.C.	5,506.25		743.75	4,762.50
75	Dundas, Ont. - Calvin	8,985.29		1,235.29	7,750.00
76	Dunnville Ont. - Bethel	10,750.00		750.00	10,000.00
77	East Lansing, Michigan	18,666.67		2,666.66	16,000.01
78	East Martin, Michigan	6,000.00		1,000.00	5,000.00
79	Edmonton, Alta. - Maranatha	3,562.50		625.00	2,937.50
80	Edmonton, Alta. - Ottewell	10,000.00			10,000.00
81	Edmonton, Alta. - 2nd	2,400.00		600.00	1,800.00
82	Edmonton, Alta. - Trinity	8,000.00		2,000.00	6,000.00
83	Edmonton, Alta. - West End	6,739.07		1,039.07	5,700.00
84	Edson, Alta.	7,765.56		750.00	7,015.56
85	Emo, Ont.	10,055.00	3,000.00	1,550.00	11,505.00
86	Escalon, California	5,625.00		1,000.00	4,625.00
87	Essex, Ont.	4,880.00		820.00	4,060.00

		ANALYSIS - LOANS OUTSTANDING			
No.	Church	Balance	New Loans	Repay	Balance
		12-31-70			12-31-71
88	Everett, Washington - 1st	12,000.00		3,000.00	9,000.00
89	Exeter, Ont.	7,750.00		750.00	7,000.00
90	Ferrisburg, Vermont	7,420.00		720.00	6,700.00
91	Flint, Michigan - 1st	1,000.00		1,000.00	none
92	Forest, Ont.	12,687.50			12,687.50
93	Fort Collins, Colo. - Immanuel	9,000.00		1,000.00	8,000.00
94	Fort Lauderdale, Florida	4,000.00		500.00	3,500.00
95	Framingham, Mass.	5,500.00		500.00	5,000.00
96	Fredericton, N.B.	1,000.00		1,000.00	None
97	Fromont, Michigan - Trinity	2,500.00		500.00	2,000.00
98	Fresno, California	7,000.00			7,000.00
99	Fruitland, Ont.	2,812.50		505.25	2,305.25
100	Fruitport, Michigan	22,750.00		1,883.33	20,866.67
101	Fulton, Ill. - Bethel	12,000.00		1,000.00	11,000.00
102	Galt, Ont. - Maranatha	13,750.00			13,750.00
103	Gary, Indiana - Beacon Light	5,350.00		750.00	4,600.00
104	Georgetown, Ont.	9,750.00		1,500.00	8,250.00
105	Goshen, Indiana	5,333.38			5,333.38
106	Grand Prairie, Alta. - La Glace	3,310.39		1,333.32	1,977.07
107	G.R., Mich. - Arcadia	6,916.72		916.66	6,000.06
108	G.R., Mich. - Bristolwood	10,000.01		833.33	9,166.68
109	G.R., Mich. - Cascade	1,750.00		1,000.00	750.00
110	G.R., Mich. - Grace	3,750.00			3,750.00
111	G.R., Mich. - Ideal Park	13,333.40		1,333.32	12,000.08
112	G.R., Mich. - Millbrook	600.00			600.00
113	G.R., Mich. - Princeton	7,500.00		1,500.00	6,000.00
114	G.R., Mich. - Riverside	4,500.00		700.00	3,800.00
115	Grandville, Mich. - Hanley	1,500.00		500.00	1,000.00
116	Grandville, Mich. - Ivanrest	8,500.00		1,250.00	7,250.00
117	Grandville, Mich. - South	2,500.00		500.00	2,000.00
118	Granum, Alta.	6,000.00		1,000.00	5,000.00
119	Grimsby, Ont. - Mountainview	9,750.00		750.00	9,000.00
120	Guelfh, Ont.	7,505.00		750.00	6,755.00
121	Halifax, Nova Scotia	7,583.34			7,583.34
122	Hamilton, Ont. - Immanuel	10,350.00		775.00	9,575.00
123	Hamilton, Ont. - Mount Hamilton	4,250.00		600.00	3,650.00
124	Hammond, Indiana	3,975.00		1,225.00	2,750.00
125	Hancock, Minnesota	5,625.00		500.00	5,125.00
126	Hansy, B.C.	2,400.00		637.50	1,762.50
127	Hartley, Iowa	7,825.00		825.00	7,000.00
128	Hawarden, Iowa	2,500.00		500.00	2,000.00
129	Hayward, California	6,333.34		1,083.34	5,250.00
130	High River, Alta.	1,800.00		1,000.00	800.00
131	Holland, Iowa	16,000.01			16,000.01
132	Holland, Michigan - Calvary	13,100.00			13,100.00
133	Holland, Michigan - Maranatha	1,000.00		1,000.00	none
134	Holland, Michigan - Park	11,000.00		2,000.00	9,000.00
135	Holland, Minnesota	5,310.00		650.00	4,660.00
136	Holland Center, South Dakota	829.00		829.00	none
137	Hollandale, Minnesota	5,500.00		500.00	5,000.00
138	Holland Marsh, Ont.	3,688.44		500.00	3,188.44
139	Houston, B.C.	500.00		500.00	none
140	Hudsonville, Mich. - Messiah	9,000.00		1,500.00	7,500.00
141	Hull, Iowa - Hope	13,950.00		1,050.00	12,900.00
142	Hull, North Dakota		20,000.00		20,000.00
143	Ingersoll, Ont.	7,500.00		895.00	6,605.00
144	Jackson, Michigan	2,750.00			2,750.00
145	Jamaica, New York - Queens	9,000.00		500.00	8,500.00
146	Jarvis, Ont.	950.00		600.00	350.00
147	Kalamazoo, Mich. - Eastern Hills	19,000.00			19,000.00
148	Kalamazoo, Mich. - Faith	15,000.00		1,500.00	13,500.00
149	Kalamazoo, Mich. - Knollwood	12,000.00		1,700.00	10,300.00
150	Kalamazoo, Mich. - Northern Hgts.	15,000.00		1,500.00	13,500.00
151	Kalamazoo, Mich. - Parchment	4,500.00		500.00	4,000.00
152	Kalamazoo, Mich. - Prairie Edge	6,250.00		750.00	5,500.00
153	Kalamazoo, Mich. - Southern Hgts.	10,000.00		1,000.00	9,000.00
154	Kalamazoo, Mich. - Westwood	1,500.00		500.00	1,000.00
155	Kentville, Nova Scotia	10,750.00		1,000.00	9,750.00
156	Kingston, Ont.	2,375.00		625.00	1,750.00

## ANALYSIS - LOANS OUTSTANDING

No.	Church	Balance	New Loans	Repay	Balance
		12-31-70			12-31-71
157	Kitchener, Ont. - 1st	3,312.50		656.25	2,656.25
158	Lacombe, Alta. - Bethel	7,000.00		750.00	6,250.00
159	Ladner, B.C.	5,175.00		625.00	4,550.00
160	Lake City, Michigan	15,500.00		1,250.00	14,250.00
161	Langley, B.C.	4,172.50		687.50	3,485.00
162	Le Mars, Iowa - Calvin	2,000.00	2,000.00	500.00	3,500.00
163	Lethbridge, Alta.	1,100.00		1,100.00	none
164	Lindsay, Ont.	8,563.00		862.50	7,700.50
165	Listowel, Ont.	9,000.00		750.00	8,250.00
166	London, Ont. - 1st	2,212.50		2,212.50	none
167	Los Angeles - Calif. - Crenshaw	3,500.00		500.00	3,000.00
168	Lowell, Michigan - Calvary	9,000.00		1,000.00	8,000.00
169	Lucas, Michigan	6,000.00		2,000.00	4,000.00
170	Lucknow, Ont.	24,350.00		1,900.00	22,450.00
171	Lynnwood, Washington	26,000.00		2,000.00	24,000.00
172	Marysville, Wash. - Cascade	18,666.67		1,333.33	17,333.34
173	McBain, Michigan	4,000.00		1,000.00	3,000.00
174	McBain, Michigan - Calvin	5,000.00		3,000.00	2,000.00
175	Medicine Hat, Alta.	7,000.00		750.00	6,250.00
176	Miami, Florida	11,000.00		1,500.00	9,500.00
177	Middleville, Michigan	4,000.01		333.33	3,666.68
178	Midland Park, N.J. - Irving Park	3,000.00		500.00	2,500.00
179	Milwaukee, Wisconsin - 1st	1,300.00		350.00	950.00
180	Minneapolis, Minn. - Calvary	3,250.00		250.00	3,000.00
181	Minneapolis, Minn. - 1st		30,000.00		30,000.00
182	Momence, Ill.	9,000.00		1,000.00	8,000.00
183	Montreal, Quebec	22,500.00		1,500.00	21,000.00
184	Mountain Lake, Minnesota	797.75			797.75
185	Mount Vernon, Wash. - 1st	2,000.00		1,000.00	1,000.00
186	Muskegon, Mich. - Calvin	4,350.00		2,350.00	2,000.00
187	Muskegon, Mich. - Grace	8,294.00		970.14	7,323.86
188	Newmarket, Ont.	10,500.00		750.00	9,750.00
189	New Westminster, B.C.	3,937.50		600.00	3,337.50
190	Niagara Falls, Ont. - Rehoboth	6,000.00			6,000.00
191	North Haledon, New Jersey	5,700.00		1,200.00	4,500.00
192	Oak Forest, Ill. - Hope	10,100.00		2,300.00	7,800.00
193	Oak Harbor, Washington	3,666.68			3,666.68
194	Ogilvie, Minnesota	3,600.00		1,500.00	2,100.00
195	Omaha, Nebr. - Prairie Lane	16,000.00		1,000.00	15,000.00
196	Orangeville, Ont.	21,525.00		2,220.00	19,305.00
197	Orillia, Ont.	9,500.00		750.00	8,750.00
198	Oshawa, Ont. - Zion	8,250.00		2,750.00	5,500.00
199	Oskaloosa, Iowa - Bethel	2,300.00		550.00	1,750.00
200	Ottawa, Ont. - East Calvary	17,150.00		625.00	16,525.00
201	Ottawa, Ont. - Calvin	5,750.00		625.00	5,125.00
202	Palos Heights, Illinois	3,700.00		700.00	3,000.00
203	Paramus, New Jersey	20,083.34			20,083.34
204	Pateron, N.J. - Madison Ave.	7,500.00		7,500.00	none
205	Peers, Alta.	4,970.76		1,062.50	3,908.26
206	Pembroke, Ont. - Zion	5,052.50		687.50	4,375.00
207	Penticton, B.C.	13,600.01		1,216.04	12,383.97
208	Petersborough, Ont. - Cephas	8,468.52		800.00	7,668.52
209	Phoenix, Arizona - Orangewood	10,000.00		1,000.00	9,000.00
210	Pipestons, Minnesota	2,000.00		500.00	1,500.00
211	Plainfield, Michigan	22,383.34		2,008.33	20,375.01
212	Port Albernia, B.C. - 1st	1,775.00	10,000.00		11,775.00
213	Portland, Michigan	500.00			500.00
214	Red Deer, Alta.	3,562.50		562.50	3,000.00
215	Redlands, Calif. - Highland Ave.	3,100.00		425.00	2,675.00
216	Regina, Sask. - 1st	9,750.00		750.00	9,000.00
217	Renfrew, Ont. - Hebron	7,500.00		750.00	6,750.00
218	Ranville, Minnesota - Emden	2,000.00		1,000.00	1,000.00
219	Richmond, B.C.	6,000.00			6,000.00
220	Rock Valley, Iowa - Trinity		10,000.00		10,000.00
221	Rocky Mountain House, Alta.	2,662.50		637.50	2,025.00
222	Rosoville, Michigan - Immanuel	3,000.00		250.00	2,750.00
223	Rudyard, Michigan	10,000.00		666.66	9,333.34
224	Sacramento, California	18,500.00		1,500.00	17,000.00
225	Saginaw, Michigan - Community	11,000.00		1,000.00	10,000.00

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

ANALYSIS - LOANS OUTSTANDING

No.	Church	Balance			Balance 12-31-71
		12-31-70	New Loans	Repay	
226	San Diego, California	3,000.00		1,000.00	2,000.00
227	San Jose, Calif. - Moorpark		20,000.00		20,000.00
228	Samia, Ont. - 2nd Rebooth	3,450.00		650.00	2,800.00
229	Saskatoon, Sask. - Bethel	6,950.00	16,000.00	250.00	22,700.00
230	Seattle, Wash. - Calvary	5,750.00		750.00	5,000.00
231	Seattle, Wash. - 1st	2,600.00		775.00	1,825.00
232	Sheboygan, Wis. - Calvin	9,666.57		1,083.33	8,583.34
233	Silver Spring, Maryland	19,333.34	30,000.00	10,666.66	38,666.68
234	Simcoe, Ont. - Immanuel	6,300.00	17,000.00		23,300.00
235	Sioux City, Iowa	14,600.00			14,600.00
236	Smithers, B.C.	6,560.00		630.00	5,930.00
237	South Bend, Indiana	476.75		175.00	301.75
238	South Holland, Illinois - Peace	16,500.00		1,500.00	15,000.00
239	Springdale, Ont.	4,000.00		1,000.00	3,000.00
240	St. Catharines, Ont. - Maranatha	2,362.50			2,362.50
241	St. Thomas, Ont. - 1st	5,737.50		762.50	4,975.00
242	Stony Plain, Alta. - Hope	9,500.00		500.00	9,000.00
243	Stratford, Ont.	7,250.00		500.00	6,750.00
244	Strathroy, Ont. - East	3,600.00		1,275.00	2,325.00
245	Strathroy, Ont. - Westmount	6,000.00			6,000.00
246	Sun Valley, Calif. - Bethel	3,500.00			3,500.00
247	Surrey, B.C.	10,000.00		750.00	9,250.00
248	Taber, Alta.	15,486.43		1,615.63	13,870.80
249	Telkwa, B.C.	6,844.67		1,300.00	5,544.67
250	Torrance, B.C.	5,500.00			5,500.00
251	Terra Ceia, North Carolina	930.00		295.00	635.00
252	Thunderbay, Ont. - Bethlehem	11,250.00		750.00	10,500.00
253	Thunderbay, Ont. - 1st	2,837.50		1,500.00	1,337.50
254	Toronto, Ont. - 1st	1,550.00		450.00	1,100.00
255	Toronto, Ont. - Grace, Scarborough	6,000.00		1,000.00	5,000.00
256	Toronto, Ont. - Rebooth	2,125.00			2,125.00
257	Toronto, Ont. - 2nd Weston	9,750.00			9,750.00
258	Toronto, Ont. - Willowdale	3,200.00		800.00	2,400.00
259	Tracy, Iowa	1,017.50		504.50	513.00
260	Trenton, Ont. - Ebenezer	2,775.00		600.00	2,175.00
261	Troy, Mich. - North Hills	28,666.68		2,999.99	25,666.69
262	Truro, Nova Scotia	5,200.00		600.00	4,600.00
263	Tucson, Arizona - Bethel	18,750.00		1,000.00	17,750.00
264	Tucson, Arizona - Elim		10,000.00		10,000.00
265	Vancouver, B.C. - Bethel	8,062.50		8,062.50	none
266	Vancouver, Wash. - Trinity	30,000.00		2,000.00	28,000.00
267	Vauxhall, Alta.	2,300.00		600.00	1,700.00
268	Vernon, B.C.	17,333.34		1,396.91	15,936.43
269	Vesper, Wisconsin	4,000.00		500.00	3,500.00
270	Victoria, B. C.	6,175.00			6,175.00
271	Vogel Center, Michigan		10,000.00		10,000.00
272	Wallaceburg, Ont.	10,450.00		1,000.00	9,450.00
273	Waupun, Wisconsin - Bethel	11,000.00		1,000.00	10,000.00
274	Wayland, Michigan	29,000.00		5,000.00	24,000.00
275	Welland Junction, Ont.	9,250.00		750.00	8,500.00
276	Wellandport, Ont. - Riverside	3,125.00		625.00	2,500.00
277	Wellsburg, Iowa - 2nd		10,000.00		10,000.00
278	Wheaton, Ill.	500.00		500.00	none
279	Whitby, Ont. - Hebron	8,062.50		750.00	7,312.50
280	Williamsburg, Ont.	5,000.00		625.00	4,375.00
281	Willmar, Minnesota	5,500.00		500.00	5,000.00
282	Winfield, Illinois	15,000.00		3,000.00	12,000.00
283	Winnipeg, Man. - College Ave.	1,025.00		540.75	484.25
284	Winnipeg, Man. - Kildonan	10,000.00		1,000.00	9,000.00
285	Winnipeg, Man. - Transcona	12,250.00		5,250.00	7,000.00
286	Woodstock, Ont.	344.30		344.30	none
287	Wyoming, Michigan - Calvary	1,000.00		1,000.00	none
288	Wyoming, Mich. - Roger Heights	4,500.00		250.00	4,250.00
289	Wyoming, Mich. - 36th St.	2,000.00		500.00	1,500.00
290	Wyoming, Ont.	3,412.50		662.50	2,750.00
291	York, Ont. - Maranatha	22,750.00		2,016.66	20,733.34
292	Zealand, Mich. - Haven	9,000.00			9,000.00
293	Zillah, Washington		5,000.00		5,000.00

\$ 2,288,872.65    \$233,000.00    \$278,423.62    \$2,243,449.04

## THE CHURCH HELP FUND

Schedule "C"

## ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSE

Meeting and mileage .....	\$ 328.60
Rev. John Engbers - secretary .....	450.00
Marion Wiersma - treasurer .....	1,100.00
Henry De Groot - auditor .....	45.00
Postage and supplies .....	89.18
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>\$2,012.78</b>

## DELINQUENT CHURCHES

Churches	Amount Delinquent 12-31-71	1971 Repayment	No. Yrs. Delinquent
Forest, Ontario .....	\$2,656.25	\$1,218.75	2
Galt, Ontario - Maranatha .....	4,250.00	750.00	5
Grand Rapids, Mich. - Grace ..	750.00	250.00	3
Halifax, Nova Scotia .....	1,499.99	583.33	2
Muskegon, Mich. - Grace .....	4,123.86	700.00	5
Simcoe, Ontario - Emmanuel ..	900.00	450.00	2
Strathroy, Ontario - West .....	1,000.00	637.50	2
Toronto, Ontario - Rehoboth ..	1,250.00	262.50	5
Toronto, Ontario - 2nd .....	3,000.00	750.00	4
Tucson, Arizona .....	6,500.00	1,250.00	5

## REPORT 11

## EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE TO CHURCHES ABROAD

DEAR BROTHERS:

Your committee has now completed the second year of its existence. Our mandate is the nourishment of the worldwide witness of the Reformed churches through provision of student scholarships, internship experiences, and library assistance to institutions of Reformed churches abroad. This committee would indicate its gratitude to the denomination for its faithful support of our work. This has greatly alleviated the financial worries of the committee during the past year, and given us the freedom to develop our programs in good faith. We must testify to the goodness of our Lord and to the joy involved in his work.

In the first place, our scholarship program has been that of supporting Mr. John Lin of Taiwan and the Rev. L. C. DeKretser of Ceylon. In spite of tightening travel restrictions, the Rev. Mr. DeKretser, his wife and their son arrive safely in the states, were provided with a comfortable place to live, and he is now becoming known to many of our churches through his services in the pulpit. Both Mr. Lin and the Rev. DeKretser are progressing well in their study program at the seminary. We now have a third man in view for support beginning in the fall of this year. We thus will be committed for approximately \$200.00 per month per man, plus incidental expenses for tuition, books, etc. . . . All those accepted in this program are committed to a return to their churches overseas, and are being prepared for positions of leadership in their denominations.

Secondly, we have initiated and developed our library assistance program for needy educational institutions of Reformed churches overseas. We have activated this program by granting several allocations to various institutions such as \$500.00 to Kobe Reformed Theological Seminary of Japan, \$600.00 to two study libraries envisioned and supervised by our missionaries in the Philippines, \$500.00 to the Juan Calvino Seminary in Mexico City and \$200.00 to the Mexico City Bible Institute, etc. We are now in the process of sending out books, and also funds for local purchases in the vernaculars. We are being assisted in the mechanics of this operation by the helpful cooperation and generosity of Baker Book House here, and by our missionaries overseas.

On this score we might mention the assistance of The Theological Librarian, Mr. Peter De Klerk, in operating the used book collection center of the committee. He has graciously consented to assist the committee in this operation, and part of the facilities of Calvin College library are being used for this purpose. With his knowledge of books, etc., Mr. De Klerk is making a valuable contribution to this committee. We are grateful for a place to store books awaiting shipment in the Calvin College library building.



We are also grateful to those people who have contributed valuable books for this library assistance program to churches overseas, and we would again call this to the attention of all our consistories and churches. Any number of good books such as reputable commentaries, works in systematic theology, in church history (especially in the Reformed tradition), and other solid theological works can be used. Since the committee would also like to grant assistance for pastors' libraries abroad, many books such as Cruden's Concordance, the volumes of Edersheim, and the like can be used with profit. We are hopeful that this program will be well underway at the end of the year.

In regard to the third phase of this committee's program, the providing of service internships in particular aspects of ministry, we are now working on our first one for the summer period. Hopefully this program should be a fruitful avenue of service in the years ahead.

The committee has continued to move deliberately during the past year, evaluating requests, and laying the groundwork for a steadily increasing ministry in the years ahead. For an effective ministry in the areas sketched above we would request the continuing prayers and financial support of God's people. We have already committed ourselves to an additional \$1,100.00 for book expenditures for libraries abroad, and to at least \$5,600.00 in student support of Calvin Seminary. We thank God that in these ways we might be able to assist the growth and the ministries of various churches abroad. We are especially encouraged by a large gift from one of the member families of our denomination.

We are hopeful that the churches will make an attempt to become acquainted with the men whom we support and with the programs which we seek to expedite on behalf of the entire church.

Valuable used books should be sent: % Mr. Peter De Klerk, CEACA, Calvin Theological Seminary, 3233 Burton Street SE, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506.

Since the committee has now completed two years of work, the matter of membership in the committee was recently considered. Synod established no specific terms of service, and we suggest the following schedule of membership expiration: 2 in 1972, 2 in 1973, 3 in 1974. The committee agrees mutually that the terms of the Rev. Duane VanderBrug and the Rev. Ralph Heynen may be regarded as expiring in 1972. Prof. Ed Vander Weele and the Rev. Robert Recker in 1973, the Rev. James Lont, Mr. Peter Vande Guchte, and Dr. Eugene Rubingh in 1974.

The committee further recommends that the Rev. Duane VanderBrug and the Rev. Ralph Heynen be reappointed for a further term on the committee, since both members are eligible for an additional term of service and have given valuable service.

## STATEMENT OF CASH RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

March 1, 1971 - February 29, 1972

Cash Balance, March 1, 1971 .....	\$ 5,678.54
Contributions received from:	
Christian Reformed Churches .....	\$6,849.81
Personal gifts .....	1,035.00
Total Contributions .....	\$ 7,884.81
	<u>\$13,563.35</u>
Disbursements:	
Educational and living expense for J. Lin .....	\$2,909.00
Travel, educational and living expense for C. De Kretser .....	3,425.73
Book purchase for libraries abroad .....	1,500.00
Meeting expense .....	86.40
Printing and promotion .....	302.10
Total Disbursements .....	\$ 8,223.23
Cash Balance, February 29, 1972 .....	\$ 5,340.12

*Recommendations:*

1. That synod approve the work done by this committee.
2. That the Rev. Duane VanderBrug and the Rev. Ralph Heynen be reappointed for a three year term. *Ground:* They have served for two years and are eligible for reappointment.
3. That the work of the committee again be recommended to the churches for one or more offerings.

Respectfully committed,

E. Rubingh, Chairman  
 R. Heynen  
 J. Lont  
 P. Vande Guchte, Treasurer  
 D. VanderBrug  
 E. Vander Wee  
 R. Recker, Secretary

## REPORT 12

### FUND FOR NEEDY CHURCHES

#### DEAR BROTHERS:

The Fund for Needy Churches Committee respectfully submits its report for the year to the Synod of 1972.

#### I. MEMBERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION

A. The committee (the Synod of 1958 decided that the F.N.C. committee is to be composed of three laymen and two ministers.)

President—Mr. George Vande Werken of Westchester, Illinois

Vice President—Mr. John Swierenga of Elmhurst, Illinois

Secretary—Rev. Henry De Mots of Tinley Park, Illinois

Treasurer—Mr. Henry Wierenga of Oak Lawn, Illinois; Rev. Harry Arnold of Lansing, Illinois

B. Committee for the coming year:

Mr. George Vande Werken and Rev. Henry De Mots have both served a three year term and are eligible for another three year term. The committee recommends that both be reappointed for a second three year term. The terms of the other members, Mr. John Swierenga, Mr. Henry Wierenga and Rev. Harry Arnold do not expire at this time and all three men will continue to serve on the committee.

#### II. WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

The F.N.C. Committee received and processed 147 applications for the year 1972. The following tabulation will indicate the scope of our work and is presented to you for your information:

Applications—147

Assistance granted—145 churches

Children allowances—304

Total families in these churches—5,088

Average size of these churches—36 families

New churches—6

Mergers—0

Disbanded—2

#### III. MATTERS REQUIRING SYNODICAL ATTENTION

A. We request that our secretary and treasurer be consulted on matters pertaining to the F.N.C. when considered either by synod or its advisory committee, and that they be given the privilege of the floor. In the event that these men cannot attend, we request that another member of the committee be heard and given the privilege of the floor.

B. Recommendations:

1. We recommend that the minimum salary for ministers serving churches which receive assistance from the F.N.C. be set at \$7,500 for 1973.

2. We recommend that the per family contribution toward the minister's salary in congregations receiving aid from F.N.C. in 1973 be not less (and if possible more) than \$114.00 in the United States and not less (and if possible more) than \$109.00 in Canada.

3. We recommend that the per family quota for 1973 be set at \$10.50. This is based on a minimum salary of \$7500.00.

4. We recommend that a child's allowance of \$250.00 be granted for every child up to 19 years of age, but excluding those who have completed high school.

5. We recommend that \$350.00 mileage allowance be given to each minister. Each church is required to pay a minimum of \$500.00 mileage to its minister over and above the salary paid.

6. We recommend that Mr. George Vande Werken and Rev. Henry De Mots be reappointed for additional three year terms.

C. The Synod of 1971 submitted Overture 41 to the F.N.C. Committee for its study and recommendation to the Synod of 1972 (cf. Art. 32 I, 6, p. 22). The F.N.C. Committee has studied Overture 41 and submits the following to synod for its consideration. (See Appendix A)

D. The F.N.C. Committee protests the action of the Synod of 1971 in instructing the committee to provide assistance of \$7,000.00 for salary subsidy for the Garfield Christian Reformed Church beginning January 1, 1972. (cf Art. 37, II, p. 25) Our protest is based on considerations presented in Appendix B.

Respectfully submitted,

Fund for Needy Churches Committee  
Henry De Mots, Secretary

#### APPENDIX A (Study Report)

DEAR BROTHERS:

The Synod of 1971 has referred Overture 41, submitted to synod by Classis Huron, to the F.N.C. Committee, for study and recommendations. (cf. Acts of Synod, 1971—Art. 32, 166) The F.N.C. Committee has taken note of Overture 41 and responds to it as follows:

1. Classis Huron overtures synod, "To instruct the F.N.C. Committee to take into account also child(ren)'s allowance when determining the minimum per family contribution toward the minister's support." The F.N.C. does take into consideration the needs of the pastor's family by granting an automatic \$250.00 allowance for *every* child in the family, up to 19 years of age, but excluding those who have completed high school. We believe that this is a good rule of thumb by which to be guided. The committee is not certain of the exegesis of this recommendation of Classis Huron, but if it means that the need of *each* pastor's family must be individually scrutinized and evaluated, it believes that this is an impossible task for a denominational committee. How-

ever, while the committee is guided by the synodically approved rules referred to above, exceptions are acknowledged and made when unusual circumstances dictate. It is our recommendation that the present rule for determining both minimum contribution and child allowance be maintained and that the committee be allowed the *continued use* of its discretionary power.

2. To instruct the F.N.C. Committee to accept those churches as "needy" when the total of the minimum salary *plus* children's allowance is more than the "number of families, times the minimum per family contribution toward the support of the minister." Response—The F.N.C. Committee recommends that synod reject this proposal of Classis Huron. The "cut off" for F.N.C. churches in the past has been set at 60-65 families. Some churches reaching this plateau continue for some time to receive child allowance while they make the transition from subsidy to self-supporting status. Also, a few churches, although much smaller than the 60-65 family "cut-off" size, have voluntarily assumed full support of their minister. The committee, while congratulating such churches on their action has always cautioned the consistory that this action should not be taken at the personal expense of its pastor. It has always been the policy of the committee to encourage churches to move in the direction of self-supporting status. This we believe is also the mind of synod. This recommendation of Classis Huron, as we understand it, would reverse this direction and encourage a spirit of dependence on the denominational F.N.C. fund. Reformed church polity has always placed the basic responsibility for a pastor's support with the consistory and local congregation. This principle should be zealously guarded.

3. "Synod has urged all consistories that 'all of our ministers receive a salary at least commensurate with the minimum set annually for needy churches' and 'if a consistory is unable to meet that minimum, it should unhesitatingly appeal to the F.N.C.'" Response—The F.N.C. Committee recommends that synod reject this proposal. We have great reservations concerning the grounds Classis Huron gives for its position. The language is far too sweeping in scope. It speaks of "*all* of our ministers" and "if a *consistory* is unable to meet the minimum it should unhesitatingly appeal to the Fund for Needy Churches." It appears to the committee that this places the F.N.C. in an entirely new context and could well make shambles of the present rules whereby we are guided. We request that synod maintain the present structure in which the F.N.C. Committee operates. This overture appears designed to increase the number of churches qualifying as "needy" churches, which is clearly contrary to the intent of synod.

4. "That synod instruct the F.N.C. Committee 'To change the rules in accordance with this overture. *Ground*: By taking only the minimum per family contribution toward the minister's support, the F.N.C. is in fact discriminating against large minister's families in small churches—surely an injustice which cannot be the intention of synod.'" Response—We recommend that the present rules be allowed to stand and that synod allow the F.N.C. Committee to exercise its judgment in the interpretation and application of the rules so that the "discrimination against

large families in small churches" and other inequities be kept at a minimum. (Note—every child under 19 in a family, no matter how large the family, receives an allowance of \$250.00) The ground adduced by Classis Huron charges the F.N.C. Committee with discrimination. We believe that if there is discrimination the charge should be layed at the door of the local consistory. The F.C.N. Committee shares the concern of Classis Huron, but believes that a fair and prudent interpretation of the rules is a better way to deal with this problem. It should finally be noted that "discrimination" or inequities in ministerial salaries referred to in the overture is by no means limited to the churches being supported by the F.N.C. Probably there is no area in which there is greater equality than among the churches supported by F.N.C. although not always on the desired level.

Humbly Submitted,  
Henry De Mots

#### APPENDIX B

##### DEAR BROTHERS:

The Synod of 1971 instructed the F.N.C. Committee to give assistance in the amount of \$7,000.00 for salary subsidy to the Garfield Christian Reformed Church beginning January 1, 1972, by way of exception to the present rules, for one year.

##### *Grounds:*

1. Precedent for such action was set by synod's concern for providing for the "present need of the Manhattan C.R.C." (cf Acts of Synod 1966, p. 84, 85.)
2. The purpose for which the fund is intended, i.e., salary subsidy, is consistent with the purpose of the F.N.C.
3. By action of Classis Chicago North on May 19, 1971, the Garfield congregation is now organized as a calling church.
4. The very recent date of this action by Classis Chicago North has made it impossible for this request to be received and studied before that time. (Acts of Synod 1971 — Art. 37 — 11)

The F.N.C. Committee responds to this as follows:

1. The committee has complied with the instruction given to it by the Synod of 1971.
2. The F.N.C. Committee protests the action of the Synod of 1971 for the following reasons:
  - a. This action, involving an expenditure of \$7,000 in a very tight budget, was taken without consultation with the F.N.C. Committee or its representatives, who were available to the advisory committee and to synod itself.
  - b. The Manhattan precedent to which appeal was made is no precedent. The Manhattan C.R.C. was paying part of the salary of its pastor. It requested a larger subsidy allowance than a strict interpretation of the rules permit. However, as the F.N.C. Committee reported to the

Synod of 1967 (cf Arts 118-V-p. 78) "its rules are sufficiently elastic to take care of such exceptional cases." Garfield C.R.C. by contrast was contributing nothing to its pastor's salary. Therefore synod should not have appealed to Manhattan as a precedent.

c. This action is a contradiction of synod's declaration, "that an organized church which cannot support itself should not ordinarily become a calling church until it has reached at least the level of thirty families." (Acts of Synod 1971, Art. 32, II, B, 2, p. 23) The Garfield C.R.C. numbered 12 families at the time of synod's action.

3. The F.N.C. Committee respectfully requests that the instruction re Garfield be not repeated for 1973 and that similar "instructions," quite at variance with the function of the F.N.C. and synod's own recommendations in 1971 be limited to this one exception.

Respectfully Submitted,

Henry De Mots, Secretary

FUND FOR NEEDY CHURCHES, INC.

CANADIAN ACCOUNT

Statement of Cash Receipts and Disbursements  
for the year ending January 31, 1972  
(In Canadian Dollars)

Canadian Balance Fund February 1, 1971		\$17,043.63
<u>Receipts</u>		
Quota payments from classical treasurers	\$62,663.83	
Transfer from United States account	75,000.00	
Exchange gain	572.83	
Total receipts		<u>138,236.66</u>
Total funds to be accounted for		155,280.29
<u>Disbursements</u>		
Salary subsidy payments	95,343.07	
Child allowance payments	27,049.31	
Car allowance payments	14,498.40	
Moving	3,554.70	
Total Disbursements		<u>140,445.48</u>
Canadian Fund balance January 31, 1972		14,834.81
Cash Account - Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce		14,834.81

FUND FOR NEEDY CHURCHES, INC.

United States Account

Statement of Cash Receipts and Disbursements  
for the year ending January 31, 1972

United States Fund Balance February 1, 1971		\$101,858.14
<u>Receipts:</u>		
Quota payments from classical treasurers	\$328,560.17	
Interest on Savings Accounts	2,684.19	
Refunds and gifts	703.96	
Total receipts		<u>331,948.32</u>
Total Funds to be accounted for		433,806.46
<u>Disbursements:</u>		
Salary subsidy payments	233,112.72	
Child allowance payments	48,882.93	
Automobile allowance	29,544.56	
Moving	5,603.34	
Refund	374.00	
Stationery & supplies	126.80	
Audit expense	195.00	
Honorarium	1,200.00	
Committee expense	544.73	
Postage	114.20	
Transfers to Canadian account	75,000.00	
		<u>394,698.28</u>
United States Fund balance January 31, 1972		39,108.18



CASH ACCOUNTS:

First National Bank of Evergreen Park checking account	34,108.18
Tri-City Savings & Loan Association	<u>5,000.00</u>
	39,108.18

FUND FOR NEEDY CHURCHES, INC.SCHEDULE BSubsidy payments for year ending January 31, 1972

<u>CLASSIS</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Salary Subsidy</u>	<u>Child Allowance</u>	<u>Car Allowance</u>	<u>Moving</u>
<u>Alberta North</u>					
Barrhead-Westlock	\$4130.00	\$3530.00	\$250.00	\$350.00	
Edson	5200.00	3600.00	1250.00	350.00	
Grand Prairie-LaGlance	4312.50	4000.00	312.50		
Peers	4900.00	4300.00	250.00	350.00	
Stony Plain	2285.50	1748.00	187.50	350.00	
<u>Alberta South</u>					
Bethel, Saskatoon	1986.67	1220.00	416.67	350.00	
Brooks	4927.00	3827.00	750.00	350.00	
Burdett	5501.15	3800.00	750.00	350.00	\$601.15
High River	5370.00	4520.00	500.00	350.00	
Medicine Hat	1800.00	1200.00	250.00	350.00	
Regina	4463.25	3219.00	195.15	273.10	776.00
Taber-Vauxhall	811.00	461.00		350.00	
<u>British Columbia</u>					
Agassiz	4450.00	3100.00	1000.00	350.00	
Burnaby	4110.00	2760.00	1000.00	350.00	
Chilliwack	1722.50	560.00	812.50	350.00	
Port Alberni	3100.00	1250.00	1500.00	350.00	
Telkwa	5677.00	3827.00	1500.00	350.00	
Terrace	1608.00	758.00	500.00	350.00	
Vernon	1628.00	1072.00	125.00	175.00	256.00
<u>Cadillac</u>					
Rudyard	500.00		500.00		
Lake City					
<u>California South</u>					
Chula Vista	3350.00	2000.00	1000.00	350.00	
Grace, Bellflower	3050.00	1950.00	750.00	350.00	
<u>Central California</u>					
Palo Alto	4210.00	2860.00	1000.00	350.00	
Sacramento	3850.00	2500.00	1000.00	350.00	
Visalia	3505.25	1500.00	1000.00	350.00	655.25
<u>Chatham</u>					
Blenheim	3480.00	2100.00	750.00	630.00	
Dresden	3226.25	2482.50	437.50	306.25	
Forest	3143.00	2718.00	250.00	175.00	
Ingersoll	2098.00	1748.00		350.00	
Wallaceburg	1787.50		1437.50	350.00	
<u>Chicago North</u>					
Winfield	1945.67	1300.00	166.67	105.00	374.00

<u>Classis</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Salary Subsidy</u>	<u>Child Allowance</u>	<u>Car Allowance</u>	<u>Moving</u>
<u>Chicago South</u>					
Richton Park	4688.00	3088.00	1250.00	350.00	
<u>Columbia</u>					
Conrad	748.25	333.30	41.70	54.00	319.25
Gallatin	4260.00	3410.00	500.00	350.00	
Calvin, Portland	1768.00	1168.00	250.00	350.00	
Calvin, Spokane	4980.00	3380.00	1250.00	350.00	
Trinity, Vancouver	5749.50	4212.00	1187.50	350.00	
<u>Eastern Canada</u>					
Charlottetown	4182.00	3332.00	500.00	350.00	
Cornwall	2249.00	1649.00	250.00	350.00	
Halifax	6759.19	4500.00	625.00	350.00	1284.19
Kemptville	5557.50	4520.00	687.50	350.00	
Pembroke	3291.00	2441.00	500.00	350.00	
Ottawa East	1322.99	123.00	937.49	262.50	
Renfrew	4828.00	3728.00	750.00	350.00	
Truro	3632.50	2243.00	520.83	350.00	518.67
<u>Florida</u>					
Miami	1568.00	468.00	750.00	350.00	
Pinellas Park	2600.00	2000.00	250.00	350.00	
<u>Grand Rapids East</u>					
Lowell	3502.00	2652.00	500.00	350.00	
Middleville	3856.00	2756.00	750.00	350.00	
Portland	4458.00	4108.00		350.00	
Grace	3149.50	2132.00	667.50	350.00	
<u>Grand Rapids West</u>					
Bristolwood	4334.00	3484.00	500.00	350.00	
Cedar Springs	4876.00	3276.00	1250.00	350.00	
Comstock Park	2600.00	2000.00	250.00	350.00	
<u>Hackensack</u>					
Broomall	3140.00	2040.00	750.00	350.00	
Franklin Lakes	850.00	500.00		350.00	
Lodi	3850.00	2500.00	1000.00	350.00	
Madison Ave., Paterson	3187.50	2125.00	625.00	437.50	
Monsey	4626.70	3500.00	437.50	350.00	339.20
Terra Ceia	3153.25	2684.50	250.00	218.75	
<u>Hamilton</u>					
York	1209.75	197.25	750.00	262.50	
Simcoe	1559.00	271.50	937.50	350.00	
<u>Holland</u>					
St. Joseph	1944.72	1214.60	125.00		605.12
<u>Hudson</u>					
Ferrisburg Vt.	2226.30	1736.30	250.00	240.00	
Framingham	2447.34	1538.46	365.38	130.00	413.50
Manhattan	3350.00	3000.00		350.00	
North Haledon	1671.75	1193.82	197.93	280.00	
Paramus	6000.00	4400.00	1250.00	350.00	
Silver Spring, MD	3980.00	3380.00	250.00	350.00	

<u>Classis</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Salary Subsidy</u>	<u>Child Allowance</u>	<u>Car Allowance</u>	<u>Moving</u>
<u>Huron</u>					
Blyth	1504.00	1154.00		350.00	
Collingwood	850.00	850.00			
Exeter	647.75	511.50	31.25	105.00	
Lucknow	2905.00	1055.00	1500.00	350.00	
Orangeville	3744.00	2144.00	1250.00	350.00	
Stratford	2096.15	1221.32	552.09	204.05	118.69
<u>Illiana</u>					
Beacon Light, Gary	2600.00	2000.00	250.00	350.00	
Bethel, De Motte	1692.00	1092.00	250.00	350.00	
Crown Point	3876.00	3276.00	250.00	350.00	
Indianapolis	2352.88	1867.00		233.33	252.55
Peace	1318.00	468.00	500.00	350.00	
<u>Kalamazoo</u>					
Decatur	4050.00	3200.00	500.00	350.00	
Faith	4106.00	2756.00	1000.00	350.00	
Northern Heights	3398.00	2548.00	500.00	350.00	
South Bend	4859.79	2946.66	604.16	204.15	1104.82
<u>Lake Erie</u>					
Cherry Hill, Inkster	4438.00	3588.00	500.00	350.00	
Columbus	1525.75	962.00	125.00	175.00	263.75
Flint	4004.67	3588.00	416.67		
Jackson	4272.00	3172.00	750.00	350.00	
Lambertville	4438.00	3588.00	500.00	350.00	
Maple Heights	2500.00	1900.00	250.00	350.00	
Roseville	3350.00	2500.00	500.00	350.00	
Saginaw	3918.00	3068.00	500.00	350.00	
Troy	4522.00	3172.00	1000.00	350.00	
<u>Minnesota North</u>					
Bloomington	1256.00	156.00	750.00	350.00	
Brandon	2200.00	1600.00	250.00	350.00	
Brooten	3585.50	2548.00	687.50	350.00	
Clara City	5350.00	4250.00	750.00	350.00	
Crookston	5662.00	4212.00	750.00	700.00	
Emo	3390.00	2540.00	500.00	350.00	
Hancock	3787.50	3250.00	187.50	350.00	
Thunder Bay	2400.00	1550.00	500.00	350.00	
Bejou	1250.00	750.00		500.00	
Ogilvie	1000.00	1000.00			
<u>Minnesota South</u>					
Bigelow	3878.50	3200.00	500.00	87.50	
Holland Center S.D.	3800.00	3200.00	250.00	350.00	
Mt. Lake	3850.00	3500.00		350.00	
Holland	3545.83	3208.33	104.17	233.33	
Hull, N.D.	4190.00	2340.00	1500.00	350.00	
<u>Muskegon</u>					
Fruitport	4267.25	2860.00	1156.25	251.00	
Grace, Muskegon	4382.00	3032.00	1000.00	350.00	
Green Ridge	4792.00	3692.00	750.00	350.00	
<u>North Central, Iowa</u>					
Ackley	3600.00	2750.00	500.00	350.00	
Britt	4450.00	4100.00		350.00	
Cedar Falls	5034.90	3692.00	562.50	350.00	430.40
Iowa Falls	3508.50	2830.00	100.00	262.50	316.00

<u>Classis</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Salary Subsidy</u>	<u>Child Allowance</u>	<u>Car Allowance</u>	<u>Moving</u>
<u>Orange City</u>					
Hartley	5065.00	4715.00		350.00	
Hope, Hull	3398.00	2548.00	500.00	350.00	
Le Mars	3096.25	2207.50	395.75	290.00	203.00
Omaha	5646.00	3796.00	1500.00	350.00	
Sioux City	4438.00	3588.00	500.00	350.00	
<u>Pacific Northwest</u>					
Bellingham	1762.75	780.00	500.00	350.00	132.75
Lynnwood	3250.50	2613.00	375.00	262.50	
Marysville	3378.00	2028.00	1000.00	350.00	
Seattle, Calvary	2794.00	2444.00		350.00	
<u>Pella</u>					
Cedar	800.00	200.00	250.00	350.00	
Tracy	5500.00	3900.00	1250.00	350.00	
<u>Quinte</u>					
Lindsay	788.33		583.33	205.00	
<u>Rocky Mountain</u>					
Alamosa	2274.00	1924.00		350.00	
Albuquerque	4330.00	3480.00	500.00	350.00	
Colorado Springs	2232.50	1820.00	62.50	350.00	
Denver, Fairview	950.00	650.00	125.00	175.00	
Denver, Trinity	2962.00	1612.00	1000.00	350.00	
Salt Lake City, First	3544.00	2444.00	750.00	350.00	
Phoenix, Orangewood	2100.00	1500.00	250.00	350.00	
<u>Sioux Center</u>					
Valentine	6000.00	4650.00	1000.00	350.00	
Rock Valley	1627.25	1061.75	166.75	205.00	193.75
Harrison	1350.00	1000.00		350.00	
<u>Toronto</u>					
Allison	2254.00	1154.00	750.00	350.00	
Orillia	1358.00	758.00	250.00	350.00	
<u>Wisconsin</u>					
Vesper	4350.00	3500.00	500.00	350.00	
	457,589.03	328,455.79	75,932.24	44,042.96	9,158.04

Schedule C  
1971 Quota Payments

<u>Families</u>	<u>Classis</u>	<u>1971 Quota</u>	<u>Payment as of January 31, 1972</u>	<u>Percentage of Quota</u>
1556	Alberta N.	\$11,670.00	\$ 6,006.07	52%
942	Alberta S.	7,065.00	4,422.59	63
1832	Brit. Col.	13,740.00	10,419.37	76
643	Cadillac	4,822.50	4,490.00	93
2359	Calif. S.	17,692.50	17,104.72	96
1039	Cent. Calif.	7,792.50	5,895.15	76
2058	Chatham	15,435.00	10,430.13	68
1347	Chicago N.	10,102.50	9,229.36	83
1541	Chicago S.	11,557.50	11,393.50	98
737	Columbia	5,527.50	5,413.17	98
948	E. Canada	7,110.00	5,724.76	81

<u>Families</u>	<u>Classis</u>	<u>1971 Quota</u>	<u>Payment as of January 31, 1972</u>	<u>Percentage of Quota</u>
437	Florida	3,277.50	2,977.34	91
3966	G. R. East	29,745.00	29,112.16	98
2590	G. R. South	19,425.00	19,288.17	99
2004	G. R. West	15,030.00	14,894.98	99
3158	Grandville	23,685.00	17,531.89	74
1159	Hackensack	8,692.50	8,468.46	97
2376	Hamilton	17,820.00	10,429.63	59
3053	Holland	22,897.50	22,966.57	100
1953	Hudson	14,647.50	13,548.31	93
1166	Huron	8,745.00	3,301.48	38
2221	Illiana	16,657.50	16,741.58	100
1735	Kalamazoo	13,012.50	12,537.95	96
1100	Lake Erie	8,250.00	7,698.18	93
1663	Minn. North	12,472.50	5,591.62	45
1096	Minn. South	8,220.00	7,794.18	95
1894	Muskegon	14,205.00	13,487.73	95
717	N. C. Iowa	5,377.50	5,355.00	100
1396	Orange City	10,470.00	10,443.82	100
1662	Pacific N. W.	12,465.00	6,800.29	55
1533	Pella	11,497.50	11,534.93	100
1305	Quinte	9,787.50	4,010.70	41
1483	Rocky Mt.	11,122.50	10,724.42	96
1457	Sioux Center	10,827.50	9,811.64	90
1871	Toronto	14,032.50	6,692.66	48
1246	Wisconsin	9,345.00	9,281.33	99
2633	Zeeland	19,747.50	19,670.16	100
1876		\$464,070.00	\$391,224.00	84%

**REPORT 13**  
**HISTORICAL COMMITTEE**

DEAR BROTHERS:

The work of the Historical Committee, especially that of cataloging official church records and microfilming the minutes of consistories and classes, has progressed to the committee's satisfaction during the past year. The services of Mr. E. R. Post in collecting and microfilming the minutes have been very much appreciated. Mr. Post is presently planning another spring offensive in an effort to obtain for microfilming the minutes of classes and consistories which have not yet been filmed and preserved. The committee again expresses the wish that those churches which have not yet complied with the request of synod to have their minutes microfilmed may soon agree to do so. The Archivist, Dr. Herbert Brinks, has facilitated the committee's work by organizing and keeping careful records of our present archival holdings and by reporting on the expenditures for the Colonial Origins Collection directly related to the acquisition and preservation of the church's archival materials. Although the committee expects the cost of procuring and microfilming minutes to be slightly higher this year than last, we recommend that synod again allocate the same amount as previously for this work.

Recommendation: That synod allocate the sum of \$10,000 as its share in the work of collecting and preserving the denomination's historical records.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. L. Oostendorp, Chairman  
Dr. H. Ippel  
Dr. S. Van Dyken  
Prof. H. Zwaanstra, Secretary

## REPORT 14

### INTER-CHURCH RELATIONS

DEAR BROTHERS:

Your committee, having undergone a considerable change in membership and a change in officers, has continued to carry out its mandate for inter-church relations and for relations with ecumenical organizations.

#### *A. Fraternal Delegation*

The Rev. Donald Wisse served as our fraternal delegate to the General Association of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and his report is on file. Among other things, he urged the Orthodox Presbyterian Church to assess the position of the Christian Reformed Church, in matters of concern, upon our official pronouncements and positions if we are to make progress in our fraternal relationship and our efforts toward unity.

Rev. R. Broekhuizen was named as our fraternal delegate to the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America (report on file), and Rev. Henry DeRooy to the General Assembly of the Reformed Presbyterian Church (Evangelical Synod), but he was unable to attend because of a change in the place of meeting. He sent his greetings by letter so no report as such is available.

Rev. Jacob Heerema served as our fraternal delegate to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Korea (Hapdong) and his report is on file. Rev. John Timmer served as our fraternal delegate to the Synod of the Reformed Church of Japan, 1971, and submitted a very informative report which is also on file.

We did not appoint a delegate to the Synod of Dordrecht of the Gereformeerde Kerken because there were no "appointable" persons on the scene. Sending a delegate would have involved a special trip to Europe.

#### *B. Ecumenical Organizations*

With respect to the World Alliance of Reformed Churches we can report two areas of contact. Dr. John Kromminga is a member of the North American Theological Committee of the WARC and as such he has been asked to represent our committee. This entails a report on his part to our committee of the activities of the Theological Committee and attendance at such meetings of the North American Area Council as are held in conjunction with the meetings of the Theological Committee. His attendance at the meetings of the Area Council is as an observer. Dr. Kromminga is very pleased with his membership on the Theological Committee and considers the meetings very profitable.

Our other contact with the WARC was through the delegation of Rev. Harold DeGroot as an observer to the meeting of the WARC in

Nairobi, Kenya in 1970. Your committee has analyzed the report of Rev. DeGroot and find that he was well received by the Alliance, that he was able to make a positive contribution to the meetings, that he was impressed with the vigorous witness of the historically Reformed delegates in what is a "mixed" membership of liberal and conservative tradition. While neither Dr. Kromminga nor Rev. DeGroot have expressed themselves on the matter of membership on our part, the positive thrust of their reports does bring up the possibility of such a consideration. We recommend, therefore, that synod authorize the Inter-Church Relations Committee to investigate further the desirability and feasibility of membership in this world service organization.

### C. *The Reformed Ecumenical Synod*

The Reformed Ecumenical Synod is meeting this summer in Australia. Our voting delegates are Dr. Gordon Spykman, Dr. Joel Nederhood and Mr. D. Farenhorst. The non-voting delegates will be the delegates of mission boards to the RES Missions Conference in New Zealand, namely Rev. E. VanBaak and Rev. W. Smedes.

Of concern to synod is the proposed revision of *The Constitution of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod* submitted by the Interim Committee of the RES and included in the appendix to this report (see Appendix A). Synod ought to address itself to this proposal with a view to instructing our voting delegates to the meeting of RES Australia 1972. Your committee has not been able to ready a recommendation at this time but will do so in its supplementary report.

### D. *Reformed Church in America*

Last year we reported the request of the Committee on Inter-Church Relations of the RCA that we enter into conversations, which had been discontinued some years previously due to the need to resolve some internal problems in the RCA. Your committee has met with representatives of the ICRC of the RCA and have mutually agreed that some inter-church activities on a local and grass-roots level would be the best approach to the pursuance of ecumenical relationships. A joint committee has been named with two members of each communion for the purpose of calling together a more broadly based group of leaders in both denominations in the Grand Rapids-Holland area, to discuss and to take whatever steps are necessary to initiate programs in which Reformed and Christian Reformed Church members could participate. The object of such programs would be to face tasks in the community which urgently need the attention of the Christian community, and in so doing to create an atmosphere of understanding and trust without which no ecumenical endeavors on the official level will prosper. We will report the progress of this endeavor. We will also continue our contact on the committee level.

### E. *The Gereformeerde Kerken (Vrijgemaakt)*

We received a letter dated December 1, 1971, from the Rev. P. Van Gorp on behalf of the deputies of the Gereformeerde Kerken for the correspondence with churches abroad in which he expresses the desire



of the deputies to initiate such action as will re-establish contact with our church, requesting among other things that we respond to a letter sent to us on January 29, 1969, and which was received as information by our Synod of 1969. We have responded to this letter in the light of the decisions of 1969 and the work that is being carried out by synod's Committee for Contact with the Canadian Reformed Churches which has, in a sense, pre-empted the work of our committee with the Gereformeerde Kerken (vrijgemaakt). We also offered to enter into direct discussions with any of their deputies who might be visiting our shores and *vice versa*. We also offered to discuss the exchange of fraternal delegates to our synods. They will report to their synod in April 1972.

#### F. *The Gereformeerde Kerken (Synodical)*

Your committee was given a mandate with respect to matters bearing upon our sister-church relationship with the Gereformeerde Kerken by the Synod of 1970, which mandate was fulfilled in measure but was continued as an "inquiry into and evaluation of recent theological trends in our sister church in the Netherlands and to advise the next synod whether or not such trends warrant a change in our relationship to these churches" (Acts 1970, p. 51, I, C, 1). The same synod sent a letter of "concern" to the Gereformeerde Kerken. We reported in 1971 that no reply had been received to the letter of our synod and that our fraternal delegate to the Synod of Sneek (1969-1970) had reported that said synod had declared that the position of Dr. Kuitert was not in harmony with the position taken by the synod of Amsterdam (1967-68). In response to an overture of Classis Eastern Canada, Synod of 1971 added to the mandate of 1970 the following: "That synod instruct the Committee on Inter-Church Relations to include in its inquiry the letter received from the Gereformeerde Kerken, and official pronouncements and decisions of the Synods of the Gereformeerde Kerken.

#### Grounds:

"a. The letter of April 6, 1971, was received after submission of the committee's report to synod and too late for proper analysis by the committee.

b. Since official decisions have now been taken, these should be carefully scrutinized" (Acts of Synod 1971, p. 50, I, C, 2.).

Synod also instructed the committee to submit its recommendations to the Synod of 1972.

The letter of April 6, 1971 from the General Synod of the Gereformeerde Kerken, received after our report was submitted to Synod of 1971, is printed in the Acts of Synod 1971, p. 690. It expresses appreciation for our reminder of mutual responsibility for maintaining the confession we share, and in the spirit of brotherhood, responds to our letter. It puts forth the position that each church has the responsibility to solve its own problems concerning the confession while being obligated to fully inform its sister churches of the nature of those problems and the solutions to the same, along with the clear rationale for arriving at such conclusions. It rejects the concept that all creedal matters must

be solved in consultation with sister churches, insisting that such a method is too laborious and unfruitful and would impose a burden upon sister churches.

The letter then goes on to discuss the specific matter of our concern. It indicates the nature of the decisions made by the synod and points to the unresolved aspects of the problem which necessitated the naming of a committee for continued discussion with a view to further action by the Synod of 1971-72. The letter ends with a strong commitment to do all that is possible to prevent the application of disciplinary measures and to maintain the unity of the church by faithfully listening to and believing the Word written. The letter also asks that we inform our sister church of our decisions with respect to the Nature and Extent of Biblical Authority.

We have begun our study of the decisions of Synod of Sneek (1969-70) and of the interim report of the committee for continued discussion, which report was sent to us as soon as it was available. We do not have an official record of the proceedings of the Synod of Dordrecht which at this time is still in session. From unofficial sources we learn that the synod is dealing with those matters which are our direct concern, and we will not know the extent of the official pronouncements and positions for some time. Your committee is convinced that there is very wide difference of opinion and position within the fellowship of the Gereformeerde Kerken and of its synod and that our assessment of that church's loyalty to the confession will have to be made on the basis of its final decisions.

We therefore recommend:

1. that synod take no further action at this time in regard to our relationship to the Gereformeerde Kerken.

Grounds:

a. The situation is still in flux in the churches of the Gereformeerde Kerken and the matter is being dealt with by the Synod of Dordrecht (1971-72).

b. An evaluation of the "trends in our sister church in the Netherlands" which might "warrant a change in our relationship to these churches" cannot be completed until it is clear which trends will prevail and which positions will finally be adopted.

c. We are still awaiting the decision of our own church (synod) in re the Nature and Extent of Biblical Authority, which, when it is forthcoming, should be submitted to the Gereformeerde Kerken for their consideration.

2. that the mandate of 1971 be continued for another year.

#### *G. Letter of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church*

Your committee also draws the attention of synod to a letter addressed to the Reformed Ecumenical Synod with copies to each member church from the Thirty-eighth General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in which it calls into question the creedal commitment of the Gereformeerde Kerken in the Netherlands and requests the RES to consider, in essence, whether the Gereformeerde Kerken can rightfully maintain membership in the RES (see Appendix B).

Your committee is not able to advise you as to the procedure which will be followed by the RES in dealing with this letter and its request. We do not know if the possibility exists that the Gereformeerde Kerken could be stripped of membership in the RES at the Australia meeting of its synod. If such a possibility does exist, synod may wish to give guidance to its delegates who will be faced with the deliberations and the decisions in such an exceedingly grave matter. Your committee would counsel against any definitive action by the RES at the meeting in Australia.

#### *H. Mandate and Task of the Committee*

Your committee would also inform synod that it has begun a study of the mandate and task of the Committee on Inter-Church Relations in view of the fact that a unified statement of mandate and task does not exist.

We also request synod to declare that all committees of synod with mandates in the area of inter-church relations shall report to the Committee on Inter-Church Relations by sending copies of their minutes and progress reports to the committee for information and evaluation, so that the Committee on Inter-Church Relations may be able to serve synod more fruitfully in an advisory capacity.

#### *I. Committee Membership*

Our records reveal that the term of Dr. John H. Bratt expires in 1972 and that he is eligible for another term of 3 years. We recommend that he be reappointed for another term.

#### *J. Committee Representation*

The secretary of your committee will represent the committee at the meeting of synod.

Respectfully submitted,

Arnold Brink, Pres.  
Tymen E. Hofman, Secretary  
John H. Bratt  
Jacob Eppinga  
Wm. P. Brink, ex officio

APPENDIX A  
PROPOSED REVISION\*  
THE CONSTITUTION  
of the  
REFORMED ECUMENICAL SYNOD

#### **I. NAME**

The name of this organization shall be Reformed Ecumenical Synod.

#### **II. BASIS**

The basis of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod shall be the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament as interpreted by the Confessions of the Reformed

\*This proposed revision was prepared by the RES Interim Committee and Dr. C. J. Verplanke in August, 1970 in Amersfoort, The Netherlands.

faith, namely, the Gallican Confession, the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, the Second Helvetic Confession, the Thirty-nine Articles, the Canons of Dordt, and the Westminster Confession. The Scriptures, in their entirety as well as in every part thereof, are the infallible and ever-abiding Word of the living triune God, absolutely authoritative in all matters of creed and conduct; and the confessions of the Reformed faith are accepted because they present the divine revealed truth, the forsaking of which has caused the deplorable decline of modern life.

### III. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod shall be:

1. To express the church's oneness in Christ and to promote the unity of the churches which profess and maintain the Reformed faith.
2. To give united testimony to the Reformed faith in the midst of the world living in error and groping in darkness, and to the many churches which have so lamentably departed from the truth of God's Holy Word. Only a whole-hearted and consistent return to the truth of Scripture, of which the gospel of Jesus Christ is the core and apex, can bring salvation to mankind and effectuate the so sorely needed renewal of church and world.
3. To confer together, as far as advisability or necessity may require, regarding missionary work of the churches at home and abroad.
4. To advise one another regarding questions and problems of import pertaining to the spiritual welfare and the scriptural government of the churches.
5. To strive to attain a common course of action with respect to common problems; likewise to issue joint resolutions regarding movements, practices, or dangers when joint statements are deemed necessary.

### IV. THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF AUTHORITY

The decisions of synod are advisory in character, but the member-churches are under obligation to take the decisions of synod under serious consideration in order that the purpose stated in Article III may be attained.

### V. MEMBERSHIP

1. Those churches shall be eligible for membership which
  - a) profess and maintain the Reformed faith and subscribe to the basis as expressed in Article II.
  - b) maintain the marks of the true church (the pure preaching of the gospel, the scriptural administration of the sacraments, and the faithful exercise of discipline) and conform to the main principle of Reformed polity, namely, the headship of Christ.
2. Admission to membership shall be by decision of the synod after investigation and recommendation by the Interim Committee. Application for membership shall be made to the synod through the office of the General Secretary at least three months before a synod meeting.

### VI. MEETINGS OF SYNOD

1. The synod shall meet normally every four (4) years.
2. Each synod shall designate the place and the calling church for the next meeting of synod. It shall be the duty of the calling church, through the office of the General Secretary, to make all necessary announcements and preparations for the forthcoming synod.

### VII. COMPOSITION OF SYNOD MEETINGS

1. Those who shall be seated at synod meetings are: voting delegates, non-voting delegates, advisers, fraternal delegates, observers, and guests.
2. a) Member churches shall be entitled to appoint delegates on the basis of their baptized membership according to the following plan:
  - 1) one (1) non-voting delegate for churches with fewer than 1,000;
  - 2) one (1) voting and one (1) non-voting delegate for churches with at least 1,000 but fewer than 10,000;
  - 3) two (2) voting and two (2) non-voting delegates for churches with at least 10,000 but fewer than 100,000;
  - 4) three (3) voting and three (3) non-voting delegates for churches with at least 100,000 but fewer than 300,000;
  - 5) four (4) voting and four (4) non-voting delegates for churches with at least 300,000.

- b. Only voting delegates shall have a vote in plenary meetings of synod, but all delegates shall have a vote in advisory committee meetings.
- c. A delegate may represent more than one member church but he shall not have more than one vote.
- 3. Advisers are theological professors or other persons with special qualifications to give advice to synod. Each member church may appoint up to two (2) advisers, who may be appointed to advisory committees, but shall have no vote.
- 4. Fraternal delegates are representatives sent by non-member churches which are considered eligible for membership and invited by the Interim Committee and the calling church to send such delegates. They have the right to speak and to attend meetings of advisory committees.
- 5. Observers are representatives sent by churches or organizations which have an interest in the cause of the synod and are invited by the Interim Committee and the calling church to send such observers. They may be invited to speak and to attend meetings of the advisory committees.
- 6. Guests are other brethren who have an interest in the cause of the synod and are invited by the Interim Committee and the calling church. They may speak in the meetings of synod upon invitation of the Moderator.
- 7. Voting delegates, non-voting delegates, and fraternal delegates shall express their agreement with the basis and purpose of the synod.

#### VIII. OFFICERS OF SYNOD

- 1. Each meeting of synod shall elect from the voting delegates a Moderamen consisting of a Moderator, a First Clerk, a Second Clerk, a First Assessor, and a Second Assessor. The election shall be by ballot without nomination.
- 2. It shall be the task of the Moderamen to manage the proceedings of the synod, to arrange the order of business for each session, and to make proposals to synod concerning advisory committees and their conveners.
- 3. It shall be the duty of the Moderator to preserve order, to direct deliberations upon all subjects that come before the synod and to take the vote. He shall decide questions on order, subject to an appeal to the synod by two voting delegates.
- 4. The First Clerk shall:
  - a) keep a complete roll of all seated persons;
  - b) take care of the papers belonging to the agenda of the synod, deliver them to the committees to which they are referred by the synod and re-accept them after settlement, and keep a record of the docket;
  - c) count the vote when requested to do so by the Moderator.
- 5. The Second Clerk shall record the minutes of the synod.
- 6. The First Assessor shall serve as the substitute for the Moderator.
- 7. The Second Assessor shall serve as the substitute for the clerks.

#### IX. GENERAL SECRETARY

- 1. Each synod shall appoint a General Secretary, who is the administrative and liaison officer of the synod and its committees and is responsible to the synod and the Interim Committee for carrying out their decisions and all the tasks of his office.
- 2. He shall carry on correspondence for the synod and its Interim Committee.
- 3. He shall receive the reports of the committees of synod and prepare, publish and distribute the papers for the agenda of synod. He shall publish and distribute the Acts of each synod, and other publications which the synod or the Interim Committee authorize.
- 4. He shall with the approval of the Interim Committee and in consultation with and in the name of the calling church, issue invitations to the meetings of synod. In consultation with the calling church and the convener of synod he shall make all necessary arrangements for the convening and the proper conduct of the meetings of synod.
- 5. He shall report to the synod and to the Interim Committee on his activities and on that of the Secretariat staff. He shall have the privilege of informing synod on the business of synod, especially as this concerns directly the tasks of his office.

6. He shall supervise the office personnel and be responsible for the proper functioning of the Secretariat.
7. He shall conduct an RES news service to publish information of importance to the synod and the member churches and shall take other measures of a literary character that will promote a Reformed ecumenism.

#### X. TREASURER

Each synod shall appoint a treasurer who shall receive the monies of the member churches and disburse funds under the direction of the General Secretary and the Interim Committee. He shall submit semi-annual reports for the General Secretary and the Interim Committee and an overall report to each meeting of synod. The treasurer's accounts shall be audited annually by an independent auditor.

#### XI. COMMITTEES

1. Each synod shall appoint an Interim Committee, which shall function in the name of the synod in the period between meetings of synod and is empowered to meet when necessary. The members of the Moderamen shall be members of the Interim Committee.  
The duties of the Interim Committee shall be to:
  - a) appoint members to all committees authorized but not appointed by synod, and to make replacements when necessary;
  - b) supervise the work of the General Secretary;
  - c) advise the calling church regarding the convening of the next synod.
  - d) direct the attention of the next synod to matters which to its mind demand consideration;
  - e) deal responsibly with all matters inadvertently overlooked or calling for action before the next meeting of synod.
2. Each synod shall appoint as many study committees as circumstances may require. For all major issues the study committee shall be composed of two or more regional committees. The conveners of these regional committees shall prepare the final report for the study committee to the synod.

Each regional committee shall complete its report before the end of the calendar year following the synod and shall report to the General Secretary that its task has been completed. The report(s) of each regional committee shall then be sent by its convener to the other convener(s) for study and comment. These conveners shall formulate a unified report by correspondence or, if this is impossible, may seek authorization of the Interim Committee to meet together.

The reports of the study committees must be in the hands of the General Secretary at least 15 months before the next meeting of synod.

3. At the recommendation of the Moderamen, the synod may appoint advisory committees to consider reports of the study committees and other materials on the agenda which require action, and to make recommendations to the synod as to their disposition. Members of the advisory committees shall be delegates of the member churches and advisers. The convener shall be chairman of his committee and as such responsible for the course of things in his committee. Each committee shall choose its own reporter(s).

#### XII. MATERIALS FOR THE AGENDA OF SYNOD

1. The synod shall receive only:
  - a) communications from member churches or their permanent committees (generale deputaatschappen);
  - b) reports from its committees and the General Secretary;
  - c) official documents from non-member churches and from organizations in which churches as such are cooperating.
2. At each synod member churches shall have opportunity to ask for advice regarding problems they are facing.
3. Materials for synod received at least one year before a meeting of the synod shall be published in a printed agenda. Materials received later, but at least three months before a meeting of the synod, shall be printed in a supplementary agenda. Materials received less than one month before a meeting of the synod shall not be considered except by special action of the synod.

4. The agenda, the supplementary agenda, other materials considered by the synod, and the minutes of the synod shall be published as the *Acts of Synod* in the English and Dutch languages. The English text shall be determinative.

### XIII. INAUGURATION OF SYNOD

1. The calling church(es) shall arrange a prayer service prior to the convening of synod.
2. The calling church(es) shall appoint a minister to convene the meeting of synod by prayer and a brief address.
3. The convener shall appoint three delegates of the synod in order to examine with the General Secretary the credentials of the delegates and to report to the meeting.
4. He shall supervise the election of the Moderamen in the order given in Article VIII.
5. After the election of the Moderamen the convener shall transfer the chair to the Moderator.

### XIV. ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. In the first session of the synod the docket shall be adopted and thereafter may be amended only by a two-thirds vote.
2. At the beginning of each day's session there shall be devotions and roll call and the minutes of the previous day's business shall be submitted for approval. The approval of the minutes of the final session is committed to the Interim Committee.
3. Materials which are not submitted to advisory committees shall be presented to the synod by a person designated by the officers of synod.
4. Advisory committees shall submit separate and written reports upon each subject entrusted to them and these shall be distributed to the synod.
5. In considering advisory committee reports the order shall be as follows:
  - a) The report shall be introduced and its recommendations moved.
  - b) If the advisory report concerns the report of a study committee and the recommendations of the advisory committee differ from those of the study committee, the latter shall be treated procedurally as a minority report. In such an event, no recommendations may be moved until the recommendations of both reports are taken into a general discussion. And if, in addition there is a minority report of the advisory committee and/or the study committee, it (they) too shall be included in the general discussion.
  - c) After sufficient, but not exhaustive, discussion the Moderator shall give opportunity to the reporter to move the recommendations of the majority report of the advisory committee and may then allow a substitute motion to adopt the recommendations of a minority report.
  - d) A substitute motion shall have priority. The Moderator shall have the right to refuse to entertain a substitute motion until he is of the opinion that there has been sufficient general discussion. He may also refer it to the advisory committee which shall consult with its mover.
  - e) If any amendment to a recommendation is moved and seconded, it shall be acted upon before the original motion.
  - f) The synod may, after discussion, refer a report to the advisory committee for revision.
6. No one, except the mover of the original motion, shall be allowed to speak more than twice on a particular report unless permission to do so is sought from, and granted by the Moderator.
7. All reports of committees and other papers read on the floor of synod shall be recorded in the minutes as read. Any difference between the original form of the report or paper as read on the floor and the final action of the synod shall be recorded as amendments to the motion to adopt the report or paper.

### XV. DEBATE AND VOTING

1. All who have the right to address synod, shall not do so without the permission of the Moderator. Every speaker shall address himself to the Moderator, and shall treat all who are seated in the synod with decorum and

- respect. No speaker shall be interrupted unless he is out of order or for the purpose of correcting mistakes or misrepresentations.
2. An appeal from a ruling of the Moderator must be seconded and is debatable. The Moderator has the privilege of making the final speech on the question before putting it to the vote.
  3. No delegate shall withdraw permanently from the synod without giving notice to the Moderator.
  4. Delegates ought not to abstain from voting unless for weighty reasons.
  5. When the Moderator has commenced taking the vote, no further debate or remark shall be admitted unless there has evidently been a mistake, in which case the mistake shall be rectified and the Moderator shall recommence taking the vote.
  6. With the exception of the cases in Articles XIV, section 1, and XVI and XV, 8, a simple majority of the ballots cast shall be required. All voting on persons shall be by secret ballot. If after two ballots there is no majority, voting shall be between those who received the highest and the next highest number of votes, including ties.
  7. It is the privilege of the Moderator to require a secret ballot in the case of important matters, if in his opinion there are weighty reasons for doing so.
  8. A motion for reconsideration shall be made only by a member of the prevailing side, shall be undebatable, and requires a two-thirds majority.

XVI. AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the synod, the amendment having been proposed by a member church or the Interim Committee at least one year before a meeting of synod.

Reformed Ecumenical Synod Secretariat  
1677 Gentian Drive, S.E.  
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49508

APPENDIX B

August 21, 1971

Christian Reformed Church  
Rev. William P. Brink, Stated Clerk  
2850 Kalamazoo Ave., S.E.  
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49508  
Esteemed Brethren:

The Thirty-eighth General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church has directed that copies of a letter sent by the Assembly to the Reformed Ecumenical Synod be sent to the member churches of the R.E.S. Accordingly, a copy of the letter (and an attachment to it) is enclosed.

May I call your attention also to the letter to all member churches of the R.E.S. dated February 26, 1971, from the Rev. Robert E. Nicholas, Stated Clerk of the Thirty-seventh General Assembly. That letter cites portions of the *Minutes of the Thirty-seventh General Assembly* which deal with other matters of concern to the member churches of the R.E.S.

Your brethren in Christ,  
The General Assembly of the  
Orthodox Presbyterian Church  
Richard A. Barker, Stated Clerk

August 21, 1971

The Reformed Ecumenical Synod  
The Rev. Paul G. Schrottenboer, General Secretary  
1677 Gentian Drive, S.E.  
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49508  
Fathers and brethren:

The Thirty-eighth General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, meeting May 24-29, 1971, in Wilmington, Delaware, determined to address the Reformed Ecumenical Synod as follows:



In view of the deviations from the apostolic teaching cited in the letter from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church to the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands dated April 6, 1971, and appended hereto, the Orthodox Presbyterian Church respectfully requests the Reformed Ecumenical Synod to determine whether the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands does, in fact, substantiate its contention that it still maintains its confessional commitment and thus submits to the authority of Christ through his Word. In making such a request, we call the attention of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod to the statements concerning this matter in the Rules and Standing Orders of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod to which all member churches are committed. The section on membership indicates that all denominations of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod "profess and maintain the Reformed Faith" and "therefore subscribe to the basis as expressed in Article II" of said document. And the basis itself states as "a fundamental requisite" that Reformed Churches stress "the headship of Christ and the marks of the true Church; the pure preaching of the Gospel, the scriptural administration of the sacraments, and the faithful exercise of discipline." It is difficult for us to understand how the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands can on the one hand declare that Dr. H. M. Kuitert's "negation of the historicity of the fall of man" is not in agreement with the confessional statement of the scriptural truth which "must also be maintained as authoritative by the church as having importance for the proclamation of the Gospel" and then on the other hand proceed to resolve that "the unity of the confession of the church is not (niet) so much threatened that special decisions would be necessary."

The Assembly further determined that a copy of this letter be sent to each member church in the Reformed Ecumenical Synod.

Your brethren in Christ,  
The General Assembly of the  
Orthodox Presbyterian Church  
Richard A. Barker, Stated Clerk

Attachment

April 6, 1971

The General Synod of the  
Reformed Churches in the Netherlands  
c/o Rev. K. J. Schaafsma,  
Prof. v. Bemmenlenlaan la  
Utrecht-5, The Netherlands  
Esteemed Brethren:

The General Assembly of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church instructed its Committee on Ecumenicity and Interchurch Relations to communicate with your synod providing examples of the serious differences between our two churches and indicating further our continued conviction that the difficulties of the sister-church relationship require this termination.

This action was prompted in part by your gracious letter to us in response to our indication of intention to end the sister-church relationship. In particular, we noticed that you indicated that you were aware only of our difference with reference to the World Council of Churches, and stated that no objections have reached you. The following items are an attempt to provide examples of those serious differences.

1. The World Council of Churches—The action of the Thirty-second General Assembly, 165 (*Minutes*, pp. 93-100) in response to your earlier decisions, now put into action by your application for membership.
2. Women in the Teaching or Ruling Office—The action of the Thirty-fourth General Assembly, 1967 (*Minutes*, pp. 100-102) in response to your report *The Place of Women in the Ministry of the Church*, which views of yours have now been put into practice by the admission of women to this office.
3. The decision that the declaration of the special general synod held in Assen from January 26 to March 17, 1926, respecting the interpretation of Genesis 2 and 3 is no longer in force in the churches. It was an overture on this matter which served as the occasion for the decision of the Thirty-

sixth General Assembly, 1969 (*Minutes*, pp. 104 and 112) to indicate its intention of bringing to an end the sister-church relationship between our two churches.

4. The Doctrine of Scripture—Exception has been taken by the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands to the declaration of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod of Potchefstroom (1958) (See especially, *The Acts and Reports of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod, 1968*, pp. 60, 307f.), stating that your synod cannot itself provide that which the Reformed Ecumenical Synod of Grand Rapids, 1963, asks for because of a “number of questions concerning the scope and nature of this authority which are still very much in discussion” (p. 308). The communication from your synod refers to several writings of your professors on the Scriptures which seem to us to contain repudiation of the historic Reformed view of the inspiration and infallibility of the Scriptures. The Thirty-seventh General Assembly, 1970 (*Minutes*, pp. 123ff.) has asked your synod to clarify its original objection and has at the same time briefly declared our own commitment.

These are examples that can be officially documented from actions of our assemblies. In addition the Christian Reformed Church in North America has specified more in length and in detail these serious differences. Acts of Synod, Christian Reformed Church in North America, 1970 Art. 99, pp. 50-53.

A more recent example is the declaration of your General Synod of Sneek, November 5, 1970, concerning the letters of protests against Dr. H. M. Kuitert's views on Genesis 1-3 and Romans 5.

The synod acknowledged Dr. Kuitert's “denial of the historicity of the fall into sin, as man's turning away from God at the beginning of human history” and at the same time declared “that the unity of the confession of the church is not (niet) so much threatened that special decisions would be necessary.” The synod acknowledged that one had denied the apostolic teaching but then took no disciplinary action. We regard this as a serious failure to follow the scriptural demand that the church must discipline those who deny the apostolic teaching.

For the sake of the cause of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, we pray that you will heed the admonition of your sister churches throughout the world and thus demonstrate that you are truly catholic and Reformed in your subjection to the Lord and his Word.

Fraternally yours,  
The Orthodox Presbyterian Church  
per The Committee on Ecumenicity  
and Interchurch Relations  
LeRoy B. Oliver, Chairman

**REPORT 15**  
**MINISTERS' PENSION FUND**

**DEAR BROTHERS:**

The primary task of the Ministers' Pension Fund is threefold: a) the financial support of our emeriti after age 65, b) the financial support of our emeriti due to disability at any age, and c) the financial support of the widows of our ministers. The purpose of the Supplemental Fund is to assist in meeting the financial needs of our emeriti, their widows or dependents, due to an emergency or "necessity of life" assistance in those cases where other forms of financial support—including assistance from local diaconates is not adequate. The Pension Fund has pre-determined fixed benefits, whereas the Supplemental Fund is flexible in its financial support.

The Synods of 1969 and 1970 adopted the principle of establishing an actuarially sound fund. This represents a basic policy change in operation. The former plan was a cash-in, cash-out operation, collecting quotas for needed beneficiary payments. The new plan creates a reserve fund for promised benefits. This is called "funding." This fund guarantees the future; the former fund could only look back. In our present transitional period, our pension quotas are performing two functions: a) meeting the current benefit needs of present beneficiaries who continued from the former plan, and b) developing the needed reserve fund for our present active participants. This is why we are under a rather steep quota for a period of time. Our needed actuarial reserve fund, as yet mostly unfunded, is \$14,900,000 as of January 1, 1972.

*Administration*

The year 1971 was a very eventful year, administratively. It was marked with an earnest effort toward progress, from administrative improvements to beneficiary service innovations. As of January 1, 1972, our census is as follows:

Active Participants:	340 through quota support
	193 by participant payments
Non-active Participants:	19 withdrawn for one year
	34 withdrawn for an indefinite period
Beneficiaries:	125 due to age
	8 due to disability
	95 widows
	15 recipients of supplemental assistance

Eleven classes were personally visited by the administrator in 1971 (Alberta North, Alberta South, British Columbia, Chatham, Hamilton, Huron, Minnesota North, Minnesota South, Orange City, Quinte, Toronto). Plans are to again visit as many in 1972. The purpose of

these appearances is to better acquaint our elders and ministers with the benefits and operations of the fund, as well as to answer any personal or congregational questions as to the finances or other matters relating to the administration of the fund.

The denomination was officially represented at the White House Conference on Aging-1971 by the administrator. Many other denominational agencies were also represented by individuals receiving such an invitation from President Nixon. The total conference registration was 3,400 specially selected leaders in the field of involvement with senior citizens. The objective of the conference was to arrive at basic policy solutions to problems as they affect elderly citizens. The final policy suggestions, as adopted by a majority vote in each area of concern, go to the president for consideration in new legislation proposals.

### *Enlarged Service*

Service improvement was of major importance to the committee in 1971. A survey test was undertaken regarding a few ideas under consideration. From the results and accompanying comments, three major changes were effected. Beginning January 1, 1972, benefit checks will be issued monthly rather than quarterly. A newsletter was begun which accompanies the benefit check, edited by the administrator, containing information pertinent to our emeriti and widows within both the U.S.A. and Canada.

Information was received from our survey that a few of our emeriti were living solely, or nearly so, from our pension checks because they never were participants in the Social Security or Canadian Pension Plans. We are now subsidizing these individuals from the Supplemental Fund up to \$1,000 annually (four in Canada, and four in the U.S.A.).

Many of our U.S. emeriti have had difficulty with Internal Revenue Service excluding part of their pension as a housing allowance as declared by Synod of 1967, so the committee requested a ruling. The official I.R.S. ruling dated December 10, 1971, states that emeriti ministers may exclude \$1,800 of their pension per year from their gross income for federal tax purposes to the extent used to rent or provide a home. Widows, however, are not entitled to the exclusion. A copy of the full ruling is available from the administrator upon request. Efforts are currently being made for a similar ruling for our emeriti in Canada.

Also, beginning January 1, 1972, in answer to Synod of 1971, the Ministers' Pension Fund will be the collecting and administrative agency for the Chaplain Deposit Fund. Full details have been mutually resolved between our two committees in the operation and administration of this new fund for our non-participating chaplains. The large number of non-active participants includes these chaplains now covered by this depository fund.

### *Financial Observation*

There is a steady improvement in over-all quota paying efforts by our congregations. We are very grateful for this cooperation. A steady

increase in 100% quota paying classes is being experienced (84% of our congregations are currently paying 100% quota).

Since we have undertaken an obligation with our present beneficiaries, and our current pastors regarding their pension, we are absolutely dependent upon a 100% commitment to the quota payment.

*Reply to Overture No. 79 and No. 80, Synod of 1971*

The 1971 Synod referred Overtures 79 and 80 to the Pension Fund Committee for study and asked the committee to report to the Synod of 1972.

Both of the overtures object to the present rule which provides that the synodical quota for pensions covers only one minister per organized congregation and that any organized congregation with more than one minister is required to pay a participant payment for such additional minister.

The Pension Fund Committee has given serious consideration to the thrust of these overtures. Although it recognizes that a valid case can be developed against the present rule, the committee believes that, on balance, it is preferable to retain the existing rule. Our reasons for this position may be summarized as follows:

1. The present system is based on the assumption (valid with only a few exceptions) that each family in the denomination is served by one minister and the philosophy that every family in an organized church should be required to pay the same quota toward the pension cost of all ministers. Churches which choose to utilize more than one minister should pay not only the current salary of the additional minister(s) but also the additional pension cost which we view as deferred compensation.

2. The present system has assumed that the additional ministers are generally employed by the larger churches. These congregations can normally afford the cost of \$950.

3. Should the present rule be revoked for second ministers, it would become an administrative problem to determine for which "associate ministers" the present participant payments would be properly revoked. The duties of "assistant ministers" range from full-time assistant pastors to part-time laborers (with primary duty in schools, hospitals, etc.) to merely nominal associates (a place to hold one's ministerial credentials).

4. Any revocation of the present assessment of \$950 for each additional minister would mean that the pension quotas would need to be increased to offset the loss of revenue. This would be unfortunate for the small churches which are already struggling to meet the present pension quota.

In view of these considerations, the committee urges synod to retain the present rule and so declare itself in answering Overtures 79 and 80.

### *Deaths*

The following beneficiaries and participants died since last synod:

Mrs. Lena Bruinooge — 5-11-71 (widow)

Rev. Herman Bel — 5-19-71

Mrs. Reuben De Haan — 8-71

Dr. Ralph Danhof — 10-13-71

Mrs. Joanna Hayenga — 10-30-71 (widow)

Mrs. John Meeter — 12-10-71

Rev. Henry A. Venema — 1-31-72

(To be continued in Supplemental Report, if necessary)

### *Emeritations*

The following persons were emeritated since last synod:

Rev. Maynard Keuning, due to age

Classis Northcentral Iowa, Effective 10-1-71

Rev. William Verwolf, due to age

Classis Minnesota South, Effective 1-1-72

Rev. Klaas Hart, due to age

Classis Chatham, Effective 1-15-72

Rev. Edgar Smith, due to age

Classis Holland, Effective 1-15-72

Rev. Walter Hekman, due to age

Classis Zeeland, Effective 5-1-72

Rev. Thomas Yff, due to age

Classis Grand Rapids South, Effective 5-15-72

Rev. John H. Steenwyk, due to age

Classis Cadillac, Effective 5-28-72

Rev. John Guichelaar, due to age

Classis Grand Rapids East, Effective 6-1-72

(To be continued in Supplemental Report, if necessary)

### *Proposed New Service: Group Life Insurance*

Our actuaries, Marsh & McLennan, were consulted on the specifications of the program. After considering several alternate plans, your committee selected as best meeting the needs of our ministers the plan as set forth in Appendix A of this report. Numerous insurance carriers were contacted by Marsh & McLennan and their findings are summarized in Appendix A along with certain excerpts from their report.

Your committee believes this group insurance program meets a need existing for many of our ministers at a cost which is within their budgets. Naturally, some churches and organizations will provide this benefit for their ministers.

Since the program is voluntary, the insurance companies require that 75% of eligible persons participate. The enrollment period will begin July 1, 1972, if synod approves. If there are any questions the committee invites inquiries prior to that date as well as thereafter.

The committee wholeheartedly recommends this plan to our ministers and solicits their participation.

See Recommendation 7.

I. Pension Fund Income Statement 2/1/71 through 1/31/72

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget Total</u>	<u>Percent To Total</u>
Income -			
Quota	\$ 925,152.70	\$ 986,000.00	94%
Participant			
Payments	148,817.21	71,250.00	209%
Interest	42,457.79	25,000.00	170%
	<u>\$1,116,427.70</u>	<u>\$1,082,250.00</u>	103%
Expense -			
Pension & Disability	\$ 802,441.67*(1)	\$ 750,000.00	107%
Emeriti Moving	5,270.84	10,000.00	53%
Canadian Exchange	2,479.04*(2)	15,000.00	17%
Termination Payments	186.83	4,000.00	5%
Administration	16,051.25*(3)	15,000.00	107%
Church Relations	<u>1,999.67</u>	---	--
	\$ 828,429.30	\$ 794,000.00	
Actuarial Reserve	287,998.40	288,250.00	99%
	<u>\$1,116,427.70</u>	<u>\$1,082,250.00</u>	103%

II. Supplemental Fund Income Statement 2/1/71 through 1/31/72

Income -			
Interest	\$2,181.57		
Contributions	<u>3,470.71</u>	\$5,652.28	
Disbursements -			
Assistance Payments		<u>21,767.99</u>	(\$ <u>16,115.71</u> )

## III. Position Statements, January 31, 1972

A. Pension Fund

Assets:	Michigan National Bank	\$ 3,664.82	
	Bank of Montreal	1,471.72	
	Trust Account	<u>1,120,302.13</u>	\$1,125,438.67*(4)
Equities:	Net Worth 2/1/71	\$ 836,747.13	
	Fiscal Period Income to		
	Trust Account	287,998.40	
	Termination Payment Reserve	<u>693.14*(5)</u>	\$1,125,438.67

B. Supplemental Fund

Assets:	Michigan National Bank	\$ 900.42	
	Bank of Montreal	596.86	
	4% Savings	658.35	
	5% Savings	<u>31,954.09</u>	\$34,109.72
Equities:	Net Worth 2/1/71	\$50,225.43	
	Fiscal Period Income	<u>(16,115.71)</u>	\$34,109.72

\* \* \* \* \*

\* (1) Pension benefits were formerly computed quarterly, with the budget reflecting this payment procedure. On January 1, 1972, benefit payments began on a monthly basis. The figure includes a 13 month payment: \$62,124.31 for the extra month.

\* (2) Extreme variation from budget due to re-valuation of international currency market.

* (3) Administrator & Office Rental	\$9,380.00
Secretarial	674.53
Telephone, Postage, Supplies	1,575.98
Committee Expense	1,345.81
Fiduciary Bonds, Adm. & Treas.	518.75
Trust Fee	1,381.18
Audit	650.00
Equipment	525.00
	<u>\$16,051.25</u>
* (4) Unfunded liability is \$16,000,000.00 less \$1,125,438.67.	
* (5) Uncashed termination payment check:	

Proposed Budget

Proposed Budget - Pension Fund  
Year Ending January 31, 1974

Income:		
Quota (98.4% of 62,000 families)	@ \$ 22.00	\$1,342,000
Participant Payments (193)	@ \$950.00	183,000
Total Budget Income		<u>\$1,525,000</u>
Expense:		
Actuarial cost of pensions & disability, 40 year funding		\$1,490,000
Widow benefits	\$266,432	
Ministerial benefits	\$456,120	
Added to Reserve	\$722,552	
Emeriti Moving		10,000
Canadian Exchange Discount		5,000
Administration		17,000
Wages: Administrator, Secretary,		
Office Rental	\$ 12,000	
Supplies, Postage, Phone	\$ 2,000	
Committee Expense	\$ 1,000	
Audit, Fiduciary Bonds	\$ 1,000	
Equipment	\$ 1,000	
Church Relations		3,000
Total Budget Expense		<u>\$1,525,000</u>

*Recommendations*

1. That Mr. D. Vander Ploeg (Committee Chairman) and Mr. A. Walters (Committee Treasurer) be accorded the privilege of the floor, with Mr. J. Stoepker (Committee Administrator) as alternate for either.
2. That three appointments for a full three-year term be made from the following nominations:
  - a. Nominee Peter Brouwer (Grand Rapids Accountant)  
    Nominee Steven Snoey (Holland, Mich. Industrial Executive)
  - b. Incumbent Rev. G. Klouw (San Diego, Calif.)  
    Nominee Rev. John Van Ryn (South Holland, Ill.)
  - c. Nominee Donald Oosterhouse (Grand Rapids Attorney)  
    Nominee Harold Knoor (Grand Rapids Attorney)
 (See Appendix B.)
3. That synod approve a quota of \$22.00.
4. That synod approve a participant payment of \$950.
5. That synod approve the Supplemental Fund of the Ministers' Pension Committee as a benevolent cause for one or more offerings.



6. That synod reject Overtures No. 79 and No. 80 of Synod of 1971, and approve the Administrative Policy of the Ministers' Pension Fund.

"Each organized church will get credit for one minister. If a church has more than one minister, it is obligated to pay for each additional minister the annual participant payment."

7. That synod grant permission to the Ministers' Pension Fund to proceed in soliciting individual enrollments from our pastors for participation in the proposed Group Life and Accidental Death Insurance program as outlined in Appendix A.

Ministers' Pension Fund Committee,

David Vander Ploeg, Chairman  
 Alden Walters, Treasurer  
 J. F. Mellama, Secretary  
 Kenneth Bergsma  
 Dr. James Harkema  
 Rev. Gordon Klouw  
 Rev. John Van Harmelen  
 Jack W. Stoepker, Administrator

APPENDIX A

Exerpts from  
 Group Life and Accidental Death and  
 Dismemberment Insurance Report for the  
 Christian Reformed Church

February 1972

prepared by Marsh & McLennan

**Comments and Recommendations**

In order to provide The Christian Reformed Church with a complete perspective as to different variations in Group Life and Accidental Death and Dismemberment insurance programs, we have included benefit outlines to show four different programs along with monthly and annual premiums. We recommend that you adopt Plan A, as it provides meaningful life insurance protection for all ministers at a reasonable monthly premium. The following comments and recommendations are based on the premise that the Christian Reformed Church will adopt Plan A.

The benefit provisions of the policy to be issued, are included in the general information section of this report.

It has been our experience that a program of this type will be most effective if there is a central location such as the Ministers' Pension Fund which would be responsible for premium reporting, plan administration and claim submission.

In making the following recommendation, we have reviewed the benefits, premiums and retention (expense) charges of the various carriers. We view this program as one which is being instituted now and will be permanent. While the initial rates quoted by the Guardian and Federal Life Insurance Companies are attractive, their net cost over a ten year period is substantially higher than the Aetna and the Prudential.

Of the two companies, the Aetna and the Prudential, *we recommend the Prudential be the underwriter* of your program. Our reasons for this recommendation are as follows:

1. On a ten year average basis, their retention (expense) charges would be the lowest.
2. Claim service would be available through the Detroit office.

3. Particularly with respect to stabilization reserves, the Prudential is, in our opinion, more flexible. The costs reflected on the attached exhibits do not include the establishment of stabilization reserves.

#### **Premium Stabilization Reserve**

Both the Aetna and the Prudential would like to set up reserves for claims fluctuation in any given year. The Aetna would set up a reserve of \$28,900 and credit interest to this reserve at the rate of  $5\frac{1}{2}\%$  per year. The earnings from this reserve would be used to reduce their retention charges. If agreed to, this reserve would be set up immediately with excess premiums. As a result of setting up this reserve, the Aetna would grant, if experience (claims) were favorable, a discount of 41% in the fifth year.

The Prudential has indicated that if they were allowed to establish a reserve of \$30,000, their discount would be as much as 60%. In addition, they are prepared to let you decide how you wish to establish any reserve, that is, over a 1, 3, or 5 year period with a maximum contribution in any one year. This reserve would be directly credited with interest at the rate of  $5\frac{5}{8}\%$ . Their retention projection would not be affected in any way.

We have not included any benefits for ministers age 65 or over in this program.

The initial premium outlay of \$80,736, may be too great for your budget at this time. You may wish to consider deleting the Accidental Death and Dismemberment coverage under the program in the first year. If claims experience is favorable, this coverage could be purchased in the second year using the dividend earned in the first year. The annual premium for this coverage is \$9,048.

The estimated available dividend at the end of the first year is \$22,002, which would be payable four months after the end of the policy year. Therefore, in the second year, the church would pay a net premium of \$51,078. In addition, the Prudential would grant an additional discount of 5% which would further reduce the paid premium by approximately \$4,600.

#### **General Information**

**Effective Date of Policy** — Provided the minimum participation requirements have been satisfied, the insurance plan may be made effective on any date desired by the employer.

**Master Policy** — This proposal is an outline of the plan. A master policy setting forth the exact provisions and terms of the plan is issued to the policyholder.

**Certificate** — Each minister insured under the plan receives a certificate of insurance which outlines his benefits and privileges provided by the plan.

#### **Eligibility Requirements**

**Employee Coverage** — To be eligible, a minister must be actively at work on a full-time basis, working at least 30 hours per week on the effective date of insurance.

If a minister is not actively at work on the effective date of insurance, his insurance will be deferred until his return to active full-time work.

A minister will be deemed to be actively at work on each day of a regular paid vacation or on a regular non-working day, provided he was actively at work on the last preceding regular work day.

These provisions apply to both present and future eligible ministers.

**Description of Benefit** — Upon death from any cause, the amount of insurance for which the employee is insured will be paid to his beneficiary.

**Beneficiary** — The insured minister may designate any beneficiary or beneficiaries he desires, other than the employer, and make any appropriate changes whenever he wishes.

**Modes of Settlement** — The amount of insurance for which a minister is insured will be paid to his beneficiary in a lump sum. A minister may elect to have all or part of his insurance paid in installments, the amounts and terms of which shall be in accordance with those customarily offered for settlement of group life insurance policy proceeds at the time of election.

**Waiver of Premium** — If an insured minister becomes totally and permanently disabled prior to age 60, his life insurance will be continued in force without

further payment of premium on a year to year basis, subject to the periodic submission of evidence of total and permanent disability.

**Conversion Privilege** — Upon termination of employment or membership in the eligible classes, a minister may convert his insurance without evidence of insurability to an individual policy of life insurance. The application and first premium payment must be received within 31 days of such termination. Should a minister die during this 31 day period, the amount to which a minister would have been entitled to convert will be paid to his beneficiary.

#### Employee Group Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance

**Description of Benefit** — If the minister, while insured, suffers an injury as a result of accidental means and within 90 days after such injury (and as a direct result of it) suffers the loss of life, limb or eyesight, benefits will be provided up to the amount for which the minister is insured in accordance with the following schedule.

Full Amount of Insurance For Loss of	One-Half the Amount of Insurance for Loss of
Life	One hand or one foot
Both hands or both feet	Sight of one eye
Sight of both eyes	
One hand and one foot	
One hand and sight of one eye	
One foot and sight of one eye	

The total amount payable for all losses resulting from any one accident may not exceed the amount of insurance.

#### General Limitations and Exclusions

Accidental Death and Dismemberment does not cover any loss which . . .

1. occurs while a minister is a member of the Armed Forces of any country or international authority, (currently renegotiating this phrase to enable our chaplains to participate)
2. results from or is caused directly or indirectly by the following:
  - a. suicide or intentionally self inflicted injury while sane or insane.
  - b. insurrection, or by participation in or in consequence of having participated in a riot, or the commission of a felony.
  - c. disease or bodily or mental infirmity, or medical or surgical treatment thereof or ptomaine or bacterial infection except septic infection of and through a visible wound accidentally sustained.
  - d. travel or flight in or descent from any kind of aircraft if a minister is a pilot, officer or member of the crew of such aircraft or if operating or assisting in the operation of such aircraft or if giving or receiving any kind of training or instruction or has any duties whatsoever on such aircraft while in flight.

#### Schedules of Monthly Contributions for Ministers of the Christian Reformed Church

Classification	Amounts of Life & AD&D Insurance*	Number of Eligible Employees	Amount of Semi-Annual Contribution For Each Minister
1) Under Age 40	\$25,000	309	\$48.00
2) 40 45	20,000	170	48.00
3) 45 50	15,000	128	48.00
4) 50 55	10,000	87	39.00
5) 55 60	7,500	59	29.10
6) 60 65	5,000	54	19.50

\*double in case of accidental death

10 Year Average

	Actna	Guardian	Federal	Prudential
Paid Premium .....	\$60,997	\$59,160	\$60,900	\$60,997
Paid Claims .....	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000
Reserve .....	1228	0	0	816
Pooling Charges .....	0	9,817	5,640	0
Incurred Claims .....	41,228	49,817	45,640	40,816
Retention—Expense factor .....	5,500	8,922	11,500	4,104
Net Cost (Claims plus Retention) ..	46,728	58,739	57,140	44,920**
Balance (Dividend) .....	14,269	421	3,760	16,077

\*\*Basis for committee recommendation in selecting Prudential at this time as our carrying agent.

APPENDIX B

The Ministers' Pension Committee has been richly blessed with the services of highly professional and talented men from various occupations and educational backgrounds. Three of these men now come to the end of their term as determined by synod. One member is eligible for re-election to a three-year term; two members are to be replaced from the nomination herewith submitted, also for three-year terms.

It is with gratitude that we say thank you to these who are now leaving the committee—the first ones to leave from the original transitional study committee, and now the newly adopted Pension Fund Committee. Many hours have been expended by these men in behalf of the denomination over the past several years—especially by our retiring committee chairman!

Terms expiring:

Mr. Kenneth Bergsma; Rev. Gordon Klouw; Mr. David Vander Ploeg

Nominations: (Listed alphabetically)

Mr. Peter Brouwers —

Member of Plymouth Heights Christian Reformed Church, former deacon (treasurer), presently chairman of its Christian Education Committee, also alternate treasurer of Classis Grand Rapids East and alternate board member of C.R.W.R.C. Self-employed accountant, formal education in the Netherlands (college level), member National Association of Accountants and Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce. Fifty years of age, married, five children.

Rev. Gordon Klouw —

Pastor of San Diego, California Christian Reformed Church. Formerly served churches in Sun Valley, California and Holland, Michigan. Chairman of the Finance Committee of Synod 1969. Appointed by that synod to this Pension Committee. Has served on other denominational boards and committees. Graduate of Calvin College; one year graduate school, University of Michigan (Business Administration); five years in lumber brokerage business; graduate of Calvin Seminary in 1960. Age 42, married, three children.

Mr. Harold Knoor —

Member of LaGrave Avenue Christian Reformed Church. Attorney; member of State Bar of Michigan. Graduate of University of Michigan Law School. Age 47, married, four children.

Mr. Donald F. Oosterhouse —

Member of the Mayfair Christian Reformed Church of Grand Rapids; member of Evangelization Committee; deacon from 1961-1963; elder from 1969-1971. Attorney. A.B. from Calvin College in 1952; Juris Doctor degree from University of Michigan in 1955. Member State Bar of Michigan and the American Bar Association. Age 41, married, five children.

Mr. Steven Snoey —

Member of the Harderwyk (Michigan) Christian Reformed Church, former elder and has served on various committees. Vice-President of Administration

at the Herman Miller, Inc. firm of Zeeland, Michigan. Age 37, married, four children.

Rev. John G. Van Ryn —

Pastor of First Christian Reformed Church of South Holland, Illinois. Formerly served churches in Lakewood, California, and Paterson, New Jersey. Member of Christian Reformed Board of Home Missions. Graduate of Calvin College and Seminary.

**REPORT OF EXAMINATION**  
Year Ended January 31, 1972

**THE MINISTERS' PENSION FUND OF THE  
CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH**  
Grand Rapids, Michigan

March 20, 1972

To the Ministers' Pension Fund Committee,  
The Ministers' Pension Fund of the Christian Reformed Church,  
Grand Rapids, Michigan

We have examined the statements of fund balances of the Ministers' Pension Fund of the Christian Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan, as of January 31, 1972, and the related statements 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 statements of fund balances and statements of changes in fund equity present fairly the financial position of the Ministers' Pension Fund of the Christian Reformed Church at January 31, 1972, 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, Helmholdt & Lyzenga  
Certified Public Accountants

**STATEMENTS OF FUND BALANCES**  
January 31, 1972

**PENSION FUND**

Assets	
Cash in bank .....	\$ 462,872.79
Marketable securities at cost (market value \$676,475.00)	
U.S. Treasury notes .....	\$260,090.63
Canadian province bonds .....	49,781.25
Corporate bonds .....	352,694.00
	<u>662,565.88</u>
	\$1,125,438.67
Balance, January 31, 1972 .....	\$ 693.14
Termination payment reserve .....	\$1,124,745.53
General Fund .....	
	<u>\$1,125,738.67</u>

**SUPPLEMENTAL FUND**

Asset	
Cash in bank .....	\$ 34,109.72
	<u>34,109.72</u>
Fund Equity	
Balance, January 31, 1972 .....	\$ 34,109.72

## STATEMENTS OF CHANGES IN FUND EQUITY

Year ended January 31, 1972

## PENSION FUND

Balance, February 1, 1971 .....		\$ 838,540.80
<b>Additions</b>		
Quota receipts .....	\$925,152.70	
Assessments .....	148,817.21	
Interest .....	40,664.12	
<b>Total Additions</b> .....		<u>1,114,634.03</u>
<b>Total Available</b> .....		<u>\$1,953,174.83</u>
<b>Deductions</b>		
Pensions and disability payments .....	\$ 802,441.67	
Moving expense .....	5,270.84	
Current exchange charge .....	2,479.04	
Termination payments .....	186.83	
Administration .....	16,051.25	
Church relations .....	1,999.67	
<b>Total Deductions</b> .....		<u>828,429.30</u>
Balance, January 31, 1972 .....		<u>\$1,124,745.53</u>

## SUPPLEMENTAL FUND

Balance, February 1, 1971 .....		\$ 50,225.43
<b>Additions</b>		
Donations and above quota contributions .....	\$ 3,470.71	
Interest .....	2,181.57	
<b>Total Additions</b> .....		<u>5,652.28</u>
<b>Total Available</b> .....		<u>\$ 55,877.71</u>
<b>Deductions</b>		
Supplemental assistance payments .....		<u>21,767.99</u>
		<u>\$ 34,109.72</u>

**REPORT 16**  
**SERMONS FOR READING SERVICES**

DEAR BROTHERS:

Thanks to excellent cooperation from the Credo Publishing Company of Toronto and from many ministers in our denomination we enjoyed the privilege of serving our churches with the "Living Word" sermons on a regular basis for the year from June 1, 1971, through May 31, 1972. All those who in one way or another contributed to this important work, deserve sincere thanks. We hope and pray that God may continue to bless our efforts and to spare our lives for the coming year, just as he did in the past.

The following statistical information was supplied by the Credo Publishing Company:

American Churches:	71	English only subscriptions
	2	English and Dutch subscriptions
Canadian Churches:	69	English only subscriptions
	82	English and Dutch subscriptions
Australia	1	English only subscription
New Zealand	2	English only subscriptions
Individuals		
(American)	3	English only subscriptions
(Canadian)	2	English only subscriptions
(New Zealand)	1	English only subscription
(Canadian)	1	English and Dutch subscription

All this shows a present total of 231 subscriptions notwithstanding a new sharp rise in the cost of materials and in postal rates the price of the two series is not to be changed. Because we need more subscriptions in this situation we humbly ask synod to urge the churches to make use of the sermons provided by your committee.

Recommendations:

1. That synod approve the publication of our sermons for reading services for the year beginning June 1, 1972, through May 31, 1973.
2. That synod strongly recommend the use of the "Living Word" sermons to the churches.
3. That synod continue the committee on sermons for reading services.

Respectfully submitted,

The Committee:  
C. Fennema  
S. Greidanus  
W. Van Dyk  
F. Guillaume, Reporter

REPORT 17

SYNODICAL COMMITTEE ON RACE RELATIONS (SCORR)

DEAR BROTHERS:

I. INTRODUCTION:

The Race Commission had been in existence for about two years as a subcommittee of the Board of Home Missions when Synod 1971 gave the commission a new name, new membership and a new place in the structure. The Synodical Committee on Race Relations has been in existence since September 1, 1971.

No cities are burning visibly just now and it is tempting to believe that something less than the best efforts of the denomination will be acceptable in dealing with racial problems. The Synodical Committee on Race Relations is aware that in six months it has scarcely begun to carry out the mandate that synod gave it. It is our prayer that in doing our tasks we may be found faithful.

II. PERSONNEL:

A. Executive Secretary: Karl J. Westerhof.

B. Committee Officers: Rev. James White, President; Dr. Remkes Kooistra, Vice-President; Mr. Wilfred Bowman, Treasurer; Rev. Vernon Geurkink, Secretary.

**Member**  
 Mr. Wilfred Bowman  
 Gallup, New Mexico  
 Dr. Anthony Diekema  
 Wheaton, Illinois  
 Dr. Milton Geerdes  
 Chicago, Illinois  
 Rev. Vernon Geurkink  
 Grand Rapids, Michigan  
 Mr. Benito Infante  
 Miami, Florida  
 Mr. Stephen Jung  
 Los Angeles, California  
 Dr. Remkes Kooistra  
 Toronto, Ont., Canada  
 Rev. Donald Posterna  
 Ann Arbor, Michigan  
 Mr. Philip Van Heest  
 Grand Rapids, Michigan  
 Rev. Stanley Vander Klay  
 Paterson, New Jersey  
 Rev. James White  
 New York, New York

**Alternate**  
 Mr. Jack De Groat  
 Fort Defiance, Arizona  
 Mr. William Ipema  
 Oak Park, Illinois  
 Mr. Donald Holtrop  
 E. Lansing, Michigan  
 Rev. Alfred Mulder  
 Gallup, New Mexico  
  
 Mr. Abraham Cho  
 Chicago, Illinois  
 Rev. Joe Vugteveen  
 Strathroy, Ont., Canada  
 Rev. Tymen Hofman  
 Muskegon, Michigan  
 Mr. Hannes Meyers, Jr.  
 Zeeland, Michigan  
 Rev. Raymond Opperwall  
 Glen Rock, New Jersey  
 Mrs. Carol George  
 New York, New York



### III. PROGRAM:

#### A. *Scholarships*

The Scholarship Fund for minority students, set up by synod provides that SCORR begin making assistance available in 1972. Already names are being presented by the colleges and we have been informed that additional names will be presented to us.

Synod authorized SCORR to grant up to twenty-five (25) \$1,000.00 scholarships. SCORR has written to the consistories, the Calvin board members have presented this cause to their respective classes and *INSIGHT* has done a feature on this subject. To date about \$500.00 has been received for this fund. This rate of response does not come near meeting the unmet needs of even the students already enrolled; furthermore, this rate of response makes the colleges very reluctant to do the recruiting which is so important. Therefore, SCORR urges synod to consider adding \$0.10 per family to the SCORR budget to make this fund operational. Special fund raising appeals to individuals and foundations lose a lot of momentum when it appears that they are being asked to do the job alone.

#### B. *Research*

Most of the major research projects approved by the Race Commission and conducted by the Calvin College Social Research Center, are now coming to completion. The results of this research will be made available to the churches. A new and ambitious research effort has been approved in the area of the ministry of the Christian Reformed Church to the Indians of North America. An initial report regarding reservation ministry has been submitted to the Home Mission Board. This report was the result of a SCORR subcommittee visit to New Mexico. Some of the issues focused on by that visit were institutionalized discrimination, racial make-up of staff, dormitory life and related issues. Conversations between SCORR and the Home Mission Board continue. SCORR commends the Home Mission Board for its recent decisions to approve the concept of a parent-run school at Rehoboth, and the concept of an Indian Council of Churches.

#### C. *Project Equality (PE)*

Participation in PE was proposed to synod in 1971 in detail (See Acts 1971, pp 303-311). Synod endorsed employment policies that affirmatively promote equality of opportunity for all persons and urged denominational boards and agencies to promote social justice in their hiring and purchasing policies and practices. But synod declined to participate in PE "at the present time". The ground was PE needed "more elucidation" (Acts 1971, p. 117).

SCORR believes that it is important to program and build in the steps needed to achieve the goals endorsed by synod. The implementation of those steps is a formidable undertaking, and indeed the detailed proposal concerning PE requires much study. SCORR believes this proposal to be a good one because it can take the denomination past the stage of pronouncements and into the stage of meaningful action. The research project on the personnel policies and practices of denominational

agencies reveals a clear pattern of ethnic exclusivism which is not handled simply by pronouncements but rather by affirmative action. This is why SCORR is recommending denominational participation in PE as proposed to Synod of 1971. We will present an updated proposal in detail in our supplementary report.

#### D. *Timothy Litigation*

This suit was settled out of court and the case was dismissed on February 28, 1972. The Cicero facility will be sold and all Timothy facilities will be open without regard to race or color when the 1972-73 school year begins. All claims and counter-claims were dropped.

The Synodical Interim Committee ruled that the involvement of SCORR in assisting the parents to pay for this litigation went contrary to SCORR's mandate. SCORR is grateful for the out of court settlement; we believe that our position on this court case and our involvement in it is adequately presented in the January 7, 1972, *BANNER* and so we refrain from going into the matter again.

#### E. *Local and Area Confessions*

Several congregational and classical committees on race relations have emerged in the past months. SCORR is beginning to develop materials and models to meet the requests from these local committees for materials and resources and advice. To date some 1,000 copies of "A Christian Perspective in Racial Understanding" have been distributed. In several classes "mini-conferences on race have been or will be held.

#### F. *Independent Agency*

Synod 1971 gave this committee two separate mandates to set up independent agencies, one to provide financial assistance for Christian schools in areas of heavy minority group concentration and the other to improve race relations. As the committee sought to carry out these aspects of its total mandate, it soon became apparent that these two concepts could and should be merged into one independent agency. The committee has made the establishment of such an agency a major priority.

### IV. RECOMMENDATIONS:

SCORR respectfully recommends that synod:

A. Grant the privilege of the floor to SCORR's Executive Secretary.  
 B. Approve the re-appointment of Karl J. Westerhof as Executive Secretary of SCORR for two years.

C. Approve the consolidation of the two mandates concerning independent agencies.

D. Set a quota of \$0.10 per family to make the minority student scholarship fund operational.

E. Approve the concept of denominational participation in Project-Equality and authorize the Synodical Interim Committee and SCORR to work out the implementation, using as a mode the Project Equality proposal to Synod 1971.

F. Give serious consideration to the proposals of the "Interracial Ministries Conference" (see Appendix A).

G. Grant SCORR permission to file a supplemental report to synod.

H. Appoint a college age minority group young person to SCORR.

#### V. FINANCIAL REPORT:

Statement of Receipts and Disbursements, September 1, thru December 31, 1971

##### Receipts:

Rec'd from Christian Reformed Board of Home Missions .....	\$16,000.00
*Other Receipts .....	228.78
<b>Total Receipts .....</b>	<b>\$16,228.78</b>

##### Disbursements:

Salaries .....	\$2,895.14
Travel & Mtgs. ....	2,626.16
Educational Materials .....	1,083.52
Office Supplies .....	345.06
Office Furniture & Equip. ....	538.22
Secretary .....	250.00
Rent & Telephone .....	233.02
Printing Materials .....	400.00
Legal Services .....	500.00
Scholarships .....	700.00
<b>Total Disbursements .....</b>	<b>9,471.12</b>
<b>Balance, December 31, 1971 .....</b>	<b>6,657.66</b>

*Materials Sold .....	\$121.28
Quota Receipts .....	50.00
For Scholarship .....	57.50
(Deposited on January 24, additional \$270.19 for Scholarship Fund)	
(This financial report submitted to SCORR by Lester Ippel)	

Respectfully submitted,  
Karl J. Westerhof

#### APPENDIX A

(SCORR has taken no action on this statement, but is simply reporting it to synod).

#### Statement from the Interracial Ministries Conference

##### INTRODUCTION:

The first meeting of the "Interracial Ministries Conference" (IRMC) was held at the Lawndale Christian Reformed Church in Chicago, February 15-17, 1972. Delegates and visitors from sixteen (16) Christian Reformed Churches or church-related organizations ministering to "interracial" communities participated.

The Interracial Ministries Conference was established to enhance such ministries of the Christian Reformed Church in the following ways:

1. To provide an ongoing structure of communication between interracial ministries whereby insights, programs, problems and solutions may be creatively shared:

2. to assist the Christian Reformed Church in providing resources for interracial ministries by sharing our concerns and working for relevant change in areas of strategic importance,

3. to thereby mutually increase our effectiveness in witnessing to our Lord in Word and deed and in our respective communities.

The Interracial Ministries Conference respectfully submits the following proposals adopted in its first session to the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church, 1972, for its consideration and action.

#### PROPOSAL I:

The present Fund-for-Needy-Churches guidelines have been set up to meet the needs of typical rural or suburban middle income congregations established through geographic extension rather than evangelical outreach.

Present guidelines should be modified or rewritten completely so that young churches growing out of mission work in population centers can come directly under new guidelines for assistance. Unfortunately, these strategically located churches must be considered exceptional cases by current FNC standards.

##### *Grounds:*

1. Present rules requiring 30 families (in order to qualify) discourages the development of indigenous spiritual leadership.

2. Present per family contributions requirements fail to take into account varying economic conditions within the United States. (Such variation is acknowledged for Canada.) Population centers are typically low-income areas which nevertheless have a high cost of living. Moreover, interracial ministry typically involves young churches in costs higher than those in church now eligible for FNC assistance. Therefore, per family contributions should be related to income levels in given areas.

3. Present FNC rules were formulated and applied without Indian, Oriental, Spanish-speaking or Afro-American representatives on the committee. One or more of these nations should be represented on the committee which reformulates the rules.

#### PROPOSAL II:

A. Properties utilized by a 'home mission' congregation and desired by that congregation for its ministry after organization, ought to be GIVEN, not sold, to that congregation.

##### *Grounds:*

1. It is unseemly to sell buildings which have been dedicated to God as long as there is still use for them in his special service. A Christian who gives to the Lord should not expect to reclaim his gift.

2. It is counterproductive to ministry for small, struggling churches, particularly in low-income areas, to have to spend money for facilities which have already been paid for.

B. Properties left behind by a congregation which leaves a community ought to be GIVEN, not sold, to a viable expression of the church which desires to remain in the community for ministry to it.

*Grounds:*

1. It is unseemly to sell buildings which have been dedicated to God as long as there is still use for them in his special service. A Christian who gives to the Lord should not expect to reclaim his gift.

2. It is counterproductive to ministry for small, struggling churches, particularly in low-income areas, to have to spend money for facilities which have already been paid for.

**PROPOSAL III:**

Synod is urged to create a committee (analogous to SCORR) on Central City Parish Problems to give strong and necessary support to local churches in their attempts to facilitate better housing conditions and programs attuned to other major parish problems such as public safety and consumerism.

*Grounds:*

1. The inner-city areas where many of our churches are located are of strategic importance in terms of economic and social value to their inhabitants. These areas are "home" and should be prevented from becoming completely unliveable.

2. The local church, in its ministry of word and deed, has a responsibility to its parish, to stabilize it and to facilitate its spiritual and physical development.

3. The immensity of the task calls for more resources than those available to the local church.

Respectfully submitted,

Karl J. Westerhof,  
Executive Secretary of SCORR

**BUDGET FOR 1973**

**ADOPTED BY THE SYNODICAL COMMITTEE ON RACE RELATIONS**

**I. STAFF**

	1973
A. Executive Secretary (Salary & Benefits) .....	\$11,000
B. Secretary .....	5,000
C. Staff Travel, Costs .....	2,500
D. Office Expenses .....	2,500
Sub Total .....	\$21,000

**II MEETINGS**

A. Full SCORR (5X) .....	5,500
B. Executive Committee (6X) .....	500
C. Subcommittee Field Work & Unscheduled Meetings .....	5,000
Sub Total .....	\$11,000

## III. PROGRAM

A. Training .....	5,000
B. Traveling Seminars .....	6,500
C. Regional Conferences .....	2,500
D. Publicity & Promotion .....	2,500
(publishing, artwork, BANNER ads, mailings)	
E. Workshops .....	5,000
F. Special & Pilot Projects .....	7,000
Sub Total .....	\$28,500

## IV. MATERIALS

A. Films & Simulation Games .....	1,000
B. Producing, Creating New Materials .....	4,000
C. Editorial Assistance .....	2,000
Sub Total .....	\$ 7,000

## V. RESEARCH

A. New Contracts .....	15,000
B. Publication of Data .....	2,000
C. Program Generation .....	3,000
Sub Total .....	\$20,000
Grand Total .....	\$87,500

## REPORT 18

## UNORDAINED EMPLOYEES' PENSION FUND

DEAR BROTHERS:

Your committee appointed by synod to supervise the Unordained Employees Pension Fund submits the following report:

The pension plan covers all qualified unordained employees of the boards of the denomination (except the employees of the Board of Publications), and also employees of Rehoboth Hospital, Christian Reformed Laymen's League, three classical home mission committees, and eleven churches. Your committee encourages all churches in the denomination to inquire into this plan to provide pension and life insurance benefits for their employees.

The Relief Fund continues to provide needed support for former employees who receive no pension or whose pension is inadequate. Your committee re-evaluates the needs of these people periodically. The fund balance of the Relief Fund is adequate at this time; but the disbursements continue to exceed the receipts so that, at some future time, your committee will find it necessary to come with a request for quota support or offerings.

Your committee recommends the reappointment of two of its members for three year terms—Mr. Al Bielema and Gerard Borst.

A financial statement accompanies this report.

Respectfully submitted,

David Vander Ploeg, Chairman  
 Al Bielema  
 Gerard Borst  
 Wilbert Venema  
 Lester Ippel, Secretary

PENSION PLAN FOR UNORDAINED WORKERS IN THE  
 CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

Statement of Receipts, Disbursements, and Balances  
 January 1, 1971 - December 31, 1971

<i>Cash Balance</i> , January 1, 1971 .....		\$ 6,545.53
<i>Receipts:</i>		
Premiums received .....	\$146,880.92	
Occidental Life Insurance Co. — Rebate due to experience rating .....	4,249.00	
Christian Reformed Board of Home Missions — relief payments to former employees .....	1,339.99	
Interest on Investments .....	2,208.77	
Securities Redeemed .....	34,956.25	189,634.93
		<u>\$196,180.46</u>

*Disbursements:*

Premiums on Pension Plan .....	\$119,133.07	
Premiums on Life Plan .....	29,851.81	
Payments from Relief Fund .....	8,724.00	
Securities Purchased .....	35,000.00	
Expenses (Audit, Bond, Meetings) .....	321.75	193,030.63
		<hr/>

*Cash Balance, December 31, 1971* ..... \$ 3,149.83

\* \* \* \*

*Balance Sheet, December 31, 1971*

*Assets:*

Cash .....		\$ 3,149.83
Investments:		
Union Bank Certificate No. 109333 .....	\$ 5,500.00	
Union Bank Certificate No. 027172 .....	35,000.00	40,500.00
		<hr/>
Due from Agencies (net).....		2,843.67
		<hr/>
Total Assets .....		\$ 46,493.50
		<hr/>

*Fund Balances:*

Relief Fund .....	\$ 23,423.68
Pension Fund .....	23,069.82
	<hr/>
Total Fund Balances .....	\$ 46,493.50
	<hr/>



# REPRESENTATIVES' REPORTS

## REPORT 19

### AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

DEAR BROTHERS:

.003? or .04?

Wonder what that means?

It is definitely not connected with a James Bond novel! And still it does tell a story.

The question is, how seriously do we take the support program which the American Bible Society engages in for the benefit of our churches? At times the ABS works unobservedly and without fanfare for the churches' benefit. This has been recorded in previous annual reports to synod.

This year's theme "Boldly we proceed in Faith" is an appropriate theme, particularly when the ABS is so dependent upon the support of the local church and its every member, to make possible the carrying out of its yearly program.

Questions like these arise:

Did your church undergird the ABS with a collection this past year?

Did your classis send in its proportionate share?

Did you personally, remember the ABS in prayer and with monetary support?

The American Bible Society carries on a program of cooperation with 49 other national Bible societies all over the world in providing assistance to more than 3000 translations in over 500 languages and dialects. Increasingly the emphasis is focused in providing people everywhere with Scriptures in common and popular translations which they can easily read and understand. Such translations are currently being prepared in English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Thai, Taiwanese, Japanese and five languages of the Philippines.

Here is a tremendous significant figure: at least one book of the Bible is now available in 1,431 languages and dialects!

And how do we react to this outreach?

.003 means that for every church member in the United States it would cost 3/10ths of one cent to *per year* financially support the ABS.

The average for the Christian Reformed Church is .04 *per year* per member. Our denomination has fallen behind in giving due, we suppose, to the general economic climate. However it is not suggested that top priority, or even median priority, be given in terms of monetary support to the ABS even though this organization handles the most basic tool for Christendom: the printing and distribution of Bibles and

other Scripture aids. For instance, the ABS provided aids in many ways for our chaplains, it organizes overseas missions Scripture distribution (particularly in Nigeria). The Back to God Hour benefits in an area not too well known by our members. "Insight" series over local radio stations provides valuable assistance and information for the Back to God Hour.

Would we be giving any priority to the Word in supposing 20c per family per year could become a reality? Just imagine! The cost would be just more than a cup of coffee and less than the cost of a half pack of cigarettes! Are we asking too much? We are asking these questions because our giving to the ABS is *down* this year.

Among the services rendered to the churches by the ABS the following should be noted:

One of the truly great services rendered by the American Bible Society in recent years has been the translation of the New Testament into a dynamic language, *Good News for Modern Man* (Today's English Version). Since "Good News" was first published in 1966, more than 31 million New Testament copies have been distributed. The *Psalms for Modern Man* was published in December, 1970, and now the second Old Testament book, *Tied and True—Job for Modern Man*, is available. Work is progressing steadily on the remaining 37 Old Testament books, all of which should be completed by 1975.

Likewise, the society continues to serve over 400,000 blind persons with special Scripture formats (braille, records, tapes and cassettes). "Today's English Version" (recorded by the late Bud Colyer) is now available on 15 cassettes, and the New Testament with Psalms in the King James Version is available on 18 cassettes. Both versions are attractively packaged and easily handled by the sightless.

For the third consecutive year the ABS provided the Armed Forces personnel with an excess of two million Scriptures. *Good News for Every man* and the individual state Scripture selections (for instance, *Good News for Michigan*) are in great demand, especially by the men stationed in Vietnam.

Of great concern to the ABS is the contact in the Spanish speaking communities. "Version Popular" enjoys wide distribution and special ABS secretaries will implement this program among the second largest language group in the U.S. It is estimated that there are 12 million Spanish speaking people in this country! Special Spanish distribution projects were carried out in the ghettos of 10 leading American cities.

With such concern for the Word of God to all people, the American Bible Society deeply appreciates the support it receives from some 70 religious bodies in the U.S. It is only when those who "have" provide for those who "have not" that God's Word can be placed in the hands of all men everywhere.

May it be so . . .

John Last  
Synodical Representative  
American Bible Society

**REPORT 20**  
**CANADIAN BIBLE SOCIETY**

DEAR BROTHERS:

The Canadian Bible Society has been very active in 1971. The distribution of Bibles has been fantastic. The Canadian Bible Society has distributed 2,223,017 volumes in 67 different languages during this past year.

The Canadian Bible Society serves the blind of Canada by providing braille Bibles and recordings of Scripture readings *free of charge*. There are 28,000 blind men and women as well as children in Canada, people who have lost their sight through war, accident or disease. Every year approximately 1700 Canadians become sightless. A complete braille Bible costs \$90.00, a Bible on records \$50.00, and a New Testament on cassette tapes \$42.00. In 1971 the Canadian Bible Society distributed 614 volumes of complete braille Bibles, 6,639 records of the Gospels, and 494 tapes.

The Bible Society limits itself to one main task: to translate, publish and distribute the Bible in whole or parts. It is able to bring 168 years of experience to the challenges of today. A very competent staff of dedicated Christians is working hard to plan ahead with courage and trust.

In Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, a small group of church leaders and Bible Society secretaries from all over the world will meet to establish guidelines for the work of the Bible Society in 158 countries and territories for this decade. The theme of the meeting is, "Let the Word Speak."

Because of my move to York, Ontario, synod is kindly requested to appoint the alternate, the Rev. Ken Verhulst, as member of the Board of Directors. It has been a pleasure for me to serve the Canadian Bible Society as a synodical representative.

We recommend the Canadian Bible Society and request synod to recognize this organization as worthy of our prayers and continued support.

Humbly submitted,

Rev. Michael De Vries

**REPORT 21**  
**DORDT COLLEGE**

**DEAR BROTHERS:**

In keeping with the instruction of synod we briefly report on items of interest and progress at Dordt College in the past year. This is the seventeenth academic year of Dordt's existence. God's favor was evident in that she might see the fulfillment of the goals she had envisioned and ardently pursued in the past decade. Today the physical facilities are fully adequate to provide Christian higher education in a responsible way. Both the new two story classroom building and the spacious student union have been completed. Also the much needed remodeling of the library and the attractive addition to the music building were finished. Dordt has adequate facilities, and no further major construction is being planned at the present time.

Of great significance was the good news received in the course of the year that full accreditation without any reservations or conditions had been granted by the North Central Association. Both administration and faculty spent much effort in the time consuming work of self-evaluation which this goal demanded. Dordt is very grateful that she saw these efforts rewarded, and herself benefitted from these series of self studies. The administration recognized that these significant blessings should not go by unnoticed. Therefore the college held "Open House" on September 24th, 1971, for her many friends and supporters and celebrated the event by an outdoor service of praise and thanksgiving to God for the many blessings given through the years.

Total enrollment at the opening of the school year was 970 students. This was a modest increase over the previous year. The college has made some modification in the school year. The first semester's work is completed in December prior to the Christmas vacation. Allowing the student four weeks vacation, the second semester beginning in the middle of January is concluded in mid-May. Half of the student population came from the mid-western classes. Significant numbers are attending from the churches of the other classes, as well as some 70 students who come from other denominations of the Reformed family. She is grateful that she is given this outreach to provide training to students who come from the various areas of our nation. About half of the student body is enrolled in the primary and secondary education courses. Some 47 students are pursuing the pre-seminary course, and the remainder are listed under general college.

This year's teaching staff numbers 54 persons. Nine new teachers were added to the staff and five were retired. Four were new additions and serve in the departments of Mathematics, Biology, History and Bible. The Rev. J. B. Hulst, who had taught part time in the Bible department and served as college pastor, was appointed full time dean of students. Dordt is thankful that she has been able to obtain qualified

teachers who are deeply concerned to provide quality Christian higher education to the covenant youth of our churches. Lively discussions and serious interchange of opinions and viewpoints continues to engage faculty and student body. A group of twelve faculty members have been appointed as committee to review and give serious study to the purposes and the goals of the college in the light of changing needs of our times. This stimulating on-going study and discussion on the campus endeavors to gain new insights for the growth and advancement of the Reformed world and life view. The Dordt College faculty continues to be deeply concerned of how she can best state and live her Reformed commitments in these strange and unpredictable times.

We are happy to report that the college was able to meet all its financial obligations again this year. The annual budget totalled \$1,500,000, of which 75% was met by student fees and tuition. The wise and dedicated leadership of competent men in procuring and handling of finances is much appreciated. The liberal support of the constituency provided gifts amounting to \$62,500 in the annual Fall Foundation Day Drive. Since adequate facilities have been acquired, and no additional funds for expansion are needed at this time, determined efforts will be made to liquidate the outstanding indebtedness. The plan for an annual Spring Debt Reduction Campaign is in operation and doing well. Contributions last year were \$50,000. Although the \$672,000 is by no means large, regular repayments of these obligations is felt to be the first order of business at this time.

Dordt College covets your prayers for her continued growth being assured of your interest and support of her program and well being.

Respectfully submitted,

John H. Rubingh  
Synodical Representative

## REPORT 22

### FAITH, PRAYER AND TRACT LEAGUE

DEAR BROTHERS:

It is a pleasure to report to you on the activities of the Faith, Prayer and Tract League in 1971. The continual growth of this work indicates that God is pleased to use this ministry to bring the gospel to the millions who need to know of the salvation he has provided for lost mankind. Among the many testimonies received, a customer wrote how a tract was instrumental in bringing about the salvation of a certain man.

The year 1971 was a year of steady growth. 32,683,441 tracts were sent out, which exceeds by more than  $4\frac{1}{2}$  million the past record in 1970. Nearly 11,000,000 of the tracts were sent out without charge.

For foreign work 1,475,000 tracts were printed and distributed in Spain, 3,044,000 in India, 1,850,000 in Indonesia, and lesser amounts in Taiwan, Korea, Ceylon and Brazil.

Although there has been much turbulence in India, over 2,000 workers distribute our tracts there. In India we have printed our first tracts in the Malayalan and Hindi.

In Indonesia distribution is made through book stores and churches, and are being read and explained in schools.

New doors have opened in Spain. Last summer 300 young people traveled all over Spain with bundles of tracts, visiting remote towns and villages thus reaching tens of thousands of Spaniards in areas that are far away from churches. This ministry is growing at an unbelievable rate. Never before has there been such an eagerness for tracts, or such a dramatic response to tract distribution.

Progress has been made in preparing a tract in Lingala and Swahila for use in Zaire (formerly the Belgian Congo).

Because of the expansion of this work an assistant was needed for the manager. Mr. Edward Postma is working in this position in a part-time capacity and is proving very helpful.

Although this steady growth caused an increase in expense for wages, printing, postage, etc., nevertheless the office is managed in a highly efficient manner. Last September a testimonial dinner was held in honor of Mr. John Brondsema commemorating his 25th anniversary as manager of the league.

Such phenomenal growth has made our rented ex-grocery store too small in a span of only four years. There are 25 workers on the staff, and it is just impossible to get more into our present building. Therefore the board has purchased a piece of property for \$8,000.00 and has decided to build a simple cinder block building during 1972.

The plans to build have not been at the expense of our foreign ministry, for though a great deal of money is needed to build, the board in

faith has increased the budget for foreign printing from \$11,000.00 in 1971 to \$17,000.00 in 1972.

The board desires that you give prayerful consideration to assist in this worldwide ministry by recommending the league to our churches for their moral and financial support, and that you appoint a representative to serve on its board.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Doot,  
Synodical Representative

STATEMENT OF CASH RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1971

RECEIPTS

Sales .....	\$214,378
Donations: Churches .....	18,934
Other .....	16,433
Interest .....	<u>645</u>

TOTAL CASH RECEIPTS

\$250,390

DISBURSEMENTS

Printing .....	\$ 99,394
Postage .....	38,854
Advertising .....	11,512
Supplies .....	8,861
Salaries and wages .....	37,685
Employee benefits .....	2,041
Payroll taxes .....	2,123
Artists fees .....	2,729
Rent .....	3,240
General insurance .....	728
Electricity .....	343
Telephone .....	304
Trash and snow removal .....	119
Property taxes .....	1,109
Managers car allowance .....	825
India branch expenses .....	8,711
Spain branch expenses .....	3,198
Other countries branch expenses .....	6,243
Bank service charges .....	1,013
Audit and accounting .....	880
Freight .....	177
Sales refunds .....	267
State sales tax .....	492
Board meeting expenses .....	418
Travel expenses .....	104
Repairs and maintenance .....	77
Purchase of property, plant and equipment .....	14,258
Miscellaneous .....	<u>340</u>

TOTAL CASH DISBURSEMENTS

\$246,045

EXCESS CASH RECEIPTS OVER DISBURSEMENTS

\$ 4,345



## BALANCE SHEET

DECEMBER 31, 1971

## ASSETS

## CURRENT ASSETS

Cash on hand and in banks — note 1	\$20,863	
Postage deposits	1,792	
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>\$22,655</b>

## PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT — AT COST — NOTES 2 &amp; 3

Land	\$ 8,002	
Building	3,311	
Leasehold improvements	4,643	
Furniture and fixtures	5,992	
		\$21,948
Less accumulated depreciation (straight-line)		3,767
<b>NET PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT</b>		<b>\$18,181</b>
		<b><u>\$40,836</u></b>

## LIABILITIES

## CURRENT LIABILITIES

Withheld funds from employees	\$ 835	
Accrued payroll tax	618	
Accrued sales tax	175	
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>\$ 1,628</b>

## EQUITY

**39,208**  
**\$40,836**

## STATEMENT OF EQUITY

FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1971

<b>BALANCE, JANUARY 1, 1971</b>		<b>\$22,091</b>
<b>Additions:</b>		
Excess cash receipts over disbursements	4,345	
Cash disbursed for property, plant and equipment	14,258	
<b>TOTAL AVAILABLE</b>		<b>\$40,694</b>
<b>Deductions:</b>		
Depreciation	1,486	
<b>BALANCE, DECEMBER 31, 1971</b>		<b><u>\$39,208</u></b>

The financial statements presented on pages 2 through 4 are prepared on the cash basis of accounting and give effect only to those assets and liabilities arising out of cash transactions. Management has furnished us with the following unaudited assets and liabilities as of December 31, 1971, not includable on the cash basis balance sheet presented on page 2.

Accounts receivable	\$ 3,119
Inventory	33,964
Prepaid insurance	199
Accounts payable	4,546
Accrued payroll	3,724

Taking these assets and liabilities into consideration the balance sheet would show,

Total current assets	\$59,937	
Total fixed assets	18,181	
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b><u>\$78,118</u></b>
Total current liabilities	\$ 9,898	
Equity	68,220	
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>		<b><u>\$78,118</u></b>

### FOOTNOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

DECEMBER 31, 1971

**Note 1 —**

Cash on hand and in bank consisted of the following:

Petty cash funds	\$ 100
Checking accounts	5,219
Savings accounts	5,135
Certificate of deposit	5,000
Savings certificate — Building Fund	<u>5,409</u>
	<b><u>\$20,863</u></b>

**Note 2 —**

The lease on the building expires on October 15, 1972. The lease contains a renewal provision if written notice is served to the lessee within 30 days of expiration. The charity is currently taking bids for construction of a new building. The land on which the building is to be erected was purchased in 1971. Building cost in the form of architect's fees were incurred in 1971. The additional cost to complete the building is estimated to be about \$93,000.

**Note 3 —**

Faith Prayer and Tract League followed the practice of expensing fixed assets in the year of acquisition up to 1968. In 1968 this practice was changed to capitalizing fixed assets acquisitions and depreciating these assets. The fixed assets as shown in the balance sheet represents only the fixed assets acquired since this change in practice in 1968.

Tracts Sold, 1971 .....	21,765,967
Tracts Free, 1971 .....	10,917,474
Total Sent Out, 1971 .....	32,683,441
Tracts Printed, 1971 .....	32,561,000
Previously Printed .....	244,977,000
Total (1922-1971) .....	277,538,000

January 20, 1972

Board of Directors  
 Faith, Prayer and Tract League  
 Grand Rapids, Michigan

Gentlemen:

We have examined the balance sheet, resulting from cash transactions of Faith, Prayer and Tract League as of December 31, 1971, and the related statements of cash receipts and disbursements and 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. We have previously examined and reported upon the financial statements of the charity for 1970.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements, pages 2 through 5, present fairly the financial position of Faith, Prayer and Tract League at December 31, 1971 resulting from cash transactions and the results of its operations for the year then ended on a basis in conformity with generally accepted accounting principals, recognized as appropriate for organizations of this type, applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

Respectfully submitted,

VANNATTER, HOWELL & CO.  
 Certified Public Accountants

## REPORT 23

## CHRISTIAN LAYMEN'S LEAGUE

DEAR BROTHERS:

One of the first things that will undoubtedly come to the attention of the reader is that we no longer find the title, League of Christian Reformed Laymen, but rather Christian Laymen's League. The reason the word, Reformed, has been taken out is certainly not because we are no longer committed to the Reformed interpretation of the Word nor is it because we are ashamed of our denominational name, but simply because we, with our television program called "Blast Off" and Bible club program called "Orbitors", want to reach everybody everywhere; and it has been proven that the name Christian Laymen's League is much more acceptable to the church and unchurched world than the name Christian Reformed Laymen's League.

The League of Christian Reformed Laymen, an Illinois Corporation, is in the process of being merged into Christian Laymen's League, which is now a non-profit Michigan Corporation with a federal tax exempt status from Internal Revenue Service. When the merger is completed, the League of Christian Reformed Laymen, the Illinois Corporation, will no longer exist: and the Christian Laymen's League, a non-profit Michigan Corporation with its federal tax exempt status, will be the surviving entity.

Our children's television program, "Blast Off", premiered on Sunday, September 19, 1971, on WZZM in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The response that we received to the program was very good, but it was drawn to our attention by the people at WZZM that if we would switch our program to Saturday morning at 8:00, our listening audience would increase from somewhere around 4,000 children, which was the estimate for Sunday morning, to over 30,000 children, again the estimate for Saturday morning. WZZM had allowed us to have "Blast Off" shown on their station on Sundays as a public service, and the cost of having it shown on that same station on a Saturday morning would be \$180.00 per one-half hour. Although we were hardly in a financial position to afford this additional expenditure, we felt constrained to go forward in faith; and as of January 15, 1972, the "Blast Off" children's television program has been shown on Saturday morning. Our response has increased substantially. The Christmas special, for example, received in excess of 200 letters from boys and girls.

The program is being produced by Mr. Martin Keuning, and he with the help of Mrs. Mereness, Executive Director of the Calvinettes; Mr. Jim Westra, owner of Animal Kingdom; Mr. Ray Felten, associated with Radio Bible Class; as well as several other local people, a number of which are children, are involved in the television program.

As of this writing, March 14, 1972, the television program is being shown on four stations throughout the country located in Grand Rapids,

Michigan, Battle Creek, Michigan, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and Aberdeen, South Dakota. We believe that we are reaching somewhere between 40,000 and 45,000 children every week with the gospel of Jesus Christ. When one reads comments in the letters that the children write such as, "Dear Uncle Mart, I like your program very much. Please tell me how I can learn more about God," we can only breathe a prayer of gratitude to God for the fact that he is using the television program to inform and involve boys and girls with Jesus Christ. These kinds of letters come to us again and again and again.

Every child who writes in receives a "Blast Off" pin, plus a little booklet entitled, "The Best Story in the World", published by the World Home Bible League. A letter is also included as well as a card which informs the boy or girls about our Orbitor Bible Clubs and urges them to fill in the enclosed business-reply card indicating his desire to join the Orbitor Bible Clubs. These cards are then given to various volunteer people in all the areas from which we receive mail, and the children are contacted and worked with on a view to having them join the Orbitor Bible Clubs; and therefore, on a person-to-person basis being instructed in the teachings of God's Word.

A 20-minute, 16mm promotional film in sound and color is now available for showing to any organization throughout the country who desires more information about the television program. It is our sincere prayer that in the coming year the program will be syndicated and shown on many stations through the country. To the best of our knowledge there is only one other Christian television program for children available, and we are receiving several inquiries from organizations and churches throughout the United States about the possibility of having "Blast Off" shown in their areas.

This is not an inexpensive program. Taping and production costs have risen considerably so that we are talking about approximately \$1,000.00 per one-half hour program in terms of cost. However, compared to "Sesame Street" with production costs of \$28,000.00 for a one-hour program, "The Jetsons", a 30-minute program with production costs of \$42,000.00, or 15 minutes of an animated cartoon at \$45,000.00, our costs are not at all high—especially when one remembers that it is one of the very few programs that offers real values because it points boys and girls to the salvation offered in Jesus Christ.

We are grateful for the financial help that we have received from various people and organizations. Millbrook Minutemen for Missions has conducted chicken barbeques on our behalf and many other organizations have put forth fund-raising efforts so that our dream of having a Christ-oriented television program for children has become a reality.

The Orbitor Bible Clubs are also now a reality. Twenty-six lessons have been written and printed, and a great deal of information has been sent out to all of the Christian Reformed and Reformed Churches in the United States and Canada concerning our Orbitor material. We were rather disappointed that a greater number of churches did not respond to the challenge to begin Bible clubs for children. In each

instance, we received glowing reports concerning the lesson material and the whole format of the Orbitor Club, but there seems to be a lack of motivation on the part of the people in our churches to reach boys and girls for Christ.

The early part of this year we designed and printed a new series of Orbitor lessons. These, by the way, are all written by Martin Keuning. We sent a sample of four lessons to each church and chapel in the Reformed and Christian Reformed denominations throughout the United States and Canada. We even offered to make the Orbitor lesson material available to them without any cost; and once again, we experienced the same kind of response, "the lesson material is just really great," but we really can't find the people who are interested in beginning Bible clubs for boys and girls. We would ask for the prayers on the part of each reader of this report so that our churches may be awakened to the fantastic responsibility of reaching as many as possible of the 30 million boys and girls in the United States and Canada who don't know about Jesus Christ.

The board members of the Christian Laymen's League are as follows:

Roger Vos, National President, Manager of Woodland Sports Center.

Herman Petersen, Vice-President, President of Dickinson Printing.

Henry Driesenga, Secretary, Executive Secretary of the Calvinist Cadet Corps.

Henry Wierenga, Treasurer, Certified Public Accountant of Illinois Tool Works.

Arie Ver Kaik, President Calvinist Cadet Corps.

Roger Roodvoets, President and Chairman of Laser Alignment Systems.

Ralph Veenstra, employed at Lear Siegler Incorporated.

Ronald Plekker, President State Barber's Association.

Lee Plas, owner and President of Lee's Supermarket.

Roger Prose, owner of the Prose Five and Dime Stores.

William Van Tongeren, Founder of Mercury Building Service.

In addition to the volunteer board, the full-time, paid staff includes Mr. Willis Timmer, Executive Director of Christian Laymen's League, functioning in a part-time capacity as Director of Christian Laymen's League with 20 percent of his salary coming from the Laymen's League and 80 percent coming from the World Home Bible League.

Martin Keuning, responsible for scripting and editing and production of the children's television program, "Blast Off", as well as the scripting and editing of the Orbitor lesson material, is also paid by the Christian Laymen's League.

Alice Zuidersma is the Secretary of the Christian Laymen's League. Being the only secretary employed at present, her tasks are numerous and varied to say the least. Her salary is paid by the Laymen's League.

In addition, there are a number of non-staff volunteer workers; and because there are so many of them, we will not at this point mention

their names because undoubtedly we will fail to mention each and every one.

The board members and staff are dedicated and enthusiastically determined to carry out the goals and ideals of the Christian Laymen's League, although the road ahead may be somewhat difficult. We go forward in the firm confidence and faith that the indispensable blessings of Almighty God are with this effort to complete the work that has begun to his glory.

Recommendations:

As synodical representative, I recommend that 1) synod continue to name a representative to the Christian Laymen's League and 2) synod recommend placing the Christian Laymen's League on the approved list of non-denominational causes for financial support.

Humbly submitted,

Rev. George Holwerda

**REPORT 24**  
**LORD'S DAY ALLIANCE OF CANADA**

(This report has not been received—Wm. P. Brink, S.C.)



## REPORT 25

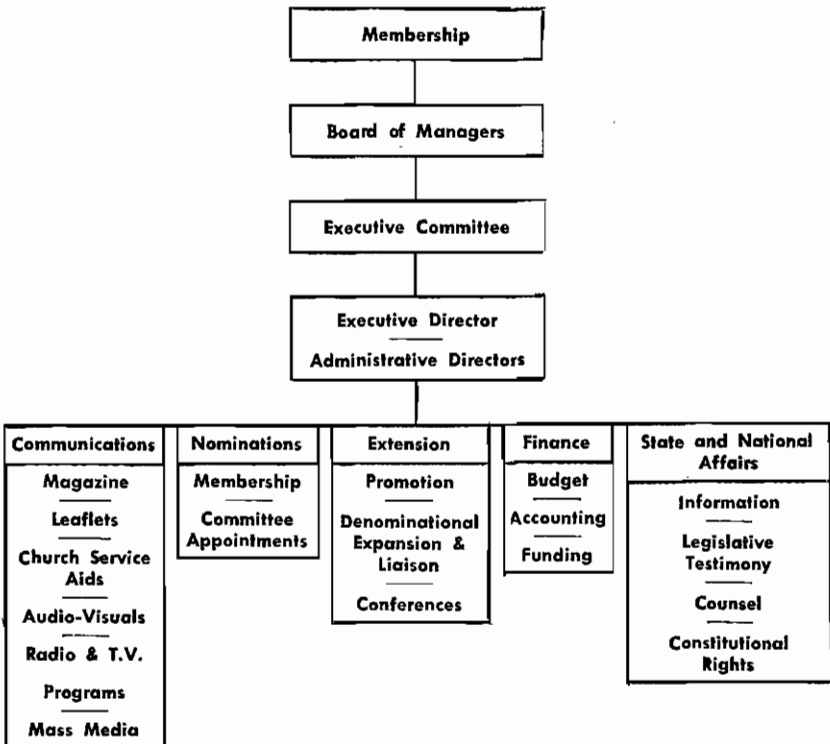
## LORD'S DAY ALLIANCE OF THE UNITED STATES

DEAR BROTHERS:

The Lord's Day Alliance was organized in 1888 and until 1970 had its headquarters in New York City, when by decision of the board of managers it moved to Atlanta, Georgia. Control of the alliance is by a board of managers made up of representatives of eleven denominations and three state alliances, together with certain "at-large members" selected by the board. Those denominations that are in harmony with the objectives of the alliance are welcome to nominate representatives to the board.

The chart below illustrates the organization of the alliance—

## ORGANIZATION AND PROGRAM



The purpose of the alliance is: "to promote the first day of the week, the Lord's Day, as the Christian day of renewal and worship according

to the Scriptures; and for that purpose to gather and diffuse information, to publish documents, to use the press, to cause public addresses to be made and use other means as shall be expedient and proper to the end that the blessings of the Lord's Day shall be secured for all people."

The executive director, the Rev. Marion G. Bradwell, conducts the business of the alliance from the new offices leased until 1975 in the Methodist Center, Suite 409, 159 Forrest Avenue, N.E., Atlanta, Georgia 30303. The president of the board is the Rev. Charles A. Platt, of Ridgewood, New Jersey. The treasurer is Mr. E. Larry Edison, and the director of information services is Mr. Archibald Pipe.

The communication committee has the responsibility for the publication, preparation and dissemination of all the media materials of the alliance. This committee reports that there has been a change in the number of issues of the publication, "Sunday, The Publication for the Lord's Day." It is now published on a bi-monthly, four-page format. This means that news items of the alliance can be more up to date than formerly. A new film strip, "Just One Day," was completed and is being distributed at the price of \$5.00. It calls attention to the spiritual dynamics to be discovered when we "Keep God's Day—God's Way." The alliance is promoting distribution of the book, "The Lord's Day," by the Rev. Professor Paul K. Jewett, of the faculty of the Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California. This is an excellent volume and I commend it to our churches and individual members for study and reading. This committee is also busy preparing new series of radio "spots." These will be forwarded free of charge to radio stations as finances permit.

The State and National Affairs Committee reports that it has prepared a leaflet setting forth the Christian's "Sunday Civil Rights" as provided in the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The committee also counsels with individuals who are in danger of economic privation and/or unemployment because of their "Lord's Day Convictions." This field of activity will in all probability expand as the trend "business as usual" on Sunday continues in our country. Recognition for those in business who voluntarily honor the Lord's Day by keeping their firms closed on Sunday is another plan of this committee. Local churches will be asked to become involved by distributing recognition posters to these establishments for the alliance. These posters will say, "The Lord's Day Alliance of the U.S., in cooperation with local churches gives its citation to this firm in recognition of its "no Sunday business policy." In addition, the committee is preparing bumper stickers, church bulletin boards, etc., and these will be available bearing the logo of the alliance and this legend, "Shop Where You See, Closed on Sunday."

The extension committee reported that denominational participation in the alliance has grown from five to fourteen in the last six years. Negotiations are still in progress with others for connection with the Lord's Day Alliance. Last year the alliance was offered a booth for displaying and distributing its materials at the Kiwanis International Convention in San Francisco. Plans are to be present for the 1972 Convention in Atlantic City, New Jersey. A display was at hand at the Georgia State

Baptist Convention, and the executive director spoke to more than a thousand "Messengers" gathered at Jekyll Island, Georgia.

The Finance Committee manages the Lord's Day Alliance's investment program, plus the handling of the financial records. Last year the investment program produced \$24,499.00 for the various alliance programs. This was an increase over the 1970 income. During the past year the alliance established the "Fellowship of One Hundred." This is a contribution by either churches or individuals contributing \$100 or more annually to the alliance. Twenty churches from our denomination are now numbered in this fellowship. The alliance hopes to attain a membership of 500 in this fellowship. The net income for 1971 for the alliance amounted to \$51,752 of which our churches contributed \$6,819.

Much work has been done by the alliance, and much more remains to be done. The alliance is made up of a group of dedicated people. They not only "believe in" what they are doing, but they are doing what they "believe in." I was appointed as the synodical representative by the Synod of 1971 and attended the annual board meeting on February 10, 1972, in Atlanta. I can attest that the alliance is sincerely interested in promoting real spiritual experiences which will make Sunday truly God's Day.

*Recommendations to Synod:*

1. Allow the executive director, the Rev. Marion G. Bradwell, opportunity to address synod at this session.
2. Maintain representation to the Lord's Day Alliance Board.
3. Declare September 10th, annually, to be the "Lord's Day Observance Sunday" and make available to the churches bulletin covers for this particular use.
4. That our churches be urged to become members of the "Fellowship of One Hundred" thus furnishing the alliance with additional funds so that some of the programs proposed by the alliance can be put into effect.

Respectfully submitted,

Fred Fisher

Synodical representative

REPORT 26  
THE LUKE SOCIETY, INC.

DEAR BROTHERS:

The Luke Society was formed in 1964 to encourage a more personal involvement of Christian Reformed physicians and dentists in the medical aspect of missions. The success of this organization is reflected by the increased interest in the various projects the Luke Society has undertaken and the increased opportunities for service.

As a society within the Christian Reformed Church, we appreciate the encouragement and endorsement received from previous synods, as well as the moral and financial support of the churches. We have assisted in the medical work already in progress under the auspices of our denomination. In addition, our desire to provide support to physicians and dentists within our church who are led into mission projects has resulted in new and imaginative programs.

It is our desire that our efforts and also our commitment to the denomination and its causes will enable synod and other agencies within our church to turn unhesitatingly to the Luke Society for assistance and cooperation.

*Membership*

The Luke Society membership numbers 197, which includes 90 practicing physicians, 26 practicing dentists, 36 physicians in training, 4 retirees, 8 missionaries, and 33 medical or dental students. In addition there are 31 affiliates.

*Rehoboth Christian Hospital*

Since November 27, 1970, many patients have been treated in the new Rehoboth Christian Hospital located in Gallup, New Mexico. The transition was relatively smooth and since then, the hospital has been run very efficiently by Mr. Albion Afman with the able assistance of Miss Oveta Wildeman, director of nursing.

*Medical Group:* One of the greatest problems throughout the history of Rehoboth Christian Hospital has been the procurement of staff physicians. A crisis repeatedly arose when a physician's term of service was completed and no replacement was immediately available. A unique solution has been found through an agreement of Christian physicians who, on a full time basis, practice in the hospital and simultaneously provide 24 hour coverage of the emergency and in-patient service.

The doctor group is currently composed of 5 Christian men; a general surgeon, Dr. Al Diddams; a pediatrician, Dr. Richard Stam; an internist, Dr. Jay Dykstra, and 2 generalists, Drs. Jack Kamps and Bruce Muller. These men are faithfully executing a program of which the church can be proud.

*Outstanding Indebtedness:* Total construction and equipment costs to date are \$1,330,446 and \$255,000 respectively. Hill-Burton [U.S. Government] contributions are \$333,333. The hospital has been financed by a 15 year mortgage of \$420,000 and a short term loan of \$121,000. Debentures in the amount of \$96,000 have been sold to cover the costs of necessary equipment.

*Hospital Operation:* Patients of all races who come to the Rehoboth Christian Hospital are provided with excellent care. If indigent, they are admitted to the limit of the budget. The subsidy we receive from the Board of Home Missions helps pay about 22% of the actual cost for such care. The hospital is operated locally by a Board of Governors, the majority of which are members of the community. The 12 members of this board include men and women, 7 of whom are Christian Reformed.

The following are a few statistics which may be of interest to the denomination:

	1970	1971
Number of inpatients .....	987	1,216
Number of outpatients .....	11,467	28,600
Average hospital stay .....	6.2 days	5.5 days
Number of deaths .....	19	28
Number of births .....	172	169
Total operations .....	217	431

*Hospital Evangelism:* When the Synod of 1964 requested the Luke Society to assume responsibility for Rehoboth Hospital, we accepted the challenge to make available and to improve health care services in that institution. The developments at Rehoboth give evidence to the emphasis of the Luke Society in improving the quality of medical care. However, we have not forsaken the basic tradition of Rehoboth Hospital, namely that it serves an integral part of the mission witness.

Although the 1964 Synod gave the Board of Home Missions the responsibility for the spiritual care of patients, the Luke Society has always been firmly committed to this purpose. The generosity of our denomination gives evidence of the desire to use Rehoboth Christian Hospital as a Christian Reformed mission outreach. The Luke Society believes the hospital must be used to its fullest spiritual potential; to do less is an unacceptable inconsistency! With more than 1½ million dollars invested, 78 employees, 30,000 patients [in one year], we have a great responsibility and opportunity to tell the good news of salvation and to provide spiritual counsel for those in need. It is the desire of the Luke Society that everyone associated with the operation of Rehoboth Christian Hospital be impressed by the distinct Christian atmosphere; this includes both inpatients and outpatients, nurses and physicians in training [many are transient], and all other employees. Although some patients may resist religion, we trust an expression of Christian love and concern beyond the medical help will not be resented.

A spiritual leader is needed, one who can instruct, guide and encourage both patient and staff. The Luke Society is convinced that someone special is needed, someone trained and dedicated and enthusiastic. We have listened to the requests from the hospital personnel; we have sought

the advice of qualified ministers and chaplains, the recommendations clearly revealed the importance of a full time chaplain.

Therefore, after conferring with the Board of Home Missions, we have jointly decided to request synod's permission for the Luke Society, with the assistance of the denominational Chaplain's Committee, to request that Classis Rocky Mountain call a qualified chaplain to fill this critical position.

#### *Medical Missionary Scholarship Fund*

This fund has been established to provide financial assistance to students entering the medical-dental, or allied health fields, and who in addition, intend to serve on mission fields of the Christian Reformed Church following their training. The money received can be repaid in full by completing the agreed period of time in active mission work. Students so interested are encouraged to apply for this assistance.

#### *Mississippi Evangelistic Medicine*

The Mississippi Evangelistic Medicine [M.E.M.] program began in 1970. It is centered in the Christian Health Center in Cary, Mississippi. This project gives our church an opportunity to share Christian concern for the spiritual and physical welfare of fellow men. Dr. Peter A. Boelens, Jr., Board Certified Pediatrician, who also holds a master's degree in public health, leads this work in the Mississippi Delta where the child death rate is among the highest in the United States according to U.S. Public Health statistics. The Lord continues to bless this project. Initially, the local people including some Mississippi officials, questioned our motives and even opposed our project. Now there is considerable cooperation. The Christian Reformed Church has responded splendidly with prayers and support.

Dr. Boelens writes: "In developing our program, we have been interested in providing health care for all children and pregnant mothers in Sharkey and Issaquena counties. We encourage families to enroll in our program which provides health service including free hospitalization at Kuhn Memorial [previously called Vicksburg Charity] for all members. The cost for one year is \$10 per family. To be eligible for this program, the mothers are required to attend group sessions which are guided by the nurse practitioners. Groups are being held for pregnant mothers and mothers with infants, and other groups are being planned for teenagers. The groups that have been instituted are going very well and are proving to be the most effective way of educating these people at their particular level of need. If families do not want to enroll in our program, we will also provide care, but the cost of each clinic visit including medicines is then \$2. The majority of families coming to us have enrolled in the program because of the economic incentive. To date, we are caring for over 350 families with an average of about 7 children per family. We also have seen and are caring for approximately 100 children on an individual basis. This may not seem like a great number of cases but the amount of illness in these families is staggering. Since adequate health services have not been previously available, we are

uncovering problems which have never had medical attention. In 1971, 3,057 patients were treated.

God has blessed us tremendously in providing dedicated black Christian workers. Our laboratory technician, Jolillian Bell, comes from Jackson but she lives in Cary where our clinic program is located. She does our laboratory work, receptionist work, psychological testing, and audiometry during the day. In the evening, she holds a weekly class for the teenage girls in sex education and also Bible study groups for the teenage girls. We feel very fortunate to have her in that she is an alert Christian girl dedicated toward helping her own people.

Mr. Howard Clay, a deacon in the Cary Church is a great benefit to our program in that he provides transportation to and from our clinic for many of our patients. Working in a rural setting, transportation is a big problem for the families too poor to have a car.

With all the needs here in the Delta of Mississippi, we are presently looking for additional help in the form of 2 more nurses, preferably with experience in public health nursing and an interest in pediatrics to be trained as pediatric nurse practitioners. We are also very much in need of a dentist!

Dr. Boelens, Jr., has a capable assistant, Cloe Ann Danford. This Denver-born nurse, mid-wife, and pediatric nurse practitioner is a graduate of Reformed Bible Institute. For 2½ years she served as a missionary in Nigeria working at the Mkar hospital. She has a B.S. in nursing from Barrington College in Rhode Island, and has studied mid-wifery in England. Because her return visa to Nigeria was not granted, she accepted the challenge of working in the M.E.M. project. Among other duties she conducts the classes for pregnant women and mothers with infants. In this way health education is brought together with an effective Christian witness.

An interesting development is the impact of the M.E.M. project on the community. It has utilized Mississippi's resources in a remarkable way. All patients needing hospitalization are provided free care by the Kuhn Memorial Hospital in Vicksburg, Mississippi.

The University of Mississippi provides medical help to this hospital by supplying 3 nurse midwives and 2 staff OB-Gyn physicians. The pediatric ward at Kuhn Hospital is under the supervision of Dr. Boelens who is also on the faculty of the university. For all of this we are thankful to the Lord for open doors.

Dr. Boelens' testimony concerning the work is as follows: "The health problems are great but so are the opportunities for service. I am personally thankful that God led us to this state and that with your backing we have the opportunity of demonstrating that the love of Jesus Christ is very relevant to the problems and needs of people today."

### *Sight-Sound Program*

Through the special efforts of past president, Dr. Roger Hamstra, the Luke Society has available for the church's use several sight-sound programs.

The University of Colorado Medical School cooperates in a remarkable way by making its facilities available to the Luke Society. For this we are grateful.

First of all there is a closed loop silent super 8mm presentation of the Mississippi Evangelistic Medicine program. There is also a recruitment 35mm slide and tape program called "Keepers of the Temple."

At the dedication of the Rehoboth Christian Hospital, a movie was made and this too is available for church and society use.

Another presentation of an unusual topic is "Organ Transplantation and Christian Thinking."

Any of these programs are available on loan by writing to the Luke Society, Inc., 2090 South Downing Street, Denver, Colorado 80210.

### *Recommendations*

As synodical representative, I recommend that:

1. Synod grant a Luke Society representative the privilege of the floor when this report is under consideration.

2. Synod grant approval to the Luke Society to request Classis Rocky Mountain to call a chaplain for Rehoboth Christian Hospital in co-operation and consultation with the Chaplain Committee.

#### *Grounds:*

a. The service of a full time chaplain is an essential and integral part of the hospital mission witness.

b. The Chaplain Committee is the denominational agency which endorses institutional chaplains.

c. The Board of Home Missions concurs with this request.

3. Synod continue to place the Luke Society, Inc., on the approved list of non-denominational causes recommended for financial support.

#### *Grounds:*

a. The need for medical equipment and mortgage payment assistance at Rehoboth Christian Hospital which the Luke Society operates at synod's behest.

b. The care of indigent patients at Rehoboth Christian Hospital.

c. The need for medicine, equipment, and assistants in the Mississippi Evangelistic Medicine project.

d. The continuation of the Medical Missionary Scholarship program to assist in staffing Christian Reformed projects.

Respectfully submitted,

Everett Van Reken, M.D.  
Synodical Representative for  
The Luke Society, Inc.

Board of Directors:

Henry Evenhouse, M.D., President  
Bert De Groot, M.D., Vice President  
William Bouman, M.D., Secretary  
Peter A. Boelens, D.D.S., Treasurer  
Gerrit Kemme, M.D.  
Gary Vander Ark, M.D.



## REPORT 27

## REFORMED BIBLE INSTITUTE

DEAR BROTHERS:

The Reformed Bible Institute, established in 1940 to train workers in evangelism, now offers the Bachelor of Religious Education (BRE) degree to those who major in Bible and Theology with a concentration in either evangelism or religious education on the undergraduate level. Graduates from the degree course may continue their education or enter full-time employment in church or missions. The first BRE degrees were awarded to three students in May 1971. As many as twelve degrees may be awarded at the 1972 commencement on May 18.

Since the RBI is authorized by the Michigan Board of Education to offer the BRE degree (four year) and the Associate in Religious Education degree (two year), the enrollment has grown steadily. There are now 121 regular students who come from Canada, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Taiwan, and Singapore, as well as from the United States.

The dedicated faculty consists of nine members (including three Christian Reformed ministers), assisted by part-time instructors. At the annual meeting of the Board of Trustees on March 2-3, appointments were made, designating the Rev. Addison P. Soltau, Reformed Presbyterian Missionary to Japan for nineteen years, as Professor of Missions; Mr. James A. Ritsema, Holland Christian High School Bible Teacher, as Field Work Administrator; and Mrs. Dick L. Van Halsema, part-time instructor in Social Work, to be Dean of Women for one year (succeeding Mrs. Edward Eelkema, née Magee). All instruction at RBI focuses in the Bible and theology major which is required by each student. Fully one-third of all class hours is spent in this major area. Our staff is very faithful and diligent in serving the kingdom and the church of Jesus Christ.

Following a decision by the trustees in May 1971, and a vote by the association membership in November 1971, a proposal for a change of the name to "Reformed Bible College" was submitted to the State Capitol in December. Favorable action was expected in March. We will then be known as RBC.

Over 1,100 students have studied at least one year at RBI. Many of these alumni are serving today with home and foreign missions ministries of many denominations as well as with numerous interdenominational agencies, such as Wycliffe Bible Translators. Christian education and youth leaders, as well as workers in parish evangelism. "The field is white unto harvest, but the laborers are few." Work openings exceed the number of available graduates.

Student tuition contributes a larger share of required annual income than in previous years. Church offerings and personal gifts make it possible for RBI to continue its ministry of evangelism, and missionary training. Contributions come from Christian Reformed, Reformed,

Presbyterian and other churches. Scholarship help is available for academically qualified and needy students. We are grateful to God for the loyal support, through prayers and gifts, of God's people. We are also grateful that the RBI is endorsed by the Christian Reformed Synod for congregational offerings. We covet this continued warm relationship for the years to come.

RBI has since 1963 been conducting a Mexico Summer Training Session primarily for the orientation and recruitment of missionary trainees. Last year 45 students, nurses, teachers and self-employed young adults participated. This involves ten weeks of intensive Spanish study, primitive living at Wycliffe Bible Translator's Jungle Camp, and about one month of field work assignments. A number of STS "Alumni" are now serving mission fields in Mexico, Argentina, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Canada, and in the United States.

For residents of the greater Grand Rapids metropolitan area RBI continues to hold fall and winter terms featuring evening classes. Invitations have been received to establish extension schools in other areas, and these possibilities are being explored. The correspondence department continues to supply Bible Study materials for individuals as well as for church societies and Bible study groups.

Among the many guest lecturers who appeared on RBI campus, most significant was Dr. Arthur F. Glasser, who delivered the first Baker Missions Lectures on March 13-15, speaking on "The Old Testament and Missions Today." These lectures are to be published in the near future.

I am grateful for the privilege of serving as synodical representative and I commend the RBI to you for continued and loyal support.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Harry Vander Ark  
Synodical Representative

## REPORT 28

## THE EVANGELICAL LITERATURE LEAGUE T.E.L.L

## DEAR BROTHERS:

The year 1971 was a year of growth for TELL as well as one of strengthening various phases of the work. Bookstores, seminaries and Bible institutes were provided with nearly 20,000 books of Reformed persuasion and 4,000,000 tracts were distributed in Latin America. The numerous requests from seminaries and Bible institutes for TELL's books included particular need for doctrinal aids and Bible helps such as commentaries. An unpredictable demand for Berkhof's *Systematic Theology* has made it almost impossible to meet all the requests. Similarly, Rev. Van Baalen's book on the cults continues to be in great demand.

At the present time, the projects in various stages of processing include the following:

- a. *Introduction to Systematic Theology* - Berkhof
- b. *Biblical Basis for Infant Baptism* - Small (now ready for distribution)
- c. *Book of Meditations* - (a 'Family Altar' publication, coming off the press in April)
- d. *Commentary on I Corinthians* (now being translated)
- e. *Commentary on the New Testament* - Eerdmans (17 volumes, being processed for publication)
- f. *Introduction to the Old Testament* - Young (soon to be published)

In addition to the new publications planned, TELL is currently involved in reprinting four of our best sellers. The new projects alone—with the translation, publication, distribution involved—are estimated to require an expenditure of over \$25,000.

We are grateful to report that at this writing Mr. Hubert Van Tol, Executive Director, is recovering successfully from a heart attack. God has blessed his efforts in this literature ministry and we pray that physical strength will be restored for additional years of service. The part-time services of Dr. Wm. Rutgers as Promotional Director have been greatly appreciated and helpful to the work. Mrs. Vonda Style continues faithfully as secretary in the office. Other assistance is provided through volunteer or part-time assistance.

TELL welcomes your inquiries and stands ready to assist—through evangelical Spanish literature—in the proclamation of the Gospel to the Spanish-speaking people of Latin America. We are grateful to God for blessings on this ministry. With deep appreciation to individuals, organizations and churches who have supported this work with their prayers and gifts we again request that TELL be approved for continued financial support of our churches. A copy of the Auditor's Financial Report has been submitted to the Finance Committee of the Synodical Interim Committee. If other information is needed, we will try to provide it.

Respectfully submitted,

David W. Bosscher, Synodical Representative

## REPORT 29

## UNITED CALVINIST YOUTH

DEAR BROTHERS:

After six years as UCY (United Calvinist Youth) the board decided it was well that we take a look at this infant that had been maturing to see if the present structure was adequate. The three divisions of UCY (Calvinettes, Calvinist Cadets, and Young Calvinist Federation) formed the UCY with the purpose of "uniting and guiding youth and their organizations for the purpose of making them more conscious of their responsibilities to Christ as Lord and Savior, and of utilizing and co-ordinating the powers God has graciously given Christian youth for service in the kingdom of God." Among changes in the structure which give evidence of growth and maturity is the reducing of the number of board members from a minimum of 19 to a minimum of 12. Also the number of required board meetings was changed from two a year to one a year. Provision was also made for a business manager who along with the director is to maintain overall concern for the UCY and implement and coordinate its affairs.

Two of the greatest interests and concerns for UCY this past year have been in the area of finances and "Evangelism Thrust" which reflect two of the concerns of most denominational agencies. In the area of finances the business manager has spent considerable time making sure that all monies were delegated wisely and also investigating new sources of revenue.

In the area of Evangelism Thrust, UCY cooperation with our Home Mission Board has resulted in each division producing a book in the Idea Series and each division committing itself to an intensive emphasis on youth evangelism at their up-coming conventions. Further with the financial assistance and advice of the Board of Home Missions, UCY staff from the three divisions, will seek to work out an Evangelism Training Seminar in January 1973, for the purpose of training approximately 20 youth leaders from various parts of Canada and the U.S. These youth leaders would then return to their areas to host similar meetings. There are presently 2000 YC leaders, 2200 Cadet Counselors, and 2400 Calvinette Counselors.

We want to express our appreciation to our denomination for the continued support following the decision of Synod of 1970, which placed the United Calvinist Youth on the list of denominational quotas for three years. Since the quota is only for our building expense we would earnestly ask synod to recommend our causes to the churches for one or more offerings. We ask that the following four causes be listed as in previous years:

**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)

### CALVINETTES

Being a branch of U.C.Y. the Calvinette board is happy to submit its annual report to the synod delegates.

Our *Touch* magazine is going over very well with our girls. We sponsored a contest for the girls to sell the magazine to girls other than our Calvinettes, since there is so much in the magazine which can be of interest to all girls. Prizes were given for certain amounts of subscriptions sold.

Our second convention was held at Dordt College in Sioux Center, Iowa, on June 22, 23, and 24 with 250 counselors attending. A variety of topics, including Personal Growth of Counselors, Psychology of Girls 9-16, Crafts, Camping, and Bible Lessons, were offered for group discussions. Our banquet was held on the Wednesday evening with Mr. Willis Timmer giving a very interesting message entitled "Reaching Kids for Christ Through Calvinettes." Our third convention is scheduled for August 9, 10, and 11 at Calvin College. The Muskegon Council will host the convention.

Our budget will be \$78,875.00. Part of this money is received through *Touch* magazine subscriptions and merchandise sales. The rest must come through church offerings and gifts. We ask that each church will take note of this and schedule an offering for the Calvinettes this year.

Our director, Mrs. Mereness, had the opportunity to visit Australia. During her visit, their Calvinette convention was held with 5 registrants. She reported the following: "My task there consisted of three different parts. (1) Visiting clubs and meeting with counselors in different areas. I was very pleased with what they have accomplished in their first six years as an organization. (2) Meeting the Australasian Board. (3) Participating in their convention at Berwick. This was a real highlight of my trip." At this convention the women voted on many major changes in their structure and on their relationship with the Calvinette organization in the United States and Canada. They will become a sister organization of us—programming for their own clubs.

*Calvinettes in the Community*, a how and why booklet on using the Calvinette program for evangelism, has been written by our director, Mrs. Mereness. The booklet has been published by the Board of Home Missions for the Evangelism Thrust Program.

We are also trying to update the rank and merit badge program with adding new badges and revising the old ones to make them of greater interest to the girls. We hope to have these ready for printing in January 1973.

As director, board members, and counselors we need your continual prayers and support for our program.

Mrs. Lewis Blohm  
Synodical Representative

## YOUNG CALVINIST FEDERATION

This is my first report as synodical representative. I was the alternate to Rev. Isaac Apol until September of 1971, so my experience as synodical representative has been a short one. But it has been a blessed time for me. One cannot begin to be thankful enough for the people who make this organization run smoothly, under the direction and leadership of Rev. James Lont. Thank the Lord for him and pray for him and his ministry.

The three divisions of U.C.Y. moved into the U.C.Y. building in April 1971. Now each of the divisions are adequately housed, the grounds have been beautifully landscaped, and U.C.Y. business manager, Phil Quist, is in charge of all facilities.

Our federation is where our youth groups and leagues are. We have 48 leagues at the present time, in the United States and Canada. The leagues require good executive leadership. The federation is doing much in encouraging the leagues to have leadership training sessions. These sessions help youth leaders gain knowledge, experience and also learn how to lead a person to Christ, thereby becoming more confident and better youth leaders. Good youth leaders and a well run league make up our federation. The Y.C.F. ministry is summarized in these words, "that the youth of the church may know Christ and serve him always and everywhere." We need trained and dedicated leaders to bring this ministry about.

The SWIM program continues to be a blessing. This year we had 450 SWIMers on about 90 fields. Bonaire and Pine Rest were also fields. The Pine Rest program was exceptionally successful this year.

The Y.C.F. servicemen's ministry continues to be a blessing to our own servicemen and to many others. A new servicemen's brochure has been designed and is now being distributed.

The Young Calvinist magazine, *Insight*, under the management of John Knight, continues to come off the press. It has been a good year for our magazine. A new campaign slogan is being set up for our 72 Campaign, "Give Youth a Boost." We pray that our goals will be met in Campaign 72. Young Calvinist Federation also publishes *Input*, a leaders handbook which has been very helpful to our leaders. It gives them all the information they need about the federation, and contains *Insight* lesson outlines.

The Young Calvinist Federation Convention held at the University of Montana in Bozeman, Montana, was a Spirit filled convention. Many of our young people came home with the Holy Spirit in their hearts, ready and eager to tell others how great they felt and not afraid to say they met the Lord and accepted him. The Youth Synod too was successful and a great learning experience. Official minutes of Youth Synod were sent to each classis; they are also available to consistories upon request.

Great plans are being made for 72 convention which will be held at McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, August 18-22. Again we pray for a Spirit filled convention. Our theme "God Power," will be developed with emphasis on God the Father and the Father's world;

God the Son, his forgiveness through the person and work of Christ; God the Holy Spirit, and his work in us. Anticipated attendance: 1200-1500 young people and leaders. There will also be a federation leadership training session which will include league presidents and all board members.

Lastly, let me ask each of you to continue to support and pray for the Y.C.F. and enthusiastically share our joy in Christ. Y.C.F. continues to be used by God to his glory in the strengthening of his church.

Respectfully submitted,

Marla Koning

### CALVINIST CADET CORPS

As we report this year we would like to ask you to join with us in expressing our deep gratitude to a most merciful God in the blessings that have been given as Cadeting celebrates its 20th year of service to the Christian Reformed Church and the church of Jesus Christ. The Calvinist Cadet Corps was actually formed when the name and first constitution were adopted on October 16, 1952. By February of 1953 there were 30 clubs. In 1954 the first full-time staff member was employed and the first Cadet Guidebook was developed. In 1955 synodical approval was given to Cadeting and the first Clarion (magazine for Counselors) was published. In 1958 the first Crusader (magazine for boys) was published. 1960 saw the first Counselor Convention in Cicero, Illinois. 1966 Cadeting began to flourish in Ontario, Canada, growing from one council in 1966 to six councils in 1972. It was also in this year that Cadeting became a division of United Calvinist Youth. And it was in 1966 that the first International Camporee was held near Denver, Colorado.

Now in 1972 there are three full-time staff members. The Cadet organization has truly become international with 34 councils in U.S. and Canada, and 391 council clubs in U.S. and Canada. There are 40 non-council and non-member clubs in U.S. and Canada, 15 clubs in Australia, 10 clubs in New Zealand, and 1 club in the United Kingdom for a total of 457 clubs. There are 8823 Cadets in the U.S. and Canada with another 1131 Cadets estimated in Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom and the non-council clubs, for a grand total of 9954. There are also 2144 counselors in U.S. and Canada and 196 in the other areas of the world for a total of 2340 counselors. We are also projecting a budget of \$100,740 for the season of March 1, 1972 through February 28, 1973.

In reflecting on the 20 years and the future, the energetic and challenging leader of the Cadets, Mike McGervey said at the last Cadet Congress meeting, "As counselors, you must understand that society and learn how to cope with the ways in which our young people react to it. And you must help to build a strong, biblical foundation in these Cadets that is real and meaningful to their lives so they know where to turn when the pressures of society close in around them both now and in later years . . . We are about to celebrate our 20th year,

and we're just getting started! Why? Because Cadeting deals with life itself, and as society changes. Cadeting strives to meet its challenge in the lives of boys. It can do this because it seeks to bring the truth of Scripture into these lives and help each boy come to a personal, saving knowledge of Jesus Christ."

This past year for Cadeting has been described by its President Arie Verkaik as a year of crises. There is the present financial crisis which really has existed for the past four years when each year Cadeting was ending with a deficit. This has led to renewed measures to seek other avenues of monies (such as fund raising) and wrestling to present a realistic budget. For a time there appeared to be a crisis in the publication of our magazines but again we experienced God's leading and at present we have a subscription of 8800 Crusaders (magazine for boys) and 1900 Clarions (magazine for counselors). A third area of crisis arose in regard to our International Camporee selection site when it appeared that we might have to abandon our choice of land between the lakes in Kentucky but again the problem was resolved. Only recently a signed agreement to have our annual convention at Boyne Mountain was broken, but again through the leading of the Spirit of God, Alma College, Alma, Michigan, became available to us. He tested us in many ways but we can only say that truly the Lord has been leading us in a most marvelous way, his way.

After experiencing a most blessed convention last year at Lake Okoboji, Iowa, we look forward this year to meeting at Alma College from August 17 through 19. This convention involves counselors with their wives and has as its theme, "Go Tell It On the Mountain." It will include workshops, special speakers and opportunity to rap regarding Cadeting. Prior to that date we will have our third International Camporee from July 26 through August 2 at Land Between the Lakes, Kentucky, in which some 500 cadets and 100 counselors are expected to take part.

Then we haven't even mentioned our involvement in Evangelism Thrust and our new Idea Series booklet No. 22, "Cadeting in the Community." Or our revised program, or the use of cassette tapes to provide modules for our counsels and increase communication between counsels and headquarters, or the work that Marvin Vander Vliet has been doing for us, working on a faith-basis.

And we would remind you that probably more than any other organization in the denomination, over 11 percent of our membership is non-Christian Reformed. We are thankful for the men of vision that are part of Cadeting, but we need you as leaders in your church for that continued and sustained interest in prayer, in time, in meaningful support, as we seek to be an instrument used by God to help boys to "live for Jesus."

Paul L. Vermaire,  
Synodical Representative



REPORT 30  
WORLD HOME BIBLE LEAGUE

DEAR BROTHERS:

The principal aim of the World Home Bible League is to supply missionaries, pastors, and laymen with Scriptures. This we have been privileged to do since 1938. During the past year the Lord has opened new and exciting avenues of entry for us. The results have been nothing short of fantastic. Let us tell you of some.

*Youth* — Through special arrangements with Tyndale House the World Home Bible League received permission to print its own edition of "Living Letters" which it has called: "The Greatest is Love." Since its appearance in July, 450,000 copies have been placed throughout the English-speaking world. Special editions for the black man, the American Indian, etc. have been printed. They are special in that the cover and the inside pictures portray these particular people. One international airline is considering putting this Testament on their plane as part of the reading material offered the public. The youth have been particularly responsive to this Testament. We expect that during this coming year we will print one and one-half million copies for distribution throughout the world.

At the moment we are working with translators for the release of this same Testament in Russian, French, Tagalog, Hilagaynon, and a score of other languages and dialects.

*Mexico* — The news from Mexico is tremendous. We are cooperating with the Wycliffe translators in providing Scriptures for Latin American Nations. Approximately 5,000,000 Spanish Bibles, New Testaments, and Gospels, and portions were distributed this past year. We are grateful for the effort called "Project Bibles" of the Christian Reformed Laymen's League. Much of the distribution of these Bibles was channeled through Christian Reformed missionaries. We hope to distribute over seven million Scriptures in this area in 1972 and to publish all the Wycliffe Bible translations for the peoples of this area. The power of the Word is clearly manifested and scores of people in tribes who are receiving the Word in their own language for the first time are coming to a saving knowledge of Christ. In some areas these converts have become a part of the Christian Reformed mission in Mexico.

*Bible Studies* — During the year the Bible Studies Program under the direction of Rev. John De Vries has expanded rapidly. The program has been in existence for some three years and during that time over 300,000 complete courses have been used by churches in the U.S.A., Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. Under the name "Project Philip" the Bible Studies division has expanded into twelve foreign countries.

Many Christian Reformed mission stations will receive substantial numbers of Bible courses and New Testaments to be used in this program of training laymen to witness.

During 1972 it is expected that we will open ten regional offices throughout the United States for the Bible Studies program. These offices will be staffed with full-time regional directors who will be introducing the Bible Studies program to churches in their territory.

The World Home Bible League is proud to be associated with Key '73. During this past year Rev. John De Vries served Key '73 as chairman of the Scripture Distribution and Bible Study Development Committee. The goal of '73, in Scripture distribution, is to place a Bible, New Testament, or Scripture portion in every home on our continent and accompany that placement with an invitation to join a Bible study group or enroll in a Bible study course. The World Home Bible League looks forward to becoming involved in Key '73 in saturating our continent with God's Word.

*Tape Ministry* — A unique concept in getting the Word of God to people was introduced last year when the league invested in over 1,000 cassettes and a large number of portable recorders. These are being used particularly in areas where the New Testament, or part of it, has been translated and printed and where some reference to Old Testament texts is highly desirable. One of the books of the Bible often recorded on such tapes in many dialects is the book of Isaiah and also the book of Genesis.

*Printing of Translations* — The league, working through Scriptures Unlimited, is now producing 95% of all the translations of Wycliffe Translators throughout the world. This includes such areas as Mexico, South America, the Philippine Islands, New Guinea, and Nigeria. We are grateful to the Lord to be involved in the publication of some of the newest translations of God's Word. We have in our files over 200 requests for publication of Scriptures in languages and dialects for groups as yet unreached by the Gospel. Because God is blessing and the church is responding to these needs, each year finds us bringing God's Word to more of the people of the world.

Through "Operation Handclasp," a volunteer program in which many of the Chicagoland churches cooperate, we can produce Scriptures at a very low cost. By the end of 1971 this operation alone produced several million New Testaments and Scripture tracts.

We are deeply grateful for the prayer support of our churches. We know this cause has the love of our hearts. We thrill at the generous support which our church has granted through the years. Once again we request that the synod of our church recommend the World Home Bible League to the churches for their moral and financial support.

Humbly submitted,

Rev. John A. De Kruyter  
Synodical Representative

# STUDY COMMITTEE REPORTS

## REPORT 31

### CLOSER RELATIONS WITH THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

DEAR BROTHERS:

For thirteen years synod has mandated the Committee of Closer Relations with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church to work toward the goal of eventual union. This past year your committee held two day-long sessions with the OPC committee which have proved to us again that the goal of organic union is not at this time a realistic one.

Perhaps a brief review of the past several years is in order. Until 1967 both committees had the mandate of seeking organic union and we engaged in serious deliberation on questions of church polity, which at that time appeared to be the principal roadblocks to eventual union of the two churches. These discussions proved mutually beneficial, and though differences were not fully resolved, neither committee felt that the differences were insurmountable. However, in 1967 the General Assembly of the OPC instructed their committee to investigate allegations of liberalism within the CRC. A new committee was appointed to carry out this new mandate and, unfortunately, this became in practice the primary mandate. With the change in mandate came also a change in procedures. In an attempt to show a trend toward liberalism in our church their committee confronted us with their interpretation of various articles appearing in periodicals, reports of study committees within our denomination and information from other sources. Hence we no longer discussed ecclesiastical differences but alleged trends toward liberalism within the CRC. We painstakingly showed that where deviation from our Reformed creeds and from the Word of God has been known, our church has been faithful in discipline. It is our conviction that their suspicions cannot be supported by the facts and that their allegations of liberalism within our church have not been substantiated. Repeatedly we have requested that we discuss the official position our church has taken on a certain question and not some private interpretation. Perhaps our protests at long last will be heeded.

Our committee has also responded to their probing on such questions as the special creation of man, our relation to the World Council of Churches, particular atonement, biblical infallibility, and faithfulness in discipline. We have not allayed their fears and suspicions. Though we always enjoy a cordial, hearty and frank exchange, our committee feels that to this point no meaningful progress is apparent. Old issues continue to surface; at our last meeting in January they requested fur-

ther discussion on synod's action respecting TCNN and two ministers whose views have been subject to scrutiny. We seem unable to resolve issues to their satisfaction. Perhaps the most critical issue concerns the infallibility and inspiration of the Scriptures. Our committee finds the study committee report on this subject and the decision of the 1961 synod to be very timely and an extremely helpful guide. Their committee, however, seems to be able to discern even in this study committee report to synod on the infallibility and inspiration of the scriptures statements that indicate a trend toward liberalism. Our discussions indicated that we were heading toward an impasse. For this reason we reported to the Synod of 1970 our serious difficulties in executing the mandate of a previous synod to work for eventual union with the OPC.

Last year we recommended that synod re-evaluate the mandate given its committee in 1959 "to increase efforts . . . that the way may be paved to possible eventual union." (Acts, 1959, p. 22) As grounds we listed the fact that no progress had been made, and we suggested as well that a strong desire for church union at this time was not apparent in our own denomination. Secondly, we recommended that inter-church conversations would be a more realistic mandate for the present. However, the Synod of 1971, on the strength of a letter written by their committee and approved and sent by their General Assembly, decided to continue our committee under the same mandate for another year. Synod judged that their letter indicated an apparently new posture, and charged us to continue the conversations to discover "whether or not this spirit of conciliation and cooperation which is manifest in the letter is evidenced in the continued conversations, and whether or not the progress noted by that letter, and the strong desire expressed in that letter for union finds concrete expression in the discussions with the representatives of the OPC". (Acts, 1971, Art. 133, p. 105) Our committee is unanimous in declaring that we have discovered no new posture; the allegations of trends toward liberalism have not been allayed nor withdrawn, despite our contention that they are without foundation. For this reason both our committees have now agreed to present to our respective assemblies the following recommendations:

*Recommendation one:* that our churches continue to hold to the ultimate hope of organic union on a scriptural basis.

*Ground:* The imperative to organic union of churches of like mind, effectively stated in the CRC report on Ecumenicity to the '44 synod.

*Recommendation two:* that the committees postpone, for the present, discussions specifically oriented to organic union.

*Grounds:*

- a. The OPC committee feels that the OPC must await further development in the consideration of the report on the Nature and Extent of Biblical Authority presented to the '71 synod (Acts, pp. 459-495).
- b. The continuing opinion of the OPC committee that there remain in the CRC trends toward theological liberalism which,

if unchecked, would widen the differences between the churches and make organic union less likely.

- c. The continuing concern in the OPC regarding alleged trends toward liberalism in the CRC creates a climate in which organic union could not be promoted in the CRC.

*Recommendation three:* that our churches seek to further our hope for organic union and to express the fraternal relationship of our two churches,

- a) by such actions, wherever practicable as the following:
  - a. pulpit exchanges
  - b. the use of each other's literature
  - c. cooperative publishing of literature
  - d. youth activities
  - e. ministerial conferences
  - f. representation at each other's classes/presbyteries and synods/general assemblies.
- b) by continuation of committee consultation with instruction to consider:
  - a. those matters which stand in the way of a closer relationship.
  - b. ways in which those differences may be resolved.

The above recommendations are also in accord with the Synod of 1971 which indicated that if we felt a new mandate was necessary we should make positive recommendations (Acts, 1971, Art. 133, c. 5, p. 106) to the Synod of 1972.

Should synod revise the mandate as recommended above, synod could consider these alternatives: 1) refer this to the Committee on Inter-Church Relations. 2) appoint a new committee, or 3) ask the present committee to serve under the new mandate.

In addition to the three recommendations listed above, we ask that our chairman, the Rev. Herman Hoekstra, be given the privilege of the floor.

Respectfully submitted,

Herman Hoekstra, chairman  
Sidney Cooper, reporter  
Eugene Bradford  
Peter Damsma  
Raymond Opperwall

## REPORT 32

## THE DELEGATION OF DEACONS TO MAJOR ASSEMBLIES

## A. Majority Report

DEAR BROTHERS:

*Introduction*

The Synod of 1967 considered quite extensively the question of the delegation of deacons to major assemblies. As far back as 1962, Classis Chatham overtured synod to consider such delegation; this overture was reviewed and presented with argumentation and grounds in 1963. The Synod of 1963 appointed a committee to study this matter and report to the Synod of 1965. This committee was reconstituted in 1964 and made its initial report to the Synod of 1966. That synod referred the report to the churches for study, and recommitted it to the study committee. Its final report was submitted to the Synod of 1967.

The advisory committee of the Synod of 1967 which reviewed the report of the study committee did not adopt its recommendations, but rather recommended the following statements which were adopted by the Synod of 1967 (cf. Acts of Synod, 1967, p. 93):

1. That synod declare that the delegation of deacons to the major assemblies of the church is neither prohibited nor demanded by Scripture and the Reformed confessions.

2. That synod do not accede to the request of the study committee to refer its recommendations to the churches for their consideration prior to decision by the Synod of 1968, but proceed to decision on the matter at this time.

3. That synod do not at the present time move in the direction of delegating deacons to major assemblies.

4. That synod do not accede to the recommendation "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".

Our present committee had its inception when Classis Hamilton overtured the Synod of 1970 "to reconsider its decision 'that synod do not, at the present time, move in the direction of delegating deacons to major assemblies'." The Synod of 1970 adopted this recommendation: "synod accedes to the intent of the overture of Classis Hamilton and refers it to a study committee for a reevaluation of the decision of the Synod of 1967". After several meetings of the full committee, it became obvious that we could not present a unified report to the Synod of 1972. We herewith present our majority report.

*Mandate*

Our committee believes that our mandate consists of a "reevaluation of the decision of the Synod of 1967". More specifically, we believe that

the overture of Classis Hamilton addresses itself primarily to recommendation 3 (Acts of Synod, 1967, p. 93) which reads: "synod do not at the present time move in the direction of delegating deacons to major assemblies." In addition, the four grounds for the recommendation adopted by the Synod of 1970 (Acts of Synod, 1970, p. 98) have also been in focus in our study; in fact, they form the outline for our task of "reevaluating" the decision of 1967.

### *Analysis*

Our committee was very troubled by the apparent weaknesses in the grounds advanced by the advisory committee of 1970 for the support of the recommendation to reevaluate the decision of 1967. Though synod adopted the grounds as sufficient support for reevaluating the decision of 1967, we feel that our report will make these weaknesses apparent. We feel much the same about the overture of Classis Hamilton which precipitated this recommendation. That overture was supported by two grounds, neither of which contained reference to scriptural injunctions or even practical consideration of such weight as to demand the change sought. Nor was there any concrete evidence advanced to show that the work of mercy is being impeded by our present system of delegation to the major assemblies.

Nevertheless, synod adopted the recommendation of its advisory committee, and charged this committee with the assignment of "reevaluation." We proceed to do so along the guidelines of the four grounds advanced in support of its recommendation.

A. The first ground advanced by the advisory committee reads: "The Synod of 1967 anticipated this when it asked the churches to reflect on the matter and noted that synod did not want to move at the present time in the direction of delegating deacons to major assemblies." We submit that this ground is aimed at gaining a particular objective. Is it a fact that the Synod of 1967 anticipated this, or is it a matter of opinion? It is true that it is very difficult to determine the precise thinking of a previous synod. But in the light of some of the preliminary remarks of the advisory committee, it appears that this is a very nebulous ground. Note, for example, that in B, 2. (p. 97, Acts of Synod, 1970), the advisory committee puts the words "at the present time" in italics. These words were not italicized in the original wording adopted by the Synod of 1967. Thus a particular emphasis has been given these words which was not given them originally. The advisory committee also suggests (Acts of Synod, 1970, C. 2. p. 97) that "the Synod of 1967 intended that overtures, as the one before us, would arise when it left the matter to the thought and study of the churches in the light of the report of the study committee." Is that not also a matter of opinion in the light of the second recommendation adopted by the Synod of 1967 "That synod do not accede to the request of the study committee to refer its recommendations to the churches for their consideration prior to decision by the Synod of 1968, but proceed to decision on the matter at this time"? Did synod decide to decide, and yet anticipate that the matter would come up a few years hence for reconsideration? This kind

of argumentation on the part of the advisory committee is judgmental in nature, and suggests that the Synod of 1967 was quite unsure of itself when it "decided" to decide the matter.

Although someone might say that the above has no direct bearing on the issue, we do feel it incumbent to point out to synod the apparent weaknesses of this ground.

B. The second ground advanced by the advisory committee reads: "No satisfactory answer has been given to the tradition represented by Prof. Wm. Heyns that deacons have the right of delegation to major assemblies". Here again it is difficult to determine exactly what the committee would consider to be a "satisfactory answer" to the tradition of Prof. Heyns. It seems to be implied, although not stated, that the only satisfactory answer would be one which would be in agreement with his point of view. It cannot mean that the position of Heyns (and those who basically follow his tradition, e.g. K. Dijk) has not been given a thorough hearing, because the study committee of 1967 made quite extensive reference to his position (cf. pp. 252, 253, Acts of Synod, 1967). The influence of his position is felt throughout the report of the committee, so it is hardly fair to say that his position has not been adequately heard. It was heard, but the advisory committee, as well as the Synod of 1967, gave answer that they did not agree with his position, and therefore adopted other recommendations.

In addition, the following may be offered in response to the tradition represented by Prof. Heyns. It is our conviction that Heyns argues from a theological rather than from a biblical position. This thesis appears for the most part to be based on the fact that the Church Order and Article 30 of the Belgic Confession allow for deacons to take part in many governmental functions of the church on the local level. From this basis, he proceeds to develop the thesis that deacons also have the right of delegation to major assemblies.

We do not dispute the fact that such involvement of deacons in governmental functions of the church on the local level has been practiced for generations. The question that must be answered is whether or not deacons participate in the governmental functions of the local church by "right" according to the teachings of Scripture, or by way of "exception." We believe the latter to be true.

Historically and biblically, the ruling office in the church has been that of elder. At least the Bible does not speak at all about ruling deacons; it does speak of the elders as those who rule (I Tim. 5:17, I Peter 5:1-3, Acts 20:28, Acts 15:2). If the question be asked: "May deacons share in this rule?" the answer is obviously affirmative. But this is done not so much as a matter of right as of exception. In fact, the previous study committee said that "the New Testament gives no explicit description of the task of deacons" (Acts of Synod, 1967, p. 234). From this argument of silence, the study committee went on to recommend that deacons should be included in major assemblies because there seemed to be no lawful objections. We submit, however, that it is our responsibility to stay within the confines of Scripture, especially on a matter as basic as this. We also submit that such theological argumentation



soon transforms into sheer rationalism, by which we could well institute a goodly number of things into the church because nothing is said about them in the Bible. Isn't it strange to say on the one hand that the New Testament gives no explicit description of the task of deacons, and the next moment to say that they have a "right" to be delegated to major assemblies? Scripture does not deal with the matter of deacons in a ruling position because their office was not meant to function in that way. It does deal with the responsibility of the elders to rule, however.

The fact is, a deacon delegated to a major assembly might well object that this work is outside the mandate received from his Lord, on the basis of the charge he received at the time of his installation into office. "The work of the deacons", as described in the form for installation, "consists in the faithful and diligent ingathering of the offerings which God's people in gratitude make to their Lord, in the prevention of poverty, in the humble and cheerful distribution of gifts according to the need, and in the relief of the distressed both with kindly deeds and words of consolation and cheer from Scripture." The charge to the deacons reads like this: "I charge you, deacons, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to be diligent in receiving the gifts of God's people, prudent and cheerful in the distribution of the same, sympathetic and self-denying in the ministry of Christian mercy." It is quite clear that this mandate does not include the kind of work with which classical and synodical gatherings spend the majority of their time and effort.

In connection with the tradition of Prof. Heyns, reference is frequently made to the Gallican (French) Confession of 1559, particularly Article 29. The 1967 study committee made reference to this in its report (p. 252) and concluded that Article 29 "assigned a governmental function to the office of deacon." Article 29 reads as follows:

"As to the true church, we believe that it should be governed according to the order established by our Lord Jesus Christ; that there should be pastors, overseers, and deacons, so that true doctrine may have its course, that errors may be corrected and suppressed, and the poor and all who are in affliction may be helped in their necessities; and that assemblies may be held in the name of God, so that great and small may be edified."

Does Article 29 really assign a governmental function to the office of deacon? Compare that article with Article 30 of the Belgic Confession, which reads:

"We believe that this true church must be governed by that spiritual polity which our Lord has taught us in his Word; namely, that there must be ministers or pastors to preach the Word of God and to administer the sacraments; also elders and deacons, who, together with the pastors, form the council of the church; that by these means the true religion may be preserved, and the true doctrine everywhere propagated, likewise transgressors punished and restrained by spiritual means; also that the poor and distressed may be relieved and comforted, according to their necessities. By these means everything will be carried on in the church with good order and decency, when faithful men are chosen, according to the rule prescribed by St. Paul in his Epistle to Timothy."

We submit that when the study committee of 1967 states that Article 29 of the Gallican Confession assigns a governmental function to the office of deacon, it is reading more into that article than is warranted. In fact, it concludes that therefore Calvin was already thinking in this direction since he had reviewed and approved the Gallican Confession. Is that a fair conclusion? Has anyone ever inquired historically into the opinion of Calvin on this matter, or is it an assumption we easily make? Article 30 of the Belgic Confession says basically the same thing as Article 29 of the Gallican Confession, and our church has "reviewed and approved it"; but historically we have never drawn the conclusion that Article 30 assigns a governmental function to the office of deacon when it comes to the specific task of this office. What both of these articles do is define in broad terms the way the church is governed; they do not draw the lines of responsibility specifically. We do basically the same thing when we say that the United States is governed by a democratic system, with its three branches, the executive, legislative and judicial. To draw the conclusion from that statement that these branches all function in the same way with equal power and authority would be erroneous. Their respective tasks and functions, for example, the president's power of veto, must be defined in further detail in other statements intended to identify their particular duties and responsibilities. So too, it is hardly correct to conclude that these articles define the specific task of the offices in the church.

Another matter which Prof. Heyns speaks about, and which is also referred to by the study committee of 1967, is that our people in general have a low view of the office of deacon. This led the study committee to suggest that synod urge the churches "to reactivate the office of deacon" (II. C. Acts of Synod, 1967, p. 254). It is true that the office of deacon is now lower or inferior to that of elder or minister. No one disputes that. The offices are equal in dignity and glory because they represent Christ's offices. But that does not mean they are identical in function. The office of deacon has its own special glory, its own worthiness and dignity, and ought to be valued as such. The ministry of mercy is a high and holy calling, and the work of this office reflects the compassion and mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ. And there is indeed no basis for considering the office of deacon as a kind of training ground for a more important office, namely, that of elder.

Yet we ought to be realistic. It is a fact that there are many elders who have served as deacons, but few deacons who have served as elders. However we might dislike this situation, it is not wise to ignore it. We submit that to delegate deacons to major assemblies for this reason, with the hope that this will change the thinking or attitude of people relative to this office, is to attack the problem at the wrong end. Would it not be more honest to drop the distinction in naming the offices and say so plainly, rather than try to engage deacons in a function unrelated to their office in order to try to improve their image?

Setting aside for a moment the question of "authority", it is a matter of judgment that such delegation will elevate the thinking of people relative to this office. It is also a matter of judgment to say that the

office of deacon, if that is what we are really concerned about, will be reactivated by involving deacons more fully in work now performed by elders. Is it not possible that just the opposite effect would occur, namely, that we would limit the service aspect of the diaconate by involving them more and more in the ruling office? We believe this would have a detrimental effect upon the office of deacon.

Simply delegating deacons to a major assembly will do nothing to enhance the dignity of that office. The dignity resides in the function which the office-bearer is called upon to perform as a representative of Jesus Christ in the church. An elder or minister is not superior to a deacon, or for that matter, to any believer in the church, by virtue of the fact that he represents a church at classis or a classis at synod. If his presence at a major assembly affects his dignity, then the minister or elder who never has the opportunity to attend a major assembly has a lesser amount of dignity because of it.

C. The third ground advanced by the advisory committee to support its recommendation to reevaluate the decision of 1967 is this: "The Synod of 1967 did not adequately take into consideration the implications of the constitution of the CRWRC, as adopted by the Synod of 1965". Again, who is to say that as factually as it is stated here? The study committee of 1967 surely does make reference to the CRWRC and its constitution as it relates to this matter. The Synod of 1967 was surely aware of the existence of the CRWRC and its purpose and function. But it did not see fit to conclude that the delegation of deacons to major assemblies would have any effect on this matter.

Our committee agrees. We have yet to be shown any concrete evidence that the work of the CRWRC or the work of Christian mercy is being impeded by our present system. And no one has indicated even in broad generalities how the delegation of deacons to the major assemblies is going to affect the effectiveness of the CRWRC. The CRWRC came into existence in the early 1960's. Has it in the past few years experienced a curtailment or an increase in its budget? Such evidence ought to be advanced and not just assumed. A brief glance at the cash disbursements of the CRWRC over the past few years surely indicates no curtailment of the program. In round figures, the cash disbursements in 1963 amounted to \$220,500, in 1966 \$387,000 and in 1970 \$687,000.

Is it the matter of having the authority to implement the programs of Christian mercy that would be improved by delegating deacons to major assemblies? That hardly seems to be the case either. When the major flood struck our Fulton, Illinois, area churches a few years ago, the CRWRC did not have to wait for a meeting of synod to offer help and appeal for funds from the churches of our denomination. When hurricane Camille hit the southern part of the United States a couple of years ago, the CRWRC moved right in and admirably offered assistances to alleviate the suffering of hundreds of victims of the disaster. There was no need to have synod make any ruling on the matter. The fact is, the CRWRC has as much or more freedom and authority to operate than many of the other boards of synod. The Foreign Mission Board, for example, must get the approval of synod before it can station another man or family

on one of its fields. The CRWRC operates quite freely in response to the disasters and tragedies wherever they strike. So it seems quite difficult to support the claim that the constitution of the CRWRC becomes inoperable or ineffective because deacons are not present at major assemblies. Granted, there are matters pertaining to works of mercy discussed and dealt with at synod (although we would be hard put to find a synod that spent more than half a day on specific diaconal matters, if we keep this properly distinguished from financial matters in general), but unless it can be proven that elders are functioning outside of their domain, or exercising an authority which they have no right to exercise as elders when they deal with these matters, we ought not to conclude that there is an injustice being done. And we believe there is biblical evidence to show that elders are not functioning outside of their domain when they make decisions in regard to these matters, since the primary responsibility to rule belongs to their office.

If on the other hand, deacons were to be seated at classical and synodical gatherings, with identical mandates with elders, we may safely assume that they would become involved in matters which are quite clearly regarded as being outside the scope of their office. The result would tend to make elders of the deacons, and could hardly be said to promote the development of the diaconal office.

D. The fourth ground advanced by the advisory committee in 1970, closely related to the foregoing, is this: "Diaconal conferences which take decisions in matters pertaining to the work of mercy have no authority to implement these decisions in the church." Although this sounds very significant, we believe that the implication of this statement is false. We say "false" because it is implied that if deacons were delegated to major assemblies, then diaconal conferences would have authority to implement decisions in the church. Would that in fact be true? We submit it would not. According to Reformed Church polity, no such classical conferences have ever had that kind of authority, nor should they. Elders' conferences, or ministers' conferences do not have and should not have that kind of authority independent of the local church; and by the same token, this also applies to deacons' conferences. According to Article 27a of the Church Order, the authority of a major assembly is derived, not original, which means that action must always originate in a local consistory. At a meeting of the elders, deacons or ministers in a given classis, certain problems may be discussed which each group has in common, but it is necessary in each case to initiate action in a particular consistory which in turn brings the matter to the attention of classis. So is it not a fact that the relationship of diaconal conferences to classes will in no way be altered by virtue of the fact that deacons are present at a classical or synodical meeting? This problem, if that is what we want to call it, would exist in spite of a decision favoring the delegation of deacons to major assemblies.

### *Conclusion*

We assume that the overture which precipitated the study of this whole matter was motivated by a genuine concern for the office of dea-

con. We do not wish to argue with the legitimacy of that concern; but on the basis of the foregoing, we do not believe that the office of deacon will really be activated, or enhanced or become more effective in its operation, by delegating deacons to major assemblies, and thus engaging them in a work which they were never intended to perform. We agree with the words of the late Rev. Henry Verduin as they appeared in *The Banner*, January 20, 1967: "The . . . thinking which assumes that the deacons' office has to take over functions of the elders' office to attain full stature beclouds and degrades it. The deacons' office, in its own right, has full dignity and glory because it represents Christ's priestly office. The crown of honor, all its own, is in the ministry of Christ's mercy. The deacons' office loses its crown when it reaches for functions of another office. Mixing functions makes crooked lines and dims the proper honor of the office concerned."

We also agree with the comments of the advisory committee of the Synod of 1967, which stated that the argumentation and recommendations of the study committee seem "to lean heavily toward reducing the distinctiveness of the office of deacons in the effort to establish its equality with that of the elders. The emphasis tends strongly toward coalescence. So, too, its recommendation 'to reactivate the office of deacon' seems, strangely, a proposal to engage deacons more fully in work now performed by elders. This scarcely seems a way 'to acknowledge and to reactivate the office of deacons'".

### *Recommendations*

I. That synod decide not to move in the direction of delegating deacons to major assemblies.

#### *Grounds:*

A. It has been asserted that "diaconal conferences which take decisions in matters pertaining to the work of mercy have no authority to implement these decisions in the church". However, Article 26 of the Church Order states, "the assemblies of the church are: the consistory, the classis and the synod." The delegating of deacons to major assemblies will not make diaconal conferences ecclesiastical assemblies, nor give them independent authority to implement these decisions in the church.

B. It has been stated that "many matters which are distinctively the responsibility of the diaconal office are considered at major assemblies." Though decisions pertaining to works of mercy are made at major assemblies, ministers and elders are not functioning beyond the domain of their office, or violating the scriptural principle of church government when they make decisions on such matters. Cf. Acts 11:30.

C. It has been stated that "no satisfactory answer has been given to the tradition represented by Prof. Wm. Heyns that deacons have the right of delegation to major assemblies". The tradition of Prof. Wm. Heyns *has been* sufficiently considered and satisfactorily answered. Cf. Acts of Synod, 1967, pp. 252, 253 and the body of above report, section B.

II. That synod declare this to be its answer to Overture 3 (1970) from Classis Hamilton, and to Overtures 20 and 46 (1971) from Classis Sioux Center and Hills, Minnesota Consistory.

III. That the secretary of this committee, Rev. Harlan Vanden Einde, be permitted to represent the committee before synod and its advisory committee.

Respectfully submitted,

John P. Feddema  
John A. Hoeksema  
Harlan G. Vanden Einde

## B. Minority Report

DEAR BROTHERS:

Since the committee which was appointed to reevaluate the decision of the Synod of 1967, regarding the delegation of deacons to major assemblies of the churches, could not come to unanimity of mind, we were left with the only other course open—two reports.

We are herewith submitting a minority report.

### *History*

The delegation of deacons to major assemblies is an issue with which the Christian Reformed Church has been confronted for many years. In 1962, Classis Chatham presented an overture to 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, p. 496.) The grounds for the overture as presented by Classis Chatham were:

“1. The offices of the church are three in number, representing Christ the head of the church as prophet, priest, and king. The office of deacons forms an integral part of the work of the church in carrying out the ministry of mercy. Diaconal work is the work of Christ and therefore the work of Christ’s church as a whole.

“2. Since the work of the diaconate is the work of Christ and of Christ’s church, all matters pertaining to the carrying out of this ministry of mercy should be kept within the jurisdiction and authority of the church, and not be entrusted to conferences and/or associations which have no ecclesiastical authority.

“3. In the complex world situation of today the diaconal work of the church spreads itself more and more beyond the local level of the individual churches and needs to be discussed and considered therefore also at the major assemblies of its authoritatively represented delegates at such major assemblies.” (Acts of Synod, 1962, Overture 32, p. 496.)

The Synod of 1962 did not accede to this overture on the grounds that “insufficient scriptural evidence has been adduced to warrant such a change in the Church Order.” (Acts of Synod 1962, p. 95.)

Classis Chatham again brought an overture to synod in 1963 relative to this subject. An extensive report dealing with the delegation of

deacons and adopted by said classis accompanied the overture. (Acts of Synod 1963, Overture 17, pp. 443-446) The Synod of 1963 encouraged the churches and consistorial conferences to study the issue and appointed a committee "to study the matter and report to the Synod of 1965."

The committee which was appointed reported to the Synod of 1966. Synod recommitted the matter to the committee for further consideration in the light of a number of questions that were raised, and referred the report of the committee to the churches for their study. The churches were encouraged to send their reactions to the committee.

The report of this committee was brought to the Synod of 1967. This comprehensive report addressed itself to the biblical references, a theological study of the ministry and offices of the church, the diaconal representation within the Gereformeerde Kerken and conclusions to the questions raised by the Synod of 1966. A synoptic view of the churches' response to the report of the committee reporting to Synod in 1966 was also included. (Acts of Synod 1967, Supplement 24, pp. 232-255.)

The following recommendations were made by this committee, based on the biblical and theological studies and the reactions of the churches:

"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.

"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 one deacon be delegated to classes and to synods and that these three office-bearers shall be delegated with identical mandates and credentials.

B. That synod decide, in agreement with recommendation '1' above to change the reading of Articles 40 and 45 of the (Revised) Church Order . . ." (the reading of the revision was proposed).

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.

"III. Synod refer the above recommendations (under II) to the Synod of 1968 for final decision. (Acts of Synod, 1967, p. 254, 255.)

The Synod of 1967 adopted the following resolutions:

"1. Synod declare that the delegation of deacons to the major assemblies of the church is neither prohibited nor demanded by Scripture and the Reformed confessions.

"3. That synod do not at the present time move in the direction of delegating deacons to major assemblies.

"6. That synod leave the question to the thought and reflection of the churches in the light of the report of the study committee, the material and recommendations of the advisory committee, and other relevant considerations." (Acts of Synod, 1967, p. 93, 94.)

In 1970, Classis Hamilton brought to synod an overture requesting synod to reconsider its decision of 1967 "that synod do not, at the

present time, move in the direction of delegating deacons to major assemblies.”

*“Grounds:*

“1. Many matters which are distinctively the responsibility of the diaconal office are considered at major assemblies. (Cf. Acts of Synod, 1967, p. 242.)

“2. Diaconal conferences which take decisions in matters pertaining to the work of mercy have no authority to implement these decisions in the church.” (Acts of Synod, 1970, p. 524.)

*Mandate*

The Synod of 1970 adopted the following recommendation:

“Synod accedes to the intent of the overture of Classis Hamilton and refers it to a study committee for a reevaluation of the decision of the Synod of 1967.

*“Grounds:*

1. The Synod of 1967 anticipated this when it asked the churches to reflect on the matter and noted that synod did not want to move at the present time in the direction of delegating deacons to major assemblies.

2. No satisfactory answer has been given to the tradition represented by Prof. Wm. Heyns that deacons have the right of delegation to major assemblies.

3. The Synod of 1967 did not adequately take into consideration the implications of the constitution of the CRWRC, as adopted by the Synod of 1965.

4. Diaconal conferences which take decisions in matters pertaining to the work of mercy have no authority to implement these decisions in the church. (Ground 2 of Classis Hamilton’s overture.)” (Acts of Synod, 1970, p. 98.)

It is not altogether clear what synod intended to say when it referred the overture of Classis Hamilton to us. Synod acceded to the “intent of the overture of Classis Hamilton” and referred the overture to us for a “reevaluation of the decision of the Synod of 1967.” The question we faced was this: What was the intent of the overture? Did Classis Hamilton only ask for a “reconsideration” of the decision (to talk about and discuss it once more), or was the real intent of Classis Hamilton to ask for a reversal of the decision of 1967? The grounds adduced for the overture seem to suggest that Classis Hamilton was asking for a reversal of the decision of 1967.

It seems clear that there was no intention of “reconsidering the entire matter.” Hence our mandate does not require going over the same ground as the previous committee. This would even present some difficulty, when we consider the decision of 1967. On the one hand synod said “that the delegation of deacons to major assemblies of the church is neither prohibited nor demanded by Scripture and the Reformed confessions.” But when a ground is given to “not at the present time move in the direction of delegating deacons to major assemblies,” synod said, “The study committee has not proved that the principles of Scripture or Church Order ‘demand’ such delegation” (Acts, 1967, p. 93). We do



not consider it incumbent upon us to prove that which synod declared is "neither prohibited nor demanded by Scripture." If Scripture neither prohibits nor demands such delegation, then the fact that no scriptural basis was adduced to demand delegation cannot be used as a 'ground' for denying the delegation of deacons.

We therefore judge that we must address ourselves to the overture of Classis Hamilton as we understand its intent, and to the grounds which synod adduced for referring the overture to a study committee.

### *The Tradition of Heyns*

In the mandate to this committee given by the Synod of 1970 (Acts of Synod, 1970, p. 98), Statement 2 says, "No satisfactory answer has been given to the tradition represented by Prof. Wm. Heyns that deacons have the right of delegation to major assemblies." The committee wishes to call synod's attention to the following:

1. The committee reporting to the Synod of 1967 did make the following observations regarding Prof. Heyns:

"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 deplors 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." (Acts of Synod, 1967, pp. 252-253.)

2. Prof. Heyns devoted much time to the relation of the deacons to the consistory. In section 112 of his *Handbook for Elders and Deacons*, he speaks of the consistory as a manifestation of the unity of the offices.

"In the consistory the three offices appear as a unit, and in its meetings they come together to transact the business of the church as a unit. The

unity of the offices in Christ and even in the apostolate finds an adequate expression in the consistory. "The offices of pastor, elder, deacon, and teacher," as Dr. Kuyper once wrote, "that flourish as so many stalks on one root, may never be considered as so many individual sprouts, growing separately from one another, each in its own soil and from its own roots. The office of shepherd in Jesus' church is therefore at the same time a ruling office, while the ruling elders, far from being excluded from the ministry of the Word, have to watch over its purity. And as the deacons must be abounding in consolation through the Word, and accordingly have in by far the most church seats as members in their council, this office, too, occupies a place in the midst of the ministry of the Word and ought to be interwoven in the ruling organism of the churches (that is, that of classes and synods). On the other hand, although the diaconate is more especially the office for the manifestation of a Christianity not consisting in words but in power, yet none of the other offices is exempted from the service of mercy so as to have nothing to do with it, and no office would have the right to exist unless it lets its light shine before men."

"These views are in accordance with the statement of Art. 30 of our confession: "We believe . . . that there must be ministers or pastors to preach the Word of God and to administer the sacraments; also elders and deacons, who together with the pastor from the council of the church."

This statement insures to the deacons a place in the consistory, the "council of the church," as full members. It leaves no ground whatever for considering it unwarranted and altogether contrary to Reformed church polity when in the Netherlands (in 1884) and here with us the deacons "in by far the most churches have seats as members in the council of the church." In the Reformed churches of France the deacons were considered to be so essentially members of the consistory, that they might be delegated to the major assembly as well as the elders. The delegation had to consist of "the minister accompanied by one or two elders or deacons." This shows that Calvin had no objection against such a regulation." (pp. 303-304)

Heyns goes on to point out that the Church Order in effect at the time of his writing states in Art. 37 "In all churches there shall be a consistory, composed of the ministers of the Word and the elders," excluding the deacons. He goes on to state that the deacons are added when the number of elders is small and must be added when the number is less than three. The former Church Order also stated that the deacons must be present in all consistories as members when a minister (Arts. 4 and 5) or when elders and deacons (Arts. 22 and 24) are to be elected; when the request is to be considered of a minister who requests permission to accept a call (Art. 10); when any discipline regarding an office-bearer is transacted (Art. 79); and when mutual "censure" is to be exercised (Art. 81). The remaining articles of the old Church Order prescribe separate meetings of these two groups. Heyns then addresses himself to the Church Order.

"Naturally the question arises how this apparent deviation of the Church Order came about, and whether or not it implies a difference of principle?

"In answer to these questions it may be placed on the foreground that a difference of principle is not to be thought of. From the instances just named it is evident that the Church Order as well as the confession considers the deacons as entitled to take part in the transaction of matters of church government and discipline, and to attend the consistorial meetings as full members. Otherwise the Church Order could not require the presence of the deacons at consistory meetings, either always where the number of elders is small, or on several special occasions where the number of elders is not small.

"So much is certain, therefore, that the separation of the deacons from 'the consistory,' as we find it indicated in the Church Order, was not a matter of principle. From this it follows that it must have its ground in practical considerations, and this conclusion is supported by the testimony of history.

'In its first redaction, that the Synod of Emden, 1571, the Church Order expressed itself in the same manner as the confession. In Art. 6 of that redaction we read, "In every church there shall be meetings or consistories of the ministers of the Word, elders, and deacons." On the next synod, however, the Synod of Dordrecht, 1574, an overture was presented by one of the Zeeland classes containing the question, "Whether the deacons belong to the consistory, and are under obligation to attend its meetings on weekdays as well as the elders?" The synod gave its answer to this question in Art. 4 of its redaction of the Church Order in these words: "In interpretation of Art. 6 of the Synod of Emden (see above), the ministers of the Word, elders and deacons constitute the consistory in such a manner that the ministers and elders shall meet separately and also the deacons shall meet separately, in order to transact their own business respecting the poor. In places, however, where there are only few elders, the deacons may be admitted if the consistory so desires. And when the deacons are requested to attend, they will be obliged to appear."

"By an examination of these happenings the whole thing is made plain. The wording of both the overture and the synodical answer indicate that the question proceeded from the deacons themselves, that virtually it was a request from them to be exempted from the obligation to attend the consistorial meeting as well as the elders, seeing that they had to tend to their own business besides, and that the synod by its resolution granted that request. In that resolution the synod expressly maintained the principle that ministers, elders and deacons constitute the consistory, and that as members of the consistory they were entitled to take part in the transaction of matters of church government and discipline. It even put them under obligation to assist the ministers and elders in the transaction of matters of church government as often as they were desired to do so. These provisions and the principle involved have been preserved and maintained throughout all the redactions of the Church Order till the present day. In fact the only thing that was done was that the deacons

were excused from attending the consistory meetings "in order to transact their business respecting the poor." Practically, this amounted to a division of the office-bearers into two groups, one group consisting of the ministers and elders for taking care of the matters of church government, and the other group consisting of the deacons for taking care of the poor. That now it soon became customary to speak of "the consistory and the deacons" is as could be expected. *The exemption of the deacons from the consistory meetings was simply a concession, not on the ground of theoretical considerations, but for practical reasons.*" (italics ours) (pp. 305-307)

3. Regarding the tradition spoken of by Prof. Heyns, it must be noted that Art. 30 of the Belgic Confession reads in part, "We believe that his true church must be governed by that spiritual polity which our Lord has taught us in his word; namely that there must be ministers or pastors to preach the Word of God and to administer the sacraments; also elders and deacons, who, together with the pastors, form the council of the church. . . ."

It is also necessary to call synod's attention to Arts. 4, 5, 9, 15, 17, 35, 36, 90, 91 and 92 of the revised Church Order. Each of these articles makes reference to church government and supervision which is ascribed to the consistory, involving pastors, elders and deacons, according to the Church Order's own definition of "consistory." Specific reference is made to Article 35A, "In every church there shall be a consistory composed of the office-bearers. The consistory is responsible for the general government of the church." The emphasis on deacons sharing in the governing of the church is in clear harmony with the Belgic Confession (Art. 30). And we believe the confession interprets to us the message of the Scriptures.

4. Regarding the historical tradition concerning the delegation of deacons, Prof. Heyns in section 114 of his book reiterates that the abolishment of the practice of having deacons attend consistory meetings was made because the deacons' work took so much of their time that this attendance was a *practical* impossibility. He states that this is hardly true today and would probably not be true even if the service of mercy were up to a standard of what it should be.

It is Heyns' contention that the arrangement made by the Synod of 1574 has lost its support and is no longer defensible. He states ". . . that the *custom* (italics ours) of having the deacons function as regular members of the consistory is justifiable . . ." (p. 308) Heyns supports this statement with several considerations, including:

"a. that the deacons belong to the consistory. So Reformed church polity teaches and so do our Reformed churches declare in their Belgic Confession. The three offices are essentially a unit, cooperating to the same end, namely, the upbuilding of the body of Christ.

"b. that it is in the interest of good church government. To the office of the deacons also belongs a ruling power, namely, the power and authority to manage and regulate the matters of the care of the poor. This follows from the fact that to an office pertains not alone a task to be performed, but also the power and authority to perform that task.

"c. that it averts the peril of a second governing body arising in the local church next to, or over against, that of the eldership." (pp. 309-310)

#### *Further Support for this Tradition*

As background for the tradition sponsored by Prof. Heyns it is deserving of note that in the Acts of the Reformed Churches of France in the 16th century there is clear evidence that deacons were delegated to the national synod. The Synod of 1559 discussed the matter. At that particular synod only ministers and elders were present as delegates. But that synod adopted certain decrees.

The third decree reads:

"Ministers that are sent to the national synods may bring with them one or two elders or deacons, but not more, and those chosen by the consistory shall have the power to vote."

At the Second National Synod in 1560, the Church Order was revised to include the provision of the decree regarding the delegation of deacons. (Acts, Decisions, Decrees, and Canons of those famous National Councils of the Reformed Churches in France," by John Quick, Chapter IX, Canon III).

We believe that it is also of some significance and interest to note what Dr. H. Bavinck wrote in his Dogmatics, that points to this same tradition in the church. He wrote: "All of the assemblies of which the New Testament speaks were gatherings of local congregations, except the one in Acts 15, where delegates were present from elsewhere. This custom is followed later as well, already in the second century. For very special occasions, such as appointment or deposition of a bishop, excommunication, absolution of mortal sin, etc., not only did the presbyterium give leadership, but the consent of the congregation was given. Cyprian even says that from the beginning of his episcopate he never did anything without the advice of the presbyters and the consent of the congregation (Cyprian, Ep. 14,4). At the synods of the second and third centuries, therefore, not only the bishops are present, but also presbyters, deacons, and ordinary members. Even the Council of Nicea was attended by presbyters, deacons, and members, in addition to the bishops, who also took part in the discussions." (Geref. Dogm., IV, p. 471-474.)

Dr. Bavinck also points out that this same practice was followed when neighboring churches met together. It was only after the hierarchical idea began to develop, that the consent of the congregation was no longer sought, and the presbyters and the deacons were excluded more and more.

In the section dealing with the authority of the church he has an interesting comment: "Synods, to answer to their purpose, must always be assemblies of churches, whose members (pastors, presbyters, *deacons or ordinary members* (italics ours) must always be delegates of churches and mandated (gebonden aan) by credentials, which assemblies are convened by the churches themselves, not by civil or papal authority, and are presided over (geleid) by the persons chosen by the church, and which judge and decide in freedom and independence regarding ecclesiastical

matters" (Geref. Dogm., IV, 475). For this respected theologian the propriety of delegating deacons to major assemblies was obviously not in doubt.

Further, we may make reference to the thinking of Dr. Klaas Dijk, a respected and renowned theologian. In his book, *De Dienst Der Kerk*, he has a chapter entitled "The Service (Ministry) of Mercy" (*De Dienst der Barmhartigheid*). In that chapter he gives in substance the thought which he had earlier expressed in "De Eenheid der Ambten" (The unity of the offices). He defends the thesis that in the New Testament there is in reality but one office for the Christian, and that is *Servant of Jesus Christ*. In that service there are differing functions—teaching, ruling, showing mercy. In the book of Acts we meet primarily the apostles, who at first served in all capacities, in whom all the functions of servants of Christ were united. The seven men in Acts 6, who were appointed to "serve tables" in the church in Jerusalem, are not heard of again in Acts, except that Philip is referred to as "one of the seven" (Acts 21:8). But at that time he was serving as an evangelist. And Stephen is better known for his witnessing as an evangelist and his martyrdom as a proclaimer of the Gospel, than for serving on tables. Dr. Dijk contends that the "ministry of mercy is, in its root, one with all the other parts of the service of the church of Christ" (p. 239). "The early Christian churches know originally only one office. In that one office of bishops (*episcopai*) all the work of the ministry in the church of Christ is embraced" (p. 243).

In line with this approach to the unity of office, he had said earlier: "Ministers and elders are also shepherds, who must comfort the sick and support the weak with priestly compassion; ministers and deacons do not escape the royal task on the one hand to rule the flock (e.g., deacons must share in the calling of a minister) and on the other hand to firmly lead and direct the life that is burdened with need and distress back into the right paths; and elders and deacons are called to direct the sheep to follow the Good Shepherd who desires to lead them in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. This last thought is clear from what we read in the form for installation, in which deacons are called to relieve the distressed 'with kindly deeds and *words of consolation and cheer from Scripture*'" (italics ours) (p. 227).

#### *Relationship to CRWRC and Diaconal Conferences*

The Synod of 1970 gave us further reasons for referring the overture of Classis Hamilton to a committee that "the Synod of 1967 did not adequately take into consideration the implications of the constitution of the CRWRC, as adopted by the Synod of 1965." In times past the ministry of mercy was largely limited to needy in the local congregation. Today that has greatly changed. While the limited ministry of mercy on the local level continues, the dimension of the ministry of mercy has become global in its outlook and effort. It was in this context that the CRWRC came into being, and the ministry of the church became enlarged. That ministry must be an integral part of the church's task, not a ministry that is somehow only indirectly related to the functioning of the church when it is gathered to conduct the business of the head and king of the church.

When dealing with the problems arising out of the present structural set-up, the study committee which reported to the Synod of 1967, said:

"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." (Acts of Synod, 1967, p. 246.)

It is apparent that while the church has recognized its responsibility toward the world-wide work of Christian mercy, it has not provided the structure to properly carry it out.

While not all the difficulties that have been encountered in connection with the functioning of the CRWRC, and the organization of diaconal conferences, will be promptly resolved by delegating deacons to the major assemblies of the church, the channeling of diaconal work into the orderly business of the church will obviate the present trend of having a non-official ecclesiastical body doing church work independently. It was this very thing that already led Prof. Heyns to say that "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). That was in the early part of this century, decades before the CRWRC had been born.

If synod decides to move in the direction of delegating deacons to major assemblies, then it can entrust to the CRWRC the task of proposing to synod such changes in the constitution as will bring it into line with that practice.

Diaconal conferences can then still continue to be held for the discussion of the work of the ministry of mercy, but matters that will require the attention of the churches will be discussed in consistory meetings, for presentation to classis and synod. It is precisely in those areas in our churches where the deacons have come to grips with some of the problems calling for mercy that face the church, that the difficulties have come to the foreground.

### *Conclusion*

If we are prepared to accept the concept that basically there is but one office in the church, namely that of servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, then it follows that even though we make distinction in service or function, there must be equality. Such distinction of service may be called an office. We have grown accustomed to doing so. But then it must be above dispute at the same time that the office of deacon is equally worthy to the office of elder and minister of the Word. How could it be otherwise, when we keep in mind that it was in his work as our only high priest that the redemptive work of Christ comes to its central expression. His office of mercy is of the highest rank!

The equality of the offices, their equality in worthiness, is expressed in our Church Order in this way: "The offices instituted by Christ in his church are those of minister of the Word, the elder and the deacon. These offices differ from each other in mandate and task, not in dignity and honor" (Art. 2). And in keeping with that principle, the Church Order states that the general government of the church is entrusted to those office bearers. "In every church there shall be a consistory, composed of the office bearers. The consistory is responsible for the general government of the church" (Art. 35a).

Delegation of deacons to major assemblies will not immediately bring diaconal service into larger attention and interest throughout our churches. But if we recognize that the church is a united body, and that all of its work is interrelated; that the scope of the ministry of mercy has taken on large global dimensions in our day; and that the very presence of deacons at the major assemblies can serve to focus the attention of the church on the fact that our compassionate Savior wills that the work of mercy shall stand in the center of the full interest of the church; then the presence of deacons at major assemblies can be a step in the direction of honoring Christ more fully in his compassion and mercy. The church has a great responsibility to show the mercy of Christ both in, and to, our troubled world. Let deacons be involved at the level of decision making to project the image of compassion and mercy in the church to a sick and despairing world.

Just as in medicine we speak of psychomatic therapy—healing must be concerned with the whole person—so in the service of Christ in the church, the church ministers to the total need of the body of Christ and the total need of those to whom her ministry extends, not in disjointed fashion but in unity, even while different functions are recognized.

When Christ spoke as prophet, he did it with royal authority and with a compassionate heart.

When Christ exercised his kingly power, he did it in a merciful spirit and at the same time revealed the truth of God concerning our redemption.

When Christ performed his service as our only high priest and offered up himself on the cross, he did it as a mighty king and made known the truth concerning God's gracious redeeming purpose.

In like manner ministers must preach the Word with power and compassion. Elders must rule in harmony with the truth as it is in Christ



Jesus and in the spirit of tender, pastoral love. Deacons must perform the service of mercy in the name, upon the authority of Christ, and with words of consolation from Scripture. All of the functions of office are united in the head. The service of Christ expressed and represented in the office of minister, elder and deacon, must be seen in coordination, not in disjunction. What God has joined together, let not man put asunder.

### *Recommendations*

I. That synod decide to move in the direction of delegating deacons to major assemblies, and refer the following recommendations to the churches for their consideration prior to a 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.

#### *Grounds:*

1. Synod has already declared that the delegation of deacons to major assemblies of the church is not prohibited by the Scripture and the Reformed confessions (Acts 1967, p. 93).

2. The unity of the offices in Christ, which are reflected in the several functions and services in the church, argues for the propriety of deacons functioning not only at the local level in the consistory, but likewise in the major assemblies of the churches.

3. The Church Order not only states that the consistory consists of all the office bearers and that "the consistory is responsible for the general government of the church" (Art. 35a), but points, in numerous articles, to significant governing tasks which require the participation of deacons (Art. 4, 5, 9, 15, 36, 90, 91, 92). This is in harmony with the Belgic Confession, Art. 30.

4. There is a long tradition that points in this direction.

B. That synod decide, pursuant to the adoption of recommendation A, to change the reading of articles 40 and 45 of the 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."

II. That synod refer the above recommendations to the Synod of 1973 for final decision.

#### *Grounds:*

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.

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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.

III. That James D. Otten, reporter for the minority, be permitted to represent the minority before synod and its advisory committee.

IV. Synod declare that this is the answer to Overture 3 (1970) of Classis Hamilton, and to Overture 20 and 46 (1971) from Classis Sioux Center and the Hills, Minnesota, Consistory.

John C. Verbrugge  
James D. Otten, Reporter

**REPORT 33**  
**MEMBERSHIP LOSS COMMITTEE**

DEAR BROTHERS:

*I. Background*

In 1966, faced with the fact of denominational loss of membership, the synod appointed a committee to address itself to this situation, to attempt to discover the reasons for this loss and what these might reveal concerning the character, the ministry, the life of the Christian Reformed Church.

Theories abounded among our people. Perhaps such loss indicated a mounting defection from the Christian faith or dissatisfaction for the Reformed interpretation of Christianity. Did this loss indicate a dissatisfaction with biblical teaching or perhaps with supposed "liberal" trends within the church? Possibly it was an inevitable result of the high mobility that now characterizes North American society. Is our membership becoming less doctrinally discriminating? Was this a non-vocal protest against the quality of our fellowship; against the measure of our witness and involvement; against the quality of our pastors? These and other ideas were advanced privately and publicly.

Your committee put theory and conjecture aside and by way of extensive survey, conducted with the invaluable aid of the Sociology Department of Calvin College, attempted to probe the minds and hearts of both present and former members of our church. The response was computerized and analyzed. The findings were presented in our report to the Synod of 1971 (*Acts of Synod*, pp. 553 to 585).

Included in the response of that synod was the further mandate that the Membership Loss Committee "write a digest of their study and . . . draw conclusions concerning the character of the Christian Reformed Church on the basis of their study, and report these to the 1972 Synod." (*Acts of Synod*, Article 68, p. 55).

*II. Construal of Mandate*

Your committee had difficulty with the further mandate to "write a digest of their study," especially in the light of the ground given for this decision: "The report is of such statistical complexity that the church would best be served by such a digest."

Your committee's reactions are the following:

1. Considering the vast number of responses received and analyzed, as well as the nature of the report given, your committee is constrained to state that its report to the 1971 synod is itself a digest.
2. We can only conclude that the "statistical complexity" to which the Synod of 1971 referred was that of the supplement to our report, for we cannot conceive of the essential report of the committee as being

statistically complex. Moreover, the digest of findings which constitutes virtually the essence of our report is based upon and drawn from the statistics found in the supplement. The supplement was published only in order to enable those interested to substantiate our findings, should they so desire, or to enable others to pursue further conclusions of their own.

The second part of your committee's mandate from the 1971 synod: "To draw conclusions concerning the character of the Christian Reformed Church on the basis of their study" is understandable. Though your committee did draw conclusions, these conclusions were formulated as rhetorical questions.

Your committee will attempt to comply with its 1971 mandate by attempting to present a further digest of its 1971 report. However, in doing so, your committee is very much concerned that such digest does not supercede its 1971 report, and not be considered as in any way sufficient without reference to and reading of the report of 1971.

Also, your committee will attempt to convert the rhetorical questions found in section VI of its 1971 report into positive statements.

### III. *Digest of the 1971 Report*

#### A. Findings regarding *all* former member respondents:

1. The vast majority of the former members cannot be said to have forsaken the Christian faith.

2. Only five percent (5%) of those who left our church cited disaffection for the Reformed conception of the faith the primary reason for leaving.

3. Twenty-nine percent of those who left cited as the primary reason either their move to an area devoid of or inconvenient to a Christian Reformed Church or marriage to a non-member.

B. Findings regarding *dissatisfied* former members (71% of all former member respondents):

1. Those who left dissatisfied were almost as fully involved in Christian Reformed Church activities as is our present membership. However, very few of these who left had leadership roles in the CRC.

2. These former members were dissatisfied because of restraints, impositions, and surveillance not scripturally enjoined, at least in their estimation. For instance, much of this dissatisfaction was occasioned by what they construed to be:

a. Intolerance of internal difference of opinion.

b. Excessive emphasis upon commitment to Christian day-school education, regarding it as the *sine qua non* of first-class membership.

c. Unbiblical strictures as to sabbath observance and worldly amusements.

d. Excessive emphasis on Calvinistic doctrine and the creeds, and a too preponderant intellectual emphasis.

(For more information on this score, refer to table four of the 1971 report.)

3. Twenty-five percent of dissatisfied former members lamented our lack of involvement in social problems.

4. The vast majority of the 40 percent who called the mission emphasis factor very important or somewhat important in their decision to leave lamented the inadequate emphasis on missions.

5. Thirty-one percent called the church "too intolerant." In fact only 35 percent of the dissatisfied former members called the tolerance factor unimportant. Sixty-eight percent militated against what they considered to be the clannishness of our church and its unwillingness to accept people from other backgrounds. Sixty-five percent stated that their "fellowship" needs were better met in the new denomination with which they have become affiliated.

6. Forty-four percent referred to the inadequacy of our ministry as a considerable factor in their decision to leave. Fifty-two percent of these lamented the inadequacy in the pulpit, 32 percent the inadequacy in pastoral care, 49 percent the inadequacy in counseling.

7. Members who were reared in Christian Reformed homes and/or attended Christian schools left the denomination in the same proportion as did those without this background. Also, those who had affiliation with other churches prior to their Christian Reformed affiliation had neither more nor less inclination to leave than those who were born into the CRC.

8. Some of those issues most hotly debated among our leadership were not prominent among the concerns of those who left—issues such as evolution and ecumenism.

#### C. Findings regarding present member respondents:

1. The overwhelming majority of our members adhere to the basic tenets of the Christian faith.

2. The great majority appear to be loyal to the Christian Reformed Church and satisfied with its teachings.

3. There is significant discontent on the part of many members with the attitudes of fellow members and of the Christian Reformed Church at large. It is difficult to deny the fact of this discontent when we consider:

a. Twenty-five percent fault the church for being too intolerant of internal differences of opinion.

b. Sixty-four percent feel that we are guilty of institutional pride.

c. Forty-seven percent feel that we are characterized by an intellectualism that overshadows the concern for vibrant Christian living.

d. Thirty-five percent call us hypocritical.

e. Twenty-four percent call us too legalistic.

f. Seventy-one percent call us clannish and unwilling to accept people from other backgrounds into the church.

g. Fifty-four percent call us too tradition oriented.

h. Thirty-three percent feel that we have too little emphasis on missions.

i. Forty-four percent are unhappy with our insufficient involvement in social problems.

4. There is also an obvious protest concerning Christian Reformed officialdom and some of its perspectives and practices. This appears to be evidenced by the fact that 31 percent are unhappy with what they consider to be our excessive emphasis on the financial quota system, 54 percent are displeased with the method of calling ministers, and 27 percent have serious difference of opinion with the church on the denominational level.

#### IV. *Conclusions*

Based upon its study your committee concludes that:

A. We should be gratified that our membership loss does not denote defection from the Christian faith nor great alienation from the Reformed conception of that faith.

B. We should also be grateful for the preponderant loyalty and commitment of our present membership to the Christian faith and to our interpretation of that faith.

However, your committee is constrained to urge all agencies and institutions, and all persons who have leadership responsibility in the Christian Reformed Church to give address to the following needs perceived by the respondents especially as they relate to the specific responsibilities of these denominational and local entities:

A. The need to give due emphasis to, and guidance regarding the living of the full-orbed Christian life without which we, with our knowledge and proper theological formulations—however important these are, fall short of our Lord's mandate to do the will of the Father.

B. The need more fully to appropriate and practice, both as individuals and as the church, the Christian vision and mandate to live for others, both within and without the church—to acknowledge by word and deed that "love is the fulfillment of the law," that it is not ours to condemn but to save, not to be judgmental either in word or attitude, but to devote ourselves and our resources to the blessedness of others.

C. The need to re-assert scriptural deliverance, as distinct from human inference, ecclesiastical consensus, and habituated practice, as the basis of our fellowship with and acceptance of others.

D. The need to place increased emphasis upon pulpit and pastoral competence in the conduct of ministry, and upon development of the ability to relate well to others personally as well as pastorally—in the recognition that knowledge, however fundamental, is not the sole measure of ministerial excellence.

E. The need for improved communication between leadership and membership, between agencies and churches—whereby we convey adequate information and listen more intently, recognizing that we live in a day in which people in general are reluctant to participate by proxy and in relative ignorance.

F. The need to be more receptive to the plea for liturgical freedom, flexibility, and innovation, recognizing the necessity for each new gen-

eration to make response to the presence and relevation of God in a manner befitting its peculiar needs and its own Scripture-guided and Spirit-led inclinations.

*V. Recommendations*

A. That the chairman of this committee be given the privilege of the floor when this report is being discussed.

B. That synod urge upon the church at large an earnest consideration of these membership loss reports, and especially the above conclusions, with a view to the enhancement of the life and ministry of the Christian Reformed Church.

C. That synod declare the Membership Loss Committee's mandate fulfilled and therefore now discharge the committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Committee on Membership Loss

Rev. N. Vanderzee,  
Chairman and Reporter

Rev. H. Bossenbroek

Mr. N. Ozinga

Rev. B. Pekelder

## REPORT 34

## CLINTON, ONTARIO, IN LOCO COMMITTEE

## I. MANDATE

Synod 1971 adopted the following motion: "to appoint a committee to assist in the adjudication of the problem in Clinton, Ontario, and to evaluate the entire matter with a view of advising as to proper procedure in other similar cases." (Acts of Synod 1971, Art. 171, p. 162.)

## II. MEMBERS

As members of the committee, synod appointed the Revs. A. Vanden Pol, W. VanDijk, and R. W. Popma and Elder H. Kuntz. Elder H. Kuntz notified the Stated Clerk that it was impossible for him to serve on this committee. The committee was informed by the Stated Clerk that it could carry on with the three ministerial members.

## III. HISTORY OF THE CASE

For some length of time the consistory of the Clinton Church had dealt with a few members of the congregation who had strong leanings towards the pentecostal view of the necessity of adult baptism by immersion. These members had themselves rebaptized, one in the Netherlands, one in Detroit, another in the neighborhood. The consistory met with these people repeatedly trying to convince them of their wrong views, and finally the consistory decided to place four members under silent censure.

This decision of the consistory was taken with the advice of the church visitors given Oct. 7, 1968, which reads in summary:

1. Admonish these members repeatedly.
2. Discuss all the points in which these members deviate from the teachings of the Christian Reformed Church.
3. Urge them to take this admonition to heart.
4. Place these members themselves before the consequences of their attitude.
5. Tell them that if they remain delinquent the consistory will have to bar them with regret from the Lord's Supper.

On December 3, 1968 the following advice was given by these same church visitors:

" . . . that the following members . . . be suspended with regret from the coming celebration of the Lord's Supper in this month.

*Grounds:*

a. These members have offended in doctrine by stating that they reject the teaching and confession of the Christian Reformed Church concerning the doctrine of the covenant of grace and infant baptism.

b. The fact that these members were wilfully baptized for the second time caused offence in the Clinton congregation.



c. These members declared to the consistory that they do not accept and maintain their solemn "I do" to the first and second question of their public confession of faith.

d. These members have rejected the repeated admonitions of the consistory.

After this advice was received the consistory of the Clinton Church decided to place these members under silent censure.

On May 5, 1969 the four members addressed the consistory asking a positive answer to the following question: "Do you think that it is in agreement with God's will that we are being barred from the Lord's Supper and can this be proven from the Word of God?"

In this same letter these four members stated: ". . . It is not a difference of opinion about the meaning of baptism itself that is central here, the conflict lies in the disagreement about the proper sequence and time of baptism (conscious belief—confession of faith—baptism by immersion). Also it is not as often is thought that we reject the teaching of the covenant . . ."

Classis Huron decided at the May 1969 session that though the appellants should have sought the advice of the consistory prior to their rebaptism the appellants could continue to have full membership in the Christian Reformed Church under certain conditions, namely not to make propaganda for their views.

On Oct. 2, 1969 a classical advisory committee met with the Consistory of Clinton to advise how to further deal with the appellants. The following advice was given:

1. . . . not to see these members as anabaptist in the historical sense of the word.

2. To keep in mind that these members definitely believe in the covenant of grace; they also believe that God gives his grace and salvation to children of believers as long as these children have not come to the age of discretion.

3. To make a formal appeal to classis against the decision on the May session of classis 1969, in case the consistory continue to bar these people from the Lord's Supper. . . .

The Consistory of Clinton did not see fit to implement the decision of the May classis of 1969 and so informed the classis.

Classis in its September 1969 meeting appointed a ministerial committee to meet with the Clinton Consistory on this pastoral problem.

At the January 1970 meeting of classis the Consistory of Clinton presented an overture for synod to deal with this problem.

Classis Huron with the delegates of Clinton reformulated the original overture as was presented to synod: "Classis Huron overtures the Synod of 1970 to make a pronouncement on the question whether the signing of the Form of Subscription permits a church council to admit to the Lord's Table members who no longer agree with the doctrine of infant baptism."

Synod 1970 replied in Art. 25, Acts of Synod 1970: "Synod does not accede to this overture . . ."

*“Grounds:*

“1. There is no specific case before it in which the scriptural and creedal teaching concerning infant baptism is challenged . . .

“2. Classis can be guided by its own study and by the decisions of the synod re specific cases in 1888 (Art. 57) and in 1964 (Art. 101).”

On June 28, 1970 the Consistory of Clinton informed the congregation through the bulletin of the following decision taken in the consistory meeting of June 22, 1970: “The church council regretfully states that these members who submit themselves to rebaptism can no longer be considered members of the Clinton Christian Reformed Church.”

Two of the rebaptized members concerned did appeal this decision to classis by letter of July 28, 1970.

Mr. J. C. Bakelaar, not himself one of the rebaptized members, protested this decision of the consistory in a letter to Classis Huron of August 26, 1970. Mr. Bakelaar requested classis to declare the decision of the Clinton Consistory illegal because it was in conflict with the Church Order Art. 86 a and b.

*Grounds:*

“a. Each consistory is bound to keep the Church Order as long as it does not prove to be in conflict with the Word of God.

“b. Our Church Order does not recognize the procedure of striking members from the church community.

“c. Removing members from a local congregation should have the approval of the major assemblies in our denomination.

“d. Consistory has previously ignored the advice of classis to open the Lord’s Supper for these members.

“e. Only four out of six were under silent censure, the other two were members in good standing.

“f. The congregation had no opportunity to protest against this decision before it was taken. No prayers could be offered either.

“g. Since the children of these families are still baptized members, a split has been caused in these families.”

Two of the members of the Clinton congregation involved in this decision have addressed Classis Huron in a letter of July 28, 1970, in which they stated that they were very disappointed about the negative answer of Synod 1970 to the overture of Classis Huron; that they were shocked by the action taken by the Clinton Consistory by which action they felt that they have been excommunicated without the approval of classis.

The Consistory of Clinton presented the following information to Classis Huron in defense of the decision that was taken, since this decision had been appealed:

1. The members involved did no longer subscribe to their confession of faith (question one and first part of question two of the Form for the Public Profession of Faith).

2. These members have not tried to change the doctrine of the church by going the ecclesiastical way and yet took the step of having themselves rebaptized. This is in direct conflict with Art. 34 of the Belgic Confession and with question and answer 74 of the Heidelberg Catechism. By having

themselves rebaptized these members also acted in direct conflict with Art. 35 of the Church Order.

3. The members involved were endangering the unity and the well being of the local congregation by holding separate meetings and by their expressed desire to have other members attend their meetings.

4. The decision of the church council of Clinton was taken:

a. In the light of the negative approach of Synod 1970.

b. In the light of synod's positive decision concerning Cand. Teerling.

c. In the hope that those members who were seeking rebaptism would have second thoughts.

d. In the hope that other members of the congregation who are sympathetic to Neo-Pentecostal ideas would have second thoughts.

e. In the hope that peace would be restored within the congregation.

5. The church council made its decision without referring to any article in the Church Order, because:

a. The Church Order does not cover any case of this sort.

b. According to Art. 86 a. and b., excommunication is involved . . . this article could not be used in this case since the church council is not prepared to say that these people are no Christians and are in the snare of the devil.

The church council respectfully request Classis Huron to acquiesce in the decision taken.

Classis Huron in its session of January 13, 1971 adopted the following recommendation:

a. that classis acquiesce in the decision taken by the Council of the Clinton Christian Reformed Church as requested by council.

b. That classis acquiesce in the decision of the council, *only in so far* as it concerns those rebaptized members by the particular decision of the Clinton Church at this time. No general rule is hereby established which would apply to any and all persons in Clinton *or elsewhere* who have themselves rebaptized. This would be contrary to Reformed policy in which each case must be dealt with on an individual basis.

*Ground:* In support of the above recommendation your committee would draw particular attention to the matter of holding separate meetings and inviting others to attend these meetings. We believe this to be of a schismatic nature and disruptive of the unity of the church.

Mr. J. C. Bakelaar protested this action to Synod 1970.

Your committee met with Mr. J. C. Bakelaar, the Consistory of Clinton, and with the Stated Clerk of Classis Huron.

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

A. Concerning the Consistory of Clinton.

Your committee is of the opinion that:

1. The Consistory of the Clinton Church should have requested from these members an official statement whether or not they still consider themselves members of the Clinton Christian Reformed Church, also with the obligation to submit to the government and pastoral counseling of the Clinton Church, even though they felt obligated to receive re-

baptism. This would be necessary to obtain a proper adjudication of the major assembly.

2. In case of persistent disagreement with the validity of infant baptism and their insistence on the necessity of believers baptism, the consistory should have pointed out their obligation to present a proper appeal of their doctrinal position to classis or synod.

3. Though the members concerned rejected the validity of infant baptism by their act of rebaptism, while not denying the truth of the covenant, and so at this point disregarded the authority of the local consistory, yet, in itself this does not constitute sufficient ground to exclude these persons from the fellowship of the church, whereas otherwise they reveal themselves as true Christians and show clear interest in the life of the Christian Reformed Church.

4. That the consistory acted according to its authority when with the advice of the church visitors it barred these members from the Lord's Table during the period when their actions created turmoil and offence in the congregation. When the church visitors later on advised to lift this form of church discipline, the consistory should have either acted according to this advice or have appealed it to the next classical meeting.

5. Even though your committee can understand the frustration and difficult situation in which the Consistory of the Clinton Christian Reformed Church found itself with regard to these members, the question is: Do the Bible, our confessions and the Church Order recognize the termination of membership in a certain denomination thereby placing members outside the church of Christ as a legitimate action on the part of the consistory—or do they only know and teach the excommunication from the church as the body of Christ. It is the conviction of your committee that only the latter action is in agreement with the Bible, our confessions and the Church Order. Beside this, our Church Order clearly stipulates that no person can be excluded from the membership of the church without the approval of classis. The fact that the Church Order does not mention termination of membership does not allow a consistory to follow such a course of action.

#### B. Concerning Classis Huron.

Your committee is of the opinion that:

1. Classis Huron has not given consistent leadership in this difficult problem with which the Consistory of Clinton struggled.

2. Since the Consistory of Clinton presented a specific overture concerning this problem to Classis Huron, classis should have endorsed that overture or advised the Consistory of Clinton to present the overture on its own to synod. By generalizing the gist of the overture it prevented synod from addressing itself to the Clinton situation and left the Consistory of Clinton alone in seeking a solution.

3. Classis Huron should not have acquiesced in the decision of the Consistory of Clinton, but should have pointed out that the consistory's decision was in conflict with the basic right of a church member as safeguarded in the Church Order.

4. Classis Huron should have made a decision as to sustain or to reject the appeals that were before the body.

### V. RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING THE CONSISTORY OF CLINTON

1. That synod sustain the appeal of Mr. J. C. Bakelaar as far as the termination of membership is concerned and the procedure followed.

2. That the Consistory of Clinton should again contact those members that still worship with the congregation of Clinton and place the question before them whether they themselves want to be considered members of the Clinton Christian Reformed Church.

3. That in case their reply would be in the affirmative the consistory should make arrangements to reinstate these members under certain conditions, namely though the consistory rejects their erring view on the particular point of believers baptism, they should submit themselves to the pastoral teaching and admonishing of the consistory and refrain from any form of propaganda of their erring views.

4. In case the consistory in dealing with these members can not come to a proper reinstatement of membership the consistory should seek the help and advice of classis.

5. That these conclusions and recommendations comprise synod's answer to the appeal of Mr. J. C. Bakelaar.

### VI. RECOMMENDATIONS IN GENERAL

We recommend that synod adopt the following recommendations as its advice for churches that have to deal with similar cases:

1. That these churches are urged to preach faithfully and explicitly and instruct in the Reformed doctrine of infant baptism as a sign and a seal of the covenant such members who lean toward the view of believers' baptism.

2. That members who are attracted to the view of believers' baptism are urged to seek the counsel of the office bearers of the church concerning the biblical teaching on infant baptism.

3. That in case a consistory is informed by a member that he has been rebaptized the consistory shall officially ask such a member whether he/she still considers himself/herself a member of the Christian Reformed Church and is willing to submit to the teaching and the discipline of the Christian Reformed Church.

4. In case the reply is in the affirmative and the consistory considers such a member to be a sincere Christian the consistory must faithfully and persistently admonish such an erring member.

5. Barring from the Lord's table should take place if and as long as the consistory deems it necessary for the unity and well-being of the congregation.

6. Since neither the Bible nor the confession or Church Order know and allow the action of termination of membership, therefore such members as mentioned above can only be excluded from the church if they are worthy of excommunication, which is the act of public declaration by the church that such a person has no part in Christ and in his church. In case of doubt or disagreement the consistory or the members concerned should seek the help and the advice of classis.

7. Under no circumstances should members erring in this respect be allowed to hold office in the church.

Note: Though your committee recognizes the struggle in which these recommendations may involve the consistory, congregation and members concerned, yet it is the conviction of your committee that it is the will of our Lord to consistently deal with such erring members in a pastoral rather than a judicial way.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. A. J. VandenPol

Rev. W. VanDijk

Rev. R. W. Popma, reporter

Rev. W. VanDijk due to illness was not able to serve with your committee in finalizing this report.

**REPORT 35**  
**COMMITTEE TO STUDY HOMOSEXUAL PROBLEM**

**DEAR BROTHERS:**

The committee appointed by the Synod of 1970 to study the problem of homosexuality is continuing its study as mandated. We had hoped to present a report to this synod but are unable to do so, therefore we ask synod to continue our committee for another year.

An important reason for our delay is the fact that the report of the study committee of the Gereformeerde Kerken regarding homosexuality was released in December, 1971, and came into our hands in February. This extensive report before the General Synod of the Gereformeerde Kerken merits our careful study. Obviously we were not able to do justice to it in the limited time available.

Respectfully submitted,

C. Boomsma, Sec'y

**REPORT 36**  
**LITURGICAL COMMITTEE**

DEAR BROTHERS:

The Liturgical Committee has continued its labors during the last year in accordance with the broad mandate given it by the Synod of 1964.

The forms for baptism adopted by the Synod of 1971 for use in our churches on a trial basis, with a view to eventual adoption by synod, were published in booklet form and made available to the churches (Acts, 1971, Art. 57, p. 40).

It seems that the communion service which the Synod of 1968 decided to "permit the churches to make use of . . . on a provisional basis, with a view to reporting to the committee their experiences with the order" (Acts, 1968, Art. 90, p. 65) has not been used by many churches. The committee has heard from very few consistories concerning their experiences with this form. It is our considered judgment that one of the reasons why so few consistories have registered their evaluation of the form is that it is not possible to use the form as it is presented in the booklet entitled "Models for the Morning Service and a Model for the Communion Service" because it has certain options. Therefore your committee decided to submit two usable models to the churches for use, with the earnest request that one or both of these models be used and that the consistories report their evaluations to the committee by October 1, 1972.

We are submitting a Form for Public Profession of Faith to you with the request that this form be recommended to the churches for provisional use. This form has been designed to harmonize with the Form for the Baptism of Children and the Form for the Baptism of Adults approved by the Synod of 1971 for trial use in our churches.

The form opens with a brief statement concerning the nature of the event, a recollection of God's action in baptism, an indication of the desire of the confessors, and an expression of thanks to God together with the hope that his Spirit will bless the occasion.

We would call your attention to the vows in this form. Note that questions 1, 2, and 4 are exactly the same as the questions 1, 2, and 3 in the Form for the Baptism of Adults tentatively approved by last year's synod. The third question corresponds to the pre-baptismal question in the adult baptism form but is, of course, formulated in the light of the fact that the confessors were baptized as infants and now publically embrace God's gracious promises signified and sealed in baptism. While in adult baptism the question as to the candidate's desire for baptism is placed last, in the present form the question concerning the public acceptance of the baptismal promises and the affirmation of union with Christ is placed before the question eliciting commitment to Christian service and expression of respect for the church's authority.



Thus, the order of the questions follows, in so far as is feasible, that found in the Form for the Baptism of Adults. The first question emphasizes faith in Christ, the Savior. That is central in the profession of faith. In the second question belief in the Bible as the Word of God is stressed, for it is in the Bible that Christ, the living Word, is revealed to us. Here the confessor is also asked to acknowledge that the confessions and preaching of our church are in harmony with the Bible. In the third question the confessor is asked whether he expressly accepts the divine promises sealed in his baptism and affirms that he is united with Christ, which baptism signifies. In the fourth question the promise to live a life of commitment and service in the midst of the church and the world is evoked, and the confessor is asked whether he is prepared to respect the church's authority.

We have attempted to allow for more comprehensive testimony on the part of the confessors. Therefore the suggestion is offered that the questions may be converted into affirmations and spoken by the confessors. Room is also provided for added individual testimony.

The welcome of the minister is immediately followed by a fervent expression of thanksgiving on the part of the congregation and its declared promise of love, encouragement, and intercession. All present then unite in reciting the Apostles' Creed. A brief prayer of thanksgiving concludes the ceremony.

## FORMULARY FOR PUBLIC PROFESSION OF FAITH

Beloved in the Lord:

Today we are privileged to welcome into the full life of the church's fellowship those who wish to confess their faith in Christ as Lord and Savior. When they were (or "he was" or "John was") baptized God claimed them as his own and they were received into the church. Now they wish to share fully in the life of this congregation and of the whole church of God. And so today they will publicly accept and confirm what was done in their baptism, confess their faith in the Lord Jesus, and offer themselves to God as his willing servants. We thank God for having given them this desire and pray that as we now hear their confession, he will favor us with the presence and guidance of his Holy Spirit.

### The Vows

....., will you stand now, and in the presence of God and his people respond to the following questions:

1. Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God sent to redeem the world and do you declare with repentance and joy that he is your Savior from sin and the Lord of your life?

*I do.*

2. Do you believe that the Bible is the Word of God revealing Christ and his redemption, and that the confessions and proclamations of this church faithfully reflect this revelation?

*I do.*

3. Do you accept the gracious promises of God sealed to you in your baptism and do you affirm your union with Christ and his church which your baptism signifies?

*I do.*

4. Do you promise to do all you can, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to strengthen your commitment to Christ by sharing faithfully in the life of the church, honoring its authority; and do you promise to join with the people of God in doing the work of the Lord everywhere?

*I do.*

(The questions may be changed into statements and said by the confessors. Opportunity may also be given here for additional self-expression on the part of the confessors. When the number of confessors is large the response may be asked of each after the last question only.)

### The Reception

*The minister asks the congregation to rise.*

Minister: In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ I now welcome you to all the privileges of full communion. I welcome you to full participation in the life of the church. I welcome you to its responsibilities, to its privileges, to its joys and its sufferings. "May the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, the great Shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good, that you may do his will, working in you that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory for ever and ever." Amen.

Congregation: Thanks be to God! We promise you our love, encouragement and prayers.

Minister: Let us together say what we believe:

I believe in God, the Father Almighty . . .

### The Prayer

Lord, our God, we thank thee for thy Holy Spirit through whom we know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. May those who confessed thy name today never cease to wonder at what thou hast done for them. Help them to continue firmly in the faith, to bear witness to thy love, and to let the Holy Spirit shape their lives. Take them, good Shepherd, into thy care that they may loyally endure opposition in serving thee.

May we, with all thy children, live together in the joy and power of thy Holy Spirit. In the hope of thy coming, Christ our Lord, we ask this. Amen.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

I. That synod recommend the Form for Profession of Faith to the churches for provisional use for a period of three years, with a view

to eventual adoption by synod, and request that reactions to the form be presented to the liturgical committee.

II. That Dr. Karl Kromminga and Rev. John Schuurmann be permitted to represent the committee during the consideration of our report.

Respectfully submitted,

Carl G. Kromminga, chairman  
John F. Schuurmann, recording sec'y.  
John Vriend, corresponding sec'y.  
Alvin L. Hoksbergen  
Nicholas B. Knoppers  
Calvin D. Seerveld  
Lewis B. Smedes  
Nicholas P. Wolterstorff

## REPORT 37

## WOMEN IN ECCLESIASTICAL OFFICE

DEAR BROTHERS:

This committee was appointed by the Synod of 1970, and was given the following mandate: "To examine in the light of Scripture the general Reformed practice of excluding women from the various ordained offices in the church."

At our meetings since the time of the appointment, we have discussed extensively the many problems involved in our mandate. Exploratory reports have been submitted by members of the committee on subjects as the following: Old Testament data, the New Testament concept of submissiveness, the concept of "head," woman and the office in the epistles of Paul, the scriptural concept of office, the roles of men and women in society, and in particular, the role of woman in the history of the church.

Questions repeatedly raised during the course of our meetings were such as these: How does the general office of all believers relate to the special office in the church? Should we speak in terms of *one* office, or in terms of *various* offices? Is the office primarily a *servicing* or a *ruling* function? How does the inequality of men and women in their ecclesiastical roles relate to their equality in Christ (Galatians 3:28)? Are these roles primarily determined by a divine law, or by a socio-cultural environment? How can we explain the inconclusiveness of scriptural data on the question whether women can hold office in the church?

Early in our meetings we felt that our study is related to another issue committed by synod for study, viz. the one of the *Ecclesiastical Office and Ordination*. The position of our church on this issue may become more clear once synod has dealt with this report, so that your committee will then be better equipped to deal with their specific mandate.

We regret that in this way we are not able to submit a report prior to the 1972 meeting of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod, but still feel that our churches, as well as the churches of the Reformed world community, are not really served by a report that has been drawn up prematurely.

We trust that synod will understand our position, and will bear with us as we continue to wrestle with the problems submitted to our consideration. We expect, the Lord willing, to have a report ready for the Synod of 1973. We recommend that synod continue the present committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Dr. Remkes Kooistra, chairman	Mrs. Jane Malda
Rev. Dik N. Habermehl, reporter	Miss Aukje G. J. Masselink
Rev. Peter M. Jonker	Mr. Walter J. Vos
Rev. Dick C. Los	

## REPORT 38

## COMMITTEE ON A NEW CONFESSION

## DEAR BROTHERS:

The Synod of 1971 appointed our study committee in response to overtures 5 and 77 which requested a "new confession."

## I. THE MANDATE

Synod of 1971 charged our committee with the following mandate:

1. That synod, recognizing that it is always desirable for the church to confess its faith in contemporary ways, and recognizing that at times it becomes necessary for the church to augment its confession, appoint a committee to study
  - a. How the church can confess its faith in contemporary ways today.
  - b. Whether the churches consider it necessary to augment their confession at this time, and if so,
  - c. In what areas the church desires to augment its confession.
2. That synod request this committee on the basis of this study to present recommendations to the Synod of 1972.

(Acts of Synod, 1971, Art. 140, pp. 109, 110)

It became evident to us that synod's decision was not identical with the overtures. While the overtures had asked for a new confession, either to replace or to re-express what the present confessions confess; synod spoke instead of "augmenting" the confession. We adopted the following interpretation of our mandate at our first committee meeting:

"We understand the synod to have said that the three present confessions (Heidelberg Catechism, Belgic Confession, Canons of Dort) are to continue in force. We understand our mandate to allow only for augmenting (increasing) the church's confession, and not for reducing or diminishing it in any way." (Committee minutes, arts. 1-8)

With reference to the time given to us for our study in the mandate, we observe that this is unusually brief. While concentrating on 1, b and c of our mandate, it has not been possible for us to do much work on the question in 1, a. We shall be making a recommendation that work on this question be continued.

## II. WORKING METHOD

A. *Questionnaire*:

Since our mandate stated that we were "to study whether the *churches* consider it necessary . . ." we found it essential to contact the churches and to request their views and suggestions. A questionnaire was designed that followed the questions of the mandate closely. We express our gratitude to Drs. Smit and Rottman of the Sociology Department at Calvin for their critical review of the questionnaire designed by the committee.

The questions were sent to each consistory of the CRC. And, in order not to neglect a sizeable number of office-bearers who would have no opportunity to participate in a consistory's answer, the questionnaire was also sent to all active ministers who do not serve a regular congregation.

**B. Returns:**

1. Totals of responses from 367 churches. Received as of February 28, 1972.

**QUESTIONS:** (Please read the whole questionnaire before answering any of the questions)

**A. How, in your opinion, can the church confess its faith in contemporary ways today? (Check one or more)**

- 1. By writing an additional confession ..... 97
- 2. By adding to the present confessions ..... 44
- 3. By pastoral letters and similar devices ..... 88
- 4. By individual Christian action .....169
- 5. By corporate Christian action .....164
- 6. Other (please specify) ..... 53

**B. Do you consider it necessary that the church augment its confession at this time?**

1. Yes 135 No 213 (State reasons if you wish) Number of churches giving reasons for 'yes' - 58; giving reasons for 'no' - 107.

2. If you answered "yes" to Question B-1, in which of the following functions of the confession do you consider the necessity of augmentation to exist?

- a) As a test of orthodoxy ..... 32
- b) As a witness to the world .....129
- c) As a teaching and preaching resource for the church .....111
- d) As a guide against heresy ..... 54
- e) Other (please specify) ..... 9

**C. If you answered "yes" to Question B-1, how desirable do you consider it to be to augment the confession in the following areas? (check as many as you wish)**

	<i>Urgent</i>	<i>Desirable</i>	<i>Unnecessary</i>
1. The mission of the church .....	90	45	7
2. Christian address to human need ....	63	60	11
3. Relation of church to social structures	38	65	22
4. The doctrine of Scripture .....	49	50	32
5. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit .....	90	37	5
6. The unity of the church .....	37	66	19
7. The kingdom concept .....	38	68	21
8. The "Office of all Believers" .....	42	67	20
9. Creation .....	30	47	40
10. Other (please specify) .....	20		

1. Total of responses from 116 ministers not serving regular congregations. Received of February 28, 1972.

**QUESTIONS:** (Please read the whole questionnaire before answering any of the questions)

A. How, in your opinion, can the church confess its faith in contemporary ways today? (Check one or more)

1. By writing an additional confession .....	74
2. By adding to the present confessions .....	17
3. By pastoral letters and similar devices .....	29
4. By individual Christian action .....	66
5. By corporate Christian action .....	72
6. Other (please specify) .....	27

B. Do you consider it necessary that the church augment its confession at this time?

1. Yes 96 No 18 (State reasons if you wish) Number of ministers giving reasons for 'yes' - 62; giving reasons for 'no' - 7.

2. If you answered "yes" to Question B-1, in which of the following functions of the confession do you consider the necessity of augmentation to exist?

a) As a test of orthodoxy .....	6
b) As a witness to the world .....	88
c) As a teaching and preaching resource for the church .....	71
d) As a guide against heresy .....	20
e) Other (please specify) .....	23

C. If you answered "yes" to Question B-1, how desirable do you consider it to be to augment the confession in the following areas? (check as many as you wish)

	<i>Urgent</i>	<i>Desirable</i>	<i>Unnecessary</i>
1. The mission of the church .....	77	19	1
2. Christian address to human need ....	64	25	2
3. Relation of church to social structures	53	31	2
4. The doctrine of Scripture .....	22	32	19
5. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit .....	49	35	5
6. The unity of the church .....	27	50	9
7. The kingdom concept .....	26	35	13
8. The "Office of all Believers" .....	45	30	11
9. Creation .....	10	31	25
10. Other (please specify) .....	17		

C. *Analysis of returns:*

*Size of response:*

Approximately 55% of the consistories replied; about 50% of the ministers not serving regular congregations replied. We were impressed by the thorough way many consistories and individuals answered the questions. We received a number of thoughtful responses, which were helpful to us in looking beyond the statistical totals.

*Question A:*

In the replies to the question about how the church is to confess the faith in contemporary ways, these rankings emerge:

From the churches:

No. 1. By individual Christian action.

No. 2. By corporate Christian action.

No. 3. By writing an additional confession.

- No. 4. By pastoral letters and similar devices.
- No. 5. By adding to the present confessions.

From the other ministers:

- No. 1. By writing an additional confession.
- No. 2. By corporate Christian action.
- No. 3. By individual Christian action.
- No. 4. By pastoral letters and similar devices.
- No. 5. By adding to the present confessions.

From the churches not even the first three received over half of the votes. From the ministers the first three did receive slightly over half of the votes. From both groups the first three receive much more attention than the last two.

The closest thing to a concensus emerging under "other" suggestions was 32 requests for re-writing the present confessions. But these requests were made by less than half of those responding under "other," who again are less than 7% of the total response. Very few new suggestions were received on contemporary ways of confessing the faith; there seems to be little clarity on this matter.

#### *Question B:*

1. In reply to the question whether augmentation of the confession was considered necessary at this time 61% of the churches responded with a "No"; 84% of the ministers not serving regular congregations responded with a "Yes."

Most of those who explained their negative reaction expressed as reason that the creeds we have are adequate; others that for various reasons the time is not right.

Those who responded affirmatively and explained their choice expressed the need for re-expressing the faith in terms of today's understanding, issues, and language.

2. With respect to the functions of the confession in which the necessity of augmentation is seen to exist, there was correlation between both groups responding, which produced the following ranking:

- No. 1. As a witness to the world.
- No. 2. As a teaching and preaching resource for the church.
- No. 3. As a guide against heresy.
- No. 4. As a test of orthodoxy.

When this response is combined with the response to Question A, 4 and 5, a strong concern is evident in our churches for a *lived confession*, and for a church equipping the members to act in faith.

#### *Question C:*

In regard to areas where it might be desirable to augment the confession, the following rankings emerged:

- No. 1. The mission of the church
- No. 2. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit
- No. 3. Christian address to human need
- No. 4. The "office of all believers"



- No. 5. The kingdom concept
- No. 6. Relation of church to social structures
- No. 7. The unity of the church
- No. 8. The doctrine of Scripture
- No. 9. Creation

From the other ministers:

- No. 1. The mission of the church
- No. 2. Christian address to human need
- No. 3. Relation of the church to social structures
- No. 4. The doctrine of the Holy Spirit
- No. 5. The "office of all believers"
- No. 6. The unity of the church
- No. 7. The kingdom concept
- No. 8. The doctrine of Scripture
- No. 9. Creation

Among those who favor augmenting the confession there was near unanimity on the desirability of augmenting the confession in the area of "the mission of the church." The combined totals of the responses in areas 2 and 5 clearly indicate as well a strong preference for "Christian address to human need" and "the doctrine of the Holy Spirit."

#### *Conclusions:*

1. The churches which responded to our questionnaire indicated by a solid majority that they do *not* consider it necessary to augment our confession at this time.

2. The returns from ministers serving in special ministries such as teaching, missions, urban and campus ministries indicated by an even greater majority that they *do* consider it necessary to augment the confession at this time.

3. The affirmative answer by 135 churches and many ministers indicates a significant sense of need for augmenting the confession in some way, particularly in the areas of the mission of the church, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and Christian address to human need.

4. From various responses to the committee it seems that the confessional task of the church is not clear to all in the churches.

### III. OBSERVATIONS ON THE CONFSSIONAL TASK OF THE CHURCH

At this point our committee could simply submit the plain results of the survey of the churches. However, we are convinced that this would be an insufficient address to the study mandate given to us by the Synod of 1971. We believe this to be the case for the following reasons:

1. This would be an incomplete address to the basic demands of point "a" of our mandate which calls for study ~~and~~ consideration by the committee itself.

2. This would be an inadequate address to the overtures out of which the study mandate arose.

3. A preliminary consultation of the churches does not deal with all of the aspects implied in a study.

4. The importance of the confessional question calls for further listening to Scripture and consideration of the role of confessions by the committee and by synod.

We submit, therefore, for the study of the churches and for the attention of synod, our observations on what the Bible says about confessing, on the role of the confessions in church history, on creedal development, and on the world to which we are called to proclaim the Gospel.

A. Biblical word-study on "to confess" and "confession" (homologeîn and homologia) :

The basic meaning of *homologeîn*, being a combination of "one" and "to say," is *to say the same thing*. The various translations used, such as "agree, confess, acknowledge, admit," etc. all go back to that basic meaning.

Confession is an answer to what someone has said. In legal use it answers to the charge. When the church confesses, it answers to God. "The Bible is of God; the confession is man's answer to God's Word." (Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom*, I, p. 7)

"Confess" is almost the same as "believe." It certainly has the same content (compare I John 4:2 and 5:1), but "confess" is more oriented to "witness" and action, particularly in such places as John 12:42, where some believed but did not dare to come out for it openly.

The words confess and confession are used in a variety of ways in the New Testament:

They can be used in a legal sense—as a solemn statement:

- Herod to his daughter, Matthew 14:7.
- God to Abraham, Acts 7:17.
- Paul before Felix, Acts 24:14, where a statement of belief is then added.
- John the Baptist to a committee of inquiry from Jerusalem, John 1:20.

Most uses in the New Testament do not entirely lose this solemn, legal character when they are statements of faith.

More commonly, the words are used in statements of faith. Such a statement of faith can be:

- A confession of sin, agreeing with God's analysis, I John 1:9.
- A "sacrifice of praise" to God, Hebrews 13:15.
- An action of obedient confession (cheerful giving) that praises God, II Cor. 9:13.
- A statement of a doctrinal character, such as various beliefs held by Pharisees but not by Sadducees, Acts 23:8.

—A summary of the basic Christian belief. This most common use is seen in Matthew 10:32, where it is a matter of confessing or denying Christ. Paul uses "confess" in this central way in Romans 10:9 ("Jesus is Lord"), and John in I John 4:2, 15 ("Jesus Christ has come in the flesh"/"Jesus is the Son of God").

Such summarizing confessions appear to be made at baptism, Acts 8:37, and on the occasion of a public profession of faith, I Timothy 6:12.

Hebrews keeps reminding believers of the confession they have made, 3:1; 4:14; 10:23. And in I Timothy 3:16 Paul reminds of the confession and seems to give a brief creed or hymn there.

The confession is man's answer to God, but even the confession is worked by the Spirit, I John 4:2; or the faith that is confessed comes "by the preaching of Christ," Romans 10:17.

The confession is also a public witness to the world. Christ made "the good confession" before Pilate, I Timothy 6:13. All believers are called to testify "before men," Matthew 10:32. Confession is a public act:

It is an implication of belief, Romans 10:9, 10.

It requires courage of one's conviction, John 12:42.

And it should be confirmed by deeds, Titus 1:16.

The confession is *to be spoken and lived*.

The content of the Christian confession is at its simplest: "Christ," "Jesus is Lord," "Jesus Christ has come in the flesh," "Jesus is the Son of God." In this content the confessors of Christ are separated from those who deny him, who are called deceivers, false prophets, antichrists, I John 4:3, II John 7. This separation is of eternal significance as Christ will judge on the basis of the confession, Matthew 10:32.

#### *Reflections on the word-study:*

1. The various functions we assign to the confessions today are born out by Scripture: summary of the faith, teaching and preaching guide, defense versus heresy, witness to the world.

2. The act of confessing and its content are not indifferent matters, but are highly important to God's praise and to our salvation.

3. Since confession is a response to God's Word, it is characterized by the simplicity of faith rather than by theological detail. Confessions may not bind where the Word does not bind.

4. Confession is to take place "before men"; first before the congregation, but then also before those who disagree: John 12:42, versus the synagogue; and Acts 24:14, Paul before Felix.

5. Confessing has a divisive aspect. While it unites the confessors, it divides them from the deniers. The way Paul and John state the Christian confession in different contexts already illustrates that confessing is a continual process which needs to be done again and again as the context in which the church lives changes and new denials arise.

#### *B. The Need for an Augmented Confession*

We propose in the following paragraphs to indicate why confessional augmentation is desirable at this time. This subject will be considered against the background of the nature and history of confessional statements.

##### *1. What is a Confession?*

A confessional document as usually understood may be any or all of three things: (1) a witness to the world concerning the beliefs held by the adherents of the confession; (2) a teaching instrument for the instruction of church members in these truths; (3) a test of the orthodoxy, particularly of those entrusted with propagating and defending these

truths. Most confessions partake of all three functions. But they lend themselves in varying degrees to one or the other.

When any confession is first written and adopted, the element of witness to the world usually looms large. This is because a confession is ordinarily produced in response to some crisis on which the church has to take a stand. But as time goes by and the particular crisis fades into the past, the accent tends to fall more and more on the second and third functions of a confession.

A confession, thus, is a living document whose role in the church varies with the passage of time. It may retain its full value as a teaching or testing device. But its freshness and spontaneity are usually greatest when the crisis to which it is addressed is most imminent.

## 2. *What is a Confessional Church?*

A confessional church is a fellowship of Christians united around a confession. If the confession is fully operative it serves all of the functions listed above. The confession is what these Christians say unitedly to the world; it is what they teach each other concerning the Christian faith and life; and it is the standard which they require all of their leaders to meet.

The Christian Reformed Church is such a church. It is consciously and deliberately shaped by its adopted confessions. It properly calls them its standards of unity. As it continues to teach and defend the truths of its confessions, it continues to confess what they contain as its own faith.

But this is not the only way in which the church has continued to confess its faith. Nor are the issues faced in the confessions the only issues on which the church has to speak. The Christian Reformed Church has continued over the years to express itself in documents and statements. Examples include not only the Conclusions of Utrecht, the three points of common grace, and the statement on biblical infallibility, but also pronouncements on divorce, war and peace, race, worldly amusements/film arts, and the like. These, too, are part of what the church is confessing in any given instance.

The Christian Reformed Church has been cautious about considering such statements creedal statements and making new tests of orthodoxy out of them. This is proper; new creedal pronouncements ought not to be made lightly and preferably not piecemeal. But on the other hand, the church has sometimes said that such pronouncements were official interpretations of its creeds and thus had creedal authority. And in fact, if one wishes to know what issues the church considers important *now*, and what it confesses concerning them *now*, he would do at least as well to turn to these pronouncements as to the older confessions. It must be noted also that the church considers actions of its synods—including such pronouncements as listed above—as settled and binding until they are shown to be contrary to the Word of God or the Church Order. Thus the church is continuing to confess in the way of statements and documents.

There is another sense also in which the matter of confessing can be understood. This is the idea that the church confesses not (or not so much) by words written on paper but by the way its members live in

the world. This kind of confession has always been going on, but the church is becoming more conscious of such confession and its importance in the present day. The relationship between deeds and creeds is not to be sought in a polarity between the two, so that one is forced to choose for the one or the other. Closer to the truth is the realization that words put on paper are fruitless unless they result in an appropriate life-style.

In summary, the Christian Reformed Church makes its confession in several ways. It does so by undiminished subscription to the historic confessions. It does so by address from time to time to the issues of the day. And it does so by its ongoing efforts to express its faith in appropriate actions.

### 3. *When is a New Confession Necessary?*

What has been said above may appear to add up to the conclusion that no new confession is necessary. But that is not necessarily the case. There are certain conditions which, if they should exist, would make a new confession at least desirable and possibly necessary.

The first of these conditions would exist if the church found its confessions to be in error. Such a discovery, if the error were of major proportions, would indeed be a terrible shock to the church. It would raise grave questions, including questions concerning the guidance given by the Holy Spirit to the church in the past. But because the confessions are human documents, and because the Word remains the norm, the church must recognize this possibility.

No one in the church, least of all this committee, is contending that this situation exists. No one is saying, that is, that the confessions are so filled with error that they ought to be discarded. An error of inadequacy in formulation here and there is a different matter. The church recognizes the possibility that this is the case, provides channels for bringing about correction, and has—with much painful effort—accomplished such corrections in the past. But this kind of error does not call for a new confession; and the kind of basic error which would make new confession necessary is not being claimed.

The second condition calling for a new confession would exist if the existing confessions were found to be inadequate or incomplete. This condition might partake of either or both of two parts. It could mean that the confessions inadequately reflect the light given by the Word of God on the faith and life of the church. Or it could mean that a new crisis had arisen to which the old confessions did not speak clearly enough. It is not only possible, but likely that if either of these conditions existed, the other would exist as well.

In order to understand this second condition it is necessary to understand that our confessions are historically conditioned. It was evidently felt in the Reformation age that new confession was necessary. The church responded to this need by writing and adopting confessional statements. Each of them also responded to a crisis in which the church found itself.

The dangers which these confessions envisaged have not disappeared, and the truths as they formulated them remain valid for today. Never-

theless there are indications here and there of the times and circumstances under which they were written. The Heidelberg Catechism is probably the least crisis-oriented of the three. Yet it reflects a recognition of Roman Catholicism as a major threat when it describes the mass as an accursed idolatry. When the Belgic Confession defines the church, the definition is specifically addressed to a contrast with the Roman Catholic Church. It speaks with a vehemence about the Anabaptists which today's situation does not seem to call for. It defines the role of the civil magistrate in terms of the church-state relations of its day. And the Canons are entirely addressed to the threat which Arminianism posed to the church and to the true doctrine of the Scriptures.

One further element in the history of our confessions is of great importance. All of the confessions reflect an assumption prevalent in their time. Their concentration is on Europe and their assumption is that all of Europe is at least formally Christian. While the attitude of the church to the unbelieving world is not absent from their language, their definitions and pronouncements are made in distinction from other confessions, churches, and theologies, all of which profess to be Christian. The kind of threat which rival theologies pose to the church is not absent from our situation. But the question may well be asked whether this continues to be the major crisis which the true church faces today. The writers of these confessions could hardly have been expected to read the situation otherwise than they did. But the question is whether the situation has changed enough to make their formulations insufficient.

#### 4. *Crisis and Response*

The existence of new questions and new issues might lead to a moderate response. Such a response would consist of concrete address to isolated problems. Such a response is continually being made by the church in the adjudication of disputes, in interpretations and applications of the confessions, in doctrinal deliverances, and in other ways. This approach is adequate as long as the crises are relatively small and isolated; as long, that is, as no major new crisis has arisen. Is this the situation today?

There are without doubt many issues confronting the church today. These cover a wide range. Something of their number and variety may be seen from the issues which the church currently has under study. These include the interpretation of the Bible, the meaning of office and ordination, neo-pentecostalism, and a variety of social problems. Underlying these are strains and stresses regarding the unity of the church—including the internal unity of the Christian Reformed Church—the nature of worship, the life-style of the generations, urbanization, and the like. Can the church successfully face these many issues by a piecemeal address? Do the existing confessions provide an adequate basis for the church's address to all of these questions? Or do these issues reflect a major new crisis to which the church ought to address a major new response which can be called a new confession?

In response to this question we propose that it is urgent that the church face this proposition: the modern crisis is the secularization of society; the modern challenge is the mission of the church in the world.

The presuppositions about the place of the church in society are no longer the same as in the time of the Reformation. The notion of "Christendom" in which all individuals and structures are Christian, and in which there are only varieties of the one faith, is no longer valid. The basic assumptions on which the older confessions were written are called into question, and the role of the church—the *whole* church—in the world is in doubt. The Christian Scriptures are viewed as only a part of the church's tradition, and that tradition itself is viewed as outmoded and irrelevant. The church can no longer speak, even locally, as a dominant majority in society. Locally and worldwide it is a dwindling minority.

In contrast with this there is today an uninhibited emphasis on man and his capabilities. Not only is Christianity relativized with respect to other religions, but the relation of any man to any deity is called into question. Such a relation is not so much denied as ignored. The most precious elements of the Christian faith are transformed. The faith of man is a faith in himself, his hope is a mundane hope, and his love, even at best, limited by earthly horizons. Whatever label—e.g. "post-Christian"—one wishes to attach to this, it constitutes a drastic change in the situation of the Christian faith. This state of affairs is with us, and apparently not to be reversed. Probably it has been with us longer than we have suspected.

Theological response to this situation is not lacking. But this creates problems of its own, because not all theological response is acceptable. To pick dangers at random, there is danger that Christian anthropology shall view man as autonomous and fail to reckon with his creatureliness and the image of God. There is danger that eschatology shall become earthbound and fail to leave room for the prayer, "Come, Lord Jesus."

It is not proposed here that complete theological clarity must be quickly forthcoming on all of these questions. This is not possible, because the problems are complex. Neither blanket affirmation nor complete negation provides a sure course to a sound conclusion. Nor is such a solution necessary, because it is not theological theories but the church's confession with which we are concerned.

The question is of a different order. It is a question of being in the world but not of it. Here again there are poles of opinion which are unacceptable. Neither the way of surrender nor the way of isolation is open to the church. The former would deny the identity of the church and make any confession at all meaningless. The latter would deny the mission of the church and make its confession irrelevant. Our church is challenged to find its faith-response in the light of the Word to today's situation; to develop its Reformed heritage in application to our time; and to proceed on that basis to minister to a world which needs its witness at least as badly today as it ever did.

What we have said above is admittedly only a small beginning at analysis of the crisis. If this crisis is to be adequately understood, much more study and analysis must be made. But if the challenge is as we have outlined it, a piecemeal response is insufficient. It is necessary for the church to speak clearly and comprehensively in this situation. The

church must maintain its identity with the purpose of fulfilling its mission. Such speaking, whatever name may be given to it, is a confession.

### 5. *Difficulties and Obstacles*

It is evident in many ways, including responses to the committee's questionnaire, that there is no clear general awareness of this crisis in the church. This response might be summed up in the words, "The need is not great enough to call for a new confession." There are various possible reasons for this. One is that the committee might be wrong in its assessment of the situation. Another is that those who respond thus are not sufficiently aware of what is going on in the world. Or there may be disagreement that the many threats constitute one major threat.

There is also another response discernible in the returned questionnaires. This is that we do not have the capacity to produce an added confession. We are not learned enough, or we are not unified enough; perhaps both objections apply.

In a sense these two tend to cancel each other out. One view holds that the challenge is not great enough; the other that it is too great. We are content to let the church judge whether the challenge is great enough. But if that is granted, the answer to the second objection is clear. Where there is a great challenge there must be a great faith. Not only the production of an added confession, but the very decision to attempt to do so is a confession that the arm of the Lord is not shortened.

The committee is not minded to minimize the size of the difficulties. Identifying the issues, formulating the responses, achieving unity of response, all are surpassingly difficult. Even the question of procedure is complex. How shall the process be undertaken? Shall the church look to the formulation of an individual, as in the Belgic Confession? Or to a small committee, as in the Heidelberg Catechism? Or to a synodical assembly, as in the Canons of Dort?

In view of the materials that have come to its attention, the committee is of the opinion that it is indeed true that the Christian Reformed Church is not ready at this time to proceed to the formulation and adoption of an added confession. But the committee also believes that the matter is too important to ignore and too urgent to postpone unduly. Therefore we recommend to synod the following procedure designed to carry this matter forward to a conclusion at a future date.

## IV. RECOMMENDATIONS:

A. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to the chairman and secretary of the study committee during the discussion of this matter.

B. That synod express as its judgment that the Christian Reformed Church is not ready at this time to augment its confession.

*Ground:* The majority of the churches responded negatively to the question of the need for augmentation at this time (cf. above Report, Section II).

C. That synod express the judgment that the confessional task of the church requires the churches' attention at this time.



*Grounds:*

1. A need for augmenting the confessions has been expressed by a large number of consistories and office-bearers.

2. The context in which the church ministers today is different from that existing when the present confessions were written. A study of the Scriptures indicates that new denials of faith are to be met by further confessions.

3. The Church Order assigns the task of "the adoption of creeds" to synod (Art. 47). This task, therefore, should be encouraged by synod.

D. That synod continue the "new confession" study committee, so that it may complete its task, and so that it may promote further study of our confessional task among the churches.

*Grounds:*

1. The committee has not been able to complete that part of its mandate which deals with the contemporary means of confessing the faith (committee mandate 1, a).

2. The committee would like to invite various agencies and individuals involved in the church's outreach to reflect on the way in which the faith can be confessed today.

E. That synod urge our publications, elders' conferences, ministers' institute, societies, congregations, etc. to study the Scriptures, our confessions, the study report, and the times in which we live, in order to discover together which aspects of our biblical heritage need special emphasis in a confessional statement in our time.

F. That synod make no further commitments on the subject of a new confession at this time, but wait for the fruit of the reflection of the churches under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. L. Oostendorp, chairman  
Mr. Morris N. Greidanus, reporter  
Mr. H. Arens  
Dr. J. H. Kromminga

(Due to circumstances the Rev. L. Schalkwyk did not attend the meetings of the committee).

REPORT 39  
PSALTER HYMNAL SUPPLEMENT

DEAR BROTHERS:

The mandate of this committee is in Article 64 of the Acts of Synod, 1971.

“Synod provide a wider range of music and songs by way of a supplement to the Psalter Hymnal:

*Grounds:*

a. There is a wide range of musical taste and religious experience among our worshippers and these call for a wide range of music and songs as media of expression, particularly for our young people and those received into our churches from other backgrounds.

b. Because music and song is such a basic element in Reformed worship service we must always be open to possible improvement in this area.

c. There is a considerable number of doctrinally sound and biblical hymns which could very well serve our people.”

This mandate reflects the discussion that has been carried on in the churches, which reveals that there is widespread desire for revision of the praise book of the church. New song styles are in use. Groups in the church need to be served by means of music that reaches them: children, young members, members from other than our traditional ethnic background, to name a few. There have been requests for songs that address themselves to occasions and current interests. The various religious feastdays and other occasions observed by public worship need more musical support. Problems such as ecology, urban tensions, the ills and strengths of our society require some musical expression.

SOME PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

Reflecting on our mandate led the committee into considerations that needed study.

1. The committee agreed immediately that the mandate placed the emphasis upon what is *needed* in the area of music and hymnody, not simply upon what may be *wanted*.

2. The committee agreed that the mandate suggests that we should take account of changing performance practices. For example, it is becoming increasingly common to use instruments other than the organ or piano, to accompany congregational singing.

3. It was agreed that we should endeavor to gain the original talents of the membership of the churches as a source of new musical material.

4. It soon became apparent that we could not responsibly prepare simply some hymns and psalms to be placed in a collection to supplement the Psalter Hymnal without giving consideration to such principles, guidelines, and problems as are properly involved.

### PRINCIPLES

Two members of our committee, Dr. John Hamersma and Dr. Calvin Seerveld, who are also members of the Liturgical Committee of synod, have gone deeply into the study of the principles that should guide us. Refer to the four "motifs" (Biblical, Catholic, Confession, Pastoral) in the Liturgical Committee report, Acts 1968.

Reflecting upon the detailed presentations of these two members, the committee, in brief, presents these principles.

1. The singing in the church should be united praise and prayer; it should be response to God's acts of revelation to his people. The songs should fit into the liturgy which is in the nature of a dialogue between God and his people.

2. Music is not centrally significant in worship, but secondary. The central purpose for the gathering of God's people is to hear the Word of God. Music and singing serve a supportive role, enabling the people to respond with meaningful gratitude to God's revelation.

3. Instrumental music and instrumental accompaniments are entirely supportive of the text, intended only to assist the congregation in the corporate response that worship requires.

4. The texts of hymns used in worship should be God-centered and true to God's Word.

5. Both heart and mind are exercised in singing, hence the worshippers must be informed. This requires an on-going education of the church members in matters of music and singing and an understanding of their place in worship.

6. The very best possible craftsmanship, in the writing of music and songs, as well as in performance, should be sought. There should be no room for shoddy work.

7. The appropriateness of specific details in the practice of music and singing should be judged by contemporary standards. That is to say, we cannot simply adopt the Old Testament or New Testament or Reformation era musical standards as entirely normative for today.

8. Worship is a corporate activity. The songs sung in the public worship service should reflect that corporate unity and not be too individualistic an expression of spiritual experience.

### GUIDELINES

Based upon the principles enunciated above, the following practical guidelines are proposed by the committee to determine which songs are chosen for the presently requested supplement and the subsequent selection of songs in the longer-range program recommended below.

Selections for the Psalter Hymnal supplement must:

1. meet liturgical requirements and practices;
2. support the preaching of and the response to the Word;
3. not allow the music to obtrude upon the text;
4. be scriptural and confessional as to content of lyrics;

5. be worthy of the educational program we recommend and not merely a collection of old favorites or simply familiar tunes;
6. be well-crafted as to composition, and yet not difficult for execution;
7. be relevant to the idea-patterns of the time;
8. serve for corporate worship and reflect the church's universality.

#### PROBLEMS

Extensive research has been done in the areas of performance practices, text relevancy, liturgical implications, and improvement of existing settings. Out of this research the following problems have been uncovered:

1. Should Article 52 C.O. be amended to allow more liberty to local consistories in view of the fact that the needs vary according to the comparative nearness of a given congregation to some of these problems?
2. There is the immediate need for an approved selection of songs for public worship. As it is now, songs are being sung and even whole hymn books are being used with little regard for soundness of content, merely to satisfy the desire for variety and newness.
3. There is need for a longer-range program. The present Psalter Hymnal is not clearly arranged according to the church year; there are several important liturgical events for which the Psalter Hymnal content is slight or non-existent. Some of its songs are seldom, if ever, sung because they reflect an antiquated style of musical expression and text.
4. To encourage original material by members of the churches requires a long-range program of solicitation and screening.

#### PROPOSALS

1. We propose to prepare a supplemental collection of hymns and psalms to be added to the Psalter Hymnal which will fit the guidelines we have established and also reflect the song styles that are current among us not now in the Psalter Hymnal. This collection will be available at the time of synod.
2. We propose that this committee be continued in order to carry out an on-going program of education and solicitation, such as:
  - a. to continue the program of educating the church in the newer, yet excellent, song styles that are available as well as some older unknown or untried styles;
  - b. to continue to screen and submit for provisional use by means of a Banner pull-out insert existing hymns and psalms not now in current use in the churches;
  - c. to continue to solicit and judge original compositions, which would be published periodically as a pull-out in The Banner, used experimentally in the churches, and so finally approved or not as they deserve;
  - d. to engage in a revision of some existing songs in the Psalter Hymnal, altering the instrumentation, harmonic patterns, vocal range, texts,

and such other details as will encourage the most universal use of the existing collection of psalms and hymns.

Some members of the Supplement Committee will be available to the synodical advisory committee and to synod itself upon request.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Calvin Seerveld, chairman  
Rev. Arnold Brink, reporter  
Mrs. Marie Post  
Gary Warmink  
Dr. John Hamersma  
John Worst  
Nancy Van Halsema  
Douglas Tjapkes  
Mike McGervey

## REPORT 40

## ECCLESIASTICAL OFFICE AND ORDINATION

DEAR BROTHERS:

This committee was appointed by the Synod of 1969, and was given the following mandate:

"Synod appoint a committee to study the nature of ecclesiastical office and the meaning of ordination as taught in the Scripture and exhibited in the history of the church of Christ" (Acts, 1969, p. 85, Article 121, C).

The Synod of 1970 added to our mandate the consideration of a question raised at the Reformed Ecumenical Synod of 1968 by the Reformed Churches of Brazil concerning the legitimacy of having an elder give the blessing or benediction at a regular church service (Acts, 1970, p. 119, 3, b).

The Synod of 1971 further assigned to our committee Overture 25 submitted to that synod, which dealt with the question of the ministerial status of ministers engaged in extraordinary types of service—like Bible teaching in high schools or administrative duties (Acts, 1971, pp. 55 and 643).

The committee has had twenty-seven meetings. At these meetings the problems involved in our mandate were discussed extensively, and various ramifications of the question of ordination and office were explored. Reports were submitted to the committee on a number of aspects of the problem.

During the course of our meetings questions such as the following were often raised: Do our guidelines concerning office and ordination come only from Scripture, or also from the historical development of the church? Where and when did the clergy-laity distinction arise? Is there any work done by ordained ministers that is not essentially the work of all believers? Does the New Testament commission any particular group with the task of administering the sacraments? What is the difference between preaching and exhorting? Does the laying on of hands confer any special quality on a person which he did not have before?

At this point we should like to indicate to synod how we understand our mandate. It will be well to remember, first, what is said in the Acts of 1969 by way of introduction to our mandate:

"For many years the Christian Reformed Church has been seeking to define the precise status of layworkers in evangelism. Valuable information has been provided the church in study reports presented to the Synods of 1965, 1967, and 1969. It has become evident that the precise status of the layworker in evangelism cannot be determined until the *nature of ecclesiastical office and the meaning of ordination have been clarified*" (p. 85, Art. 121, B).

Note now that the Synod of 1969 did not ask us to "define the precise status of layworkers in evangelism," but rather to study "the nature of ecclesiastical office and the meaning of ordination as taught in the Scripture and exhibited in the history of the church of Christ." We have therefore come to the conclusion that the synod wished us to develop certain principles and guidelines which will give direction to the church as it faces the basic ecclesiastical question of the status of layworkers in evangelism—a question which has a number of ramifications and implications. In other words, we consider our task to be that of providing a biblical and historical background in the light of which the problem of the status of the layworkers in evangelism must be seen and in the light of which a solution to the problem must be found. In accordance with synod's instructions, we have investigated the question of office and ordination primarily from two points of view: the biblical and the historical.

### OUTLINE

## I. BIBLICAL STUDY ON OFFICE AND ORDINATION

### A. The Meaning of Ordination

1. Word study on *ordain*
2. Special ceremonies accompanying appointments
  - a. Anointing
  - b. The laying on of hands
    - 1) In the Old Testament
    - 2) In the Book of Acts
    - 3) In the Pastoral Epistles
3. Summary

### B. The Nature of Ecclesiastical Office

1. Word study on *office*
2. Officers and other functionaries in the Bible
  - a. In the Old Testament
  - b. In the New Testament
    - 1) The Book of Acts
    - 2) Four specific passages in Paul's epistles
    - 3) Various functionaries in the New Testament church
3. The servant concept underlying office in the New Testament
4. Functions usually associated with ordination today
  - a. Preaching
  - b. Teaching
  - c. The administration of the sacraments
5. The fluid New Testament situation with regard to office

## II. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPTS OF OFFICE AND ORDINATION

### A. The Ancient Period

1. Statement of the problem
2. Specific developments
3. Evaluation

### B. The Reformation Era

1. Introduction
2. Specific Reformation developments

- a. With regard to office
- b. With regard to ordination

### 3. Summary

## C. Post-Reformation Developments in the Dutch Reformed Tradition

1. The terminology for office
2. The meaning of the laying on of hands
3. The identification of the offices
4. Differences in terms of office
5. The official character of preaching

## III. CONCLUSIONS

## IV. ADDITIONAL MATTERS REFERRED TO OUR COMMITTEE

## V. RECOMMENDATIONS

### I. BIBLICAL STUDY OF OFFICE AND ORDINATION

#### A. The Meaning of Ordination

##### 1. Word study on *ordain*

When one tries to make a word study of the word *ordain* in our English translations of the Bible, he is bound to be disappointed. To be sure, the word *ordain* is used in our English Bible versions, particularly in the King James Version. But there is no evidence that this word in the King James Bible is meant to be an exact translation of a Hebrew or Greek word designating precisely what we today commonly understand by "ordination."

As far as the Old Testament is concerned, the word *ordain* occurs fifteen times in the King James Version. Five of these occurrences have to do with appointing a man to some kind of specific task; these five instances, however, are translations of four different Hebrew words. In the American Standard Version three of these five passages are rendered *appoint* rather than *ordain*. The Revised Standard Version has used the word *establish* in one of the two remaining passages where the word *ordain* is used in the King James Version.

The situation is similar in the New Testament. The word *ordain* occurs twenty times in the King James Version of the New Testament. Eight of these occurrences have to do with ecclesiastical functionaries, but these eight are translations of five different Greek words. Two of these Greek words are rendered *appoint* by the King James translators in other places. In the case of seven of the above-named eight passages, the words in question have been rendered *appoint* by both the American Standard Version and the Revised Standard Version; in the case of the eighth of these passages, the word in question is translated with *become* in both versions.

It seems clear, therefore, that the word *ordain* in the King James Version does not translate either a single term or a group of terms which convey precisely what we today commonly understand by ordination. Rather, the word *ordain* in the King James seems to be a translation for words which mean to "appoint" or "to put in charge."



In order to see whether we find in the New Testament anything comparable to our practice of ordination, let us go on to examine a number of New Testament words which are used to describe the setting aside of people for specific ecclesiastical tasks:

1) *Titheemi* (put, place, set; make someone something, put in charge, appoint). In the New Testament the word is used to describe the following appointments:

a) Paul's appointment as apostle, as a preacher and teacher of the Gentiles: I Timothy 1:12, 2:7; II Timothy 1:11. I Timothy 1:12 specifically states that the appointment was by "Christ Jesus our Lord." From Paul's statement in Galatians 1:1 ("an apostle not from men, neither through man, but through Jesus Christ"), we may conclude that neither the church nor other men were involved in this appointment.

b) The appointment of the Ephesian elders as guardians or bishops over the flock (Acts 20:28). This was an appointment by the Holy Spirit. There appears to be no reason, however, for excluding some activity by the members of the church or by an apostle from this appointment, particularly in view of such passages as Acts 14:23 and Titus 1:5.

c) The appointment of believers to a variety of spiritual ministries (I Corinthians 12:28, "God hath set some in the church . . ."). What is here described is divine appointment to a wide range of functions. Some of these functions fit our common concept of *office*: apostles, prophets, teachers. But other functions mentioned here do not easily fit into our idea of *office*, and do not seem to be referring to *office* at all: miracles, gifts of healings, helps, governments, kinds of tongues. A careful perusal of this passage, in the context of I Corinthians 12-14, raises the question of whether the possession of certain spiritual gifts is not in itself something of a divine appointment to exercise these gifts.

2) *Kathisteemi* (primary meaning: to set down, to put in place; additional meaning; to set in an elevated position, to put in charge, to appoint). The word is used in the New Testament to describe a master's appointment of a servant to be in charge of his household, or a ruler's appointment of certain men to be in charge of various governmental functions. The book of Hebrews uses the word to indicate that under the law certain men were appointed as high priests (7:28), and to describe the tasks they were appointed to fulfill (5:1, 8:3). Two New Testament passages use the word to describe appointments within the Christian fellowship:

a) Acts 6:3. The twelve apostles propose that the congregation in Jerusalem pick out seven men to serve tables, "whom we may appoint to this duty." The entire congregation is active in selecting the seven, but it is the twelve apostles who finally authorize the seven to perform their tasks. In this connection we read about a ceremony involving the laying on of hands (6:6)—probably the hands of the members of the congregation, though it is possible to understand the passage as referring to the hands of the twelve apostles.

b) Titus 1:5. Titus is here instructed by Paul to appoint elders in every Cretan town. Nothing is said here about the way in which these elders are to be designated, about the possible role of the Christian fellowship in these appointments, or about the question of whether these appointments are to be accompanied by ceremonies.

3) *Cheiretoneoo* (literally, to show hands; thus, to choose or elect by raising hands. The word, however, does not invariably indicate a popular election, for both Philo and Josephus use it to describe God's appointment of a king. Hence the word can be used where nothing more than simple appointment by some authority is meant.) Two New Testament passages use the word:

a) II Corinthians 8:19. Here the word is used to describe the choosing by the churches of a representative to accompany Paul on the journey during which he is taking a collection for the poor in Jerusalem. Here the word unquestionably suggests the idea of a popular election. (It may be noted that in the writings of Ignatius and Polycarp the same word appears when the churches are said to be choosing envoys for bringing greetings to other churches. And in *Didachee* 15:1 the churches are instructed as follows: "Appoint therefore for yourselves bishops and deacons"; here also the word *cheiretoneoo* is used for *appoint*.)

b) Acts 14:23. Here Paul and Barnabas are said to have appointed elders in the churches of Lycaonia and Pisidia during their first missionary journey. It is not warranted, however, to infer from the use of the word *cheiretoneoo* in this passage that there must have been some kind of congregational participation in these appointments.

4) *Ekleptomai* (to choose). This word is often used to indicate the selection of certain people for a position, function, or role in the church. The word is used to describe the choosing of the twelve to be apostles (e.g., Luke 6:13; John 6:70; Acts 1:2, 24). It is also used to describe Peter's conviction that God chose him from among others to bring the gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 15:7). When Luke describes the choosing of envoys to go with Paul and Barnabas to bring the decisions of the Jerusalem Conference to Antioch, he uses *eklegomai* (Acts 15:22, 25). *Ekleptomai* is also used in Acts 6:5, to describe the choosing by the Jerusalem congregation of the seven men who were to serve tables.

Summing up what we have learned so far, we have seen that the New Testament uses several words to express the idea of "appointing," "putting in charge," "selecting for a certain task." The way in which these words are used, however, does not indicate whether the congregations and churches described in the New Testament had anything comparable to our ceremony of ordination. We do read, to be sure, of a laying on of hands in connection with the appointment of the seven in Acts 6, but we have no precise details about this ceremony, and nowhere in the New Testament are we told that whenever people were appointed for a certain task in the church there always had to be such a ceremony.

## 2. Special ceremonies accompanying appointments

To carry the investigation further, however, we must not overlook the fact that some appointments reported in Scripture were accompanied by

special ceremonies and symbolic acts. We refer here particularly to two kinds of ceremonies: anointing and the laying on of hands. Let us now see whether we may legitimately draw conclusions about ordination procedures from passages in which these ceremonies are described.

a. Anointing

In Old Testament times persons and things were anointed with oil and thereby set aside for exclusive service to the Lord. The importance of this solemn act of anointing is underscored by the warning that it was a grave offense to use holy anointing oil for common purposes (Exodus 30:31-33). Anointing was considered indispensable for the performance of certain tasks. One was not to officiate as a priest unless he had been anointed to that office. Moreover, one was anointed for a specific task and not for any and all tasks; Saul and Uzziah, who had been anointed to the kingly office, sinned grievously when they assumed priestly functions.

It is important to observe that in the Old Testament the impression is left that the anointing conferred something upon the anointed which he did not have before. The priests received the priesthood with its concomitant duties, rights, and privileges (Leviticus 7:36; Numbers 18:8). When kings were anointed, the Spirit of the Lord "came mightily" upon them (I Samuel 10:6, 10; 16:13). Only once do we read of a command to anoint a prophet (I Kings 19:16). The anointing of a king in Israel signified that the anointed one had been sovereignly chosen by the Lord, though the approbation of the people was not missing (II Samuel 2:4). It is also clear from the Old Testament that while the anointed king was untouchable (I Samuel 24:6), he was not sovereign in a dictatorial sense. Israel's king was to be a servant representing the Lord; he was not to act as an autonomous suzerain.

The most common word for anointing in the Old Testament is *mashach*, from which the word *Messiah* has been derived. Sometimes, however, the word *mashach* is used in a non-literal sense. For example, in Psalm 105:15 (cf. also I Chronicles 16:22) the patriarchs are called "anointed ones." The word *anointed* as used in Isaiah 61:1 must also be understood in a figurative way, since we do not read of a literal anointing with oil of either the prophet Isaiah or of the Messiah to whom the prophecy points. This non-literal use of the word strongly suggests that in the minds of the ancient writers the reality symbolized by the act of anointing was far more important than the symbol itself.

The Scriptural data with respect to anointing have been interpreted and applied in two different ways within the Christian community. a) One group of Christians sees in this material the basis for a setting aside of their clergy by an act of anointing which invests them with powers and qualifications not granted to others (see *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1967, VII, 82ff.). b) Another group of Christians finds the Old Testament rite of anointing in connection with appointment to office to be pointing specifically to Jesus Christ. This group of Christians observes that in the New Testament only Christ is referred to as the Anointed One. Nowhere do we read in the New Testament that apostles, evangelists, elders, deacons, or others were anointed for their specific

“offices.” On the contrary, all believers are said to have been anointed (I John 2:20, 27; also II Corinthians 1:21, which should probably be understood as referring to a general anointing of believers rather than as an anointing of apostles only). For this general anointing of believers the Old Testament paved the way. The close association between anointing and the reception of the Holy Spirit is seen repeatedly in the Old Testament (I Samuel 10:1, 9; 16:13; Isaiah 61:1; Zechariah 4:1-14, esp. v. 6). The Old Testament indicates that in the last days there will be an outpouring of the Spirit on all flesh (Joel 2:28ff., Acts 2:16ff.). It is also said that in the latter time consecration to the Lord will be most comprehensive—even to the bells on the horses (Zechariah 14:20).

We opt for the second of these two interpretations of the biblical material on anointing. As far as specific office is concerned, Jesus Christ is now *The Anointed One*, *The Messiah*, *The Christ*—our chief Prophet, our only Holy Priest, and our eternal King (Heidelberg Catechism, Q. 31). All believers are now anointed by the Holy Spirit who has been given to them (Acts 2:38, 10:47; Romans 8:9, 11; I Corinthians 12:13; I John 2:20). The New Testament, however, does not instruct the church to anoint those who have been anointed to special tasks or “office” within the Christian community.

#### b. The Laying on of Hands

##### 1) In the Old Testament

“The laying on of hands” is a technical expression in the religious terminology of the Old Testament. Three Hebrew words are used to describe the laying or placing of hands upon someone or something: *sim*, *shith*, and *samak*. The last word, *samak*, is the most important word for our purpose, since it is used of appointment to office.

The words *sim* and *shith* are generally used to denote the transmission of a blessing, or at least the wish to transmit a blessing. For example, Jacob lays his hands upon the sons of Joseph as he blesses them (Genesis 48:14).

The word *samak* is frequently used to describe the action of the worshiper who lays his hands on the sacrificial animal at the door of the tent of meeting (e.g., Exodus 29:10; Leviticus 1:4, 4:4). The laying on of hands in this type of ceremony suggests that the worshiper is thus designating the animal as his representative or substitute. In some instances, particularly in the “scapegoat” ceremony on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:21), the laying on of hands stands for the transfer of sin to the animal.

The use of *samak* in Numbers 8:10 must be noted. The Lord here commands Moses to separate the Levites from the rest of the Israelites, so that the Levites may “attend Aaron and his sons” (v. 13). The people of Israel are now told to “lay their hands upon the Levites” (v. 10). In verses 11 and 16 it is pointed out that the Levites are thus offered to the Lord instead of the first-born among the Israelites. The Levites thus represent all Israel, as the first-born would normally represent the family. In this passage, therefore, the laying on of hands as depicted by the word *samak* obviously involves representation and substitution.

The use of the word *samak* in Numbers 27:15-23 to describe the appointment of Joshua as Moses' successor is particularly instructive. It is clear that Moses publicly laid his hands on Joshua so that all Israel might recognize the latter as Moses' rightful successor. It is equally clear, however, that Joshua is chosen because he has already been endowed with the Spirit (v. 18). Since God commands Moses to invest Joshua with some of his authority (v. 20), it would appear that in some way Joshua will represent Moses while the latter is still alive.

[Note: Deuteronomy 34:9 informs us that Joshua was "full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands upon him." One may indeed raise the question of whether the word *ruach* here is intended to designate the Holy Spirit; neither the ASV nor the RSV capitalize the word *spirit* in this passage. The RSV, in fact, also spells *spirit* with a small s in Numbers 27:18. In any event, we do not need to assume that Moses' laying on of hands was the ceremonial means whereby the Spirit (or spirit) of wisdom was bestowed upon him, since according to Numbers 27:18 Joshua was chosen to be Moses' successor because he had already been endowed with the Spirit. It is interesting to note that Deuteronomy 34:9 speaks of the "spirit of wisdom," implying that Joshua had the gift of practical wisdom. This is the kind of wisdom which comes from learning and experience. We may assume that Joshua had gained a great deal of this type of practical wisdom since Moses had laid his hands upon him.]

Summing up our study of the Old Testament words used to describe this ceremony, particularly the word *samak*, we conclude that the laying on of hands in Old Testament times was usually a public rite. It was to designate a representative, a substitute, or a successor.

We go on now to look at New Testament instances of the laying on of hands. We find that in the New Testament the ceremony of the laying on of hands is used in a way analogous to the Old Testament ceremony in the *samak* passages: namely, as designating representation, substitution, or succession.

## 2) In the Book of Acts

According to Acts 6:1-6 seven men were set aside for special duties in the Jerusalem church. Verse 5 tells us that the church chose these seven men. Then verse 6 goes on to say, "These they [the multitude] set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands upon them." The way the passage reads in the original makes it appear that the entire congregation did the laying on of hands, though there are interpreters who hold that only the apostles did the laying on of hands. We shall not try to settle this question. It is significant to note, however, that the laying on of hands did not communicate to the seven some gift not previously possessed, for these men had been chosen by the congregation on the basis of their being "of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom" (v. 3). The laying on of hands in this instance was clearly a public ceremony by which these men were appointed to carry out certain duties and functions which had been delegated to them.

In Acts 13:3 we read about another laying on of hands. At Antioch the Holy Spirit commanded that Paul and Barnabas were to be set apart

for a special work to which he, the Spirit, had called them. "Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off" (v. 3). Here it would appear that it was the prophets and teachers that did the laying on of hands, though some think that the laying on of hands was done by the entire congregation. This ceremony does not seem to be an ordination to office, for Paul and Barnabas were already among the prophets and teachers at Antioch (v. 1). Rather, Paul and Barnabas were being commissioned at this time to carry out a particular task or to go forth on a particular assignment. Through the laying on of hands the other prophets and teachers were sending forth Paul and Barnabas as an extension of themselves. As a matter of fact, in this instance Paul and Barnabas represented the entire congregation at Antioch. This ceremony reminds us of the way the Israelites laid their hands on the Levites according to Numbers 8:10, so that the Levites would represent all Israel when they attended Aaron and his sons. The passage in Acts 13, therefore, is an "ordination" in the sense of an appointment to represent one's fellow Christians, and to perform certain duties in their behalf.

### 3) In the Pastoral Epistles

In the Pastoral Epistles we find three passages which refer to a laying on of hands in connection with a kind of ordination. These passages read as follows in the American Standard Version:

I Timothy 4:14, "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery."

II Timothy 1:16, "For which cause I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee through the laying on of my hands."

I Timothy 5:22, "Lay hands hastily on no man. . . ."

The first two passages speak of Timothy's having received the laying on of hands. A problem immediately arises: who laid hands on Timothy? Was it the presbytery (I Timothy 4:14) or was it Paul (II Timothy 1:6)? Did Paul perhaps join the presbytery so that both the presbytery and Paul laid hands on Timothy? Or do these two passages describe two distinct occasions? These two passages have led to a host of proposals, interpretations, and emphases. Let us examine three different ways of interpreting this material:

#### a) Interpretation One: Paul Ordained Timothy

This interpretation must obviously offer some explanation for I Timothy 4:14, where our translations tell us that the presbytery or the elders laid their hands on Timothy. The following explanation has been advanced by a number of interpreters: the I Timothy 4:14 passage is not describing a laying on of hands *by the presbytery*, but rather of a laying on of hands *unto eldership*. Calvin already saw this as a possibility:

"They who think that *presbytery* is here used as a collective noun, for 'the college of presbyters or elders,' are, I think, correct in their opinion; although, after weighing the whole matter, I acknowledge that a different meaning is not inapplicable, that is, that *presbytery* or *eldership* is the name of an office. . . . The meaning is that Timothy—having been called to the ministry by the voice of the prophets, and having afterwards

been solemnly ordained—was at the same time endued with the grace of the Holy Spirit for the discharge of his office” (Commentary *sub loco*; cf. also *Inst.* IV, iii, 16).

This interpretation has recently been revived and given considerable attention by such scholars as E. Lohse, D. Baube, and J. Jeremias. In its more recent form this interpretation of the verse finds Paul using a Greek translation of the technical Jewish expression for rabbinic ordination: *semikhath zeqenim*: “the laying on of hands on persons in order to make elders or rabbis of them.” On this interpretation I Timothy 4:14 refers to the ordination of Timothy by Paul—an ordination in which Paul invested Timothy with apostolic authority, analogous to the way in which Moses invested Joshua with authority. Timothy, on the other hand, is not to be hasty in ordaining others (I Timothy 5:22)—counsel consistent with the Jewish practice of not ordaining a man a rabbi until after his fortieth birthday. Perhaps Timothy himself was less than forty years of age—a fact which might explain Paul’s concern about Timothy’s youth (I Timothy 4:12). The above-mentioned interpretation of I Timothy 4:14, needless to say, can build a strong case for a concept of the ministry as dependent on apostolic succession.

Not all interpreters, however, have been persuaded that this way of interpreting I Timothy 4:14 is satisfactory. Two objections have been raised: (1) There is no evidence that a standard form for rabbinic ordination existed as early as New Testament times. This being the case, the phrase *semikhath zeqenim* would not have been common phraseology for the ordaining of rabbis at the time when the New Testament was written (cf. A. Ehrhardt, “Jewish and Christian Ordination,” *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, V [1954], 125-138). (2) I Timothy 4:14 is parallel to II Timothy 1:6 in grammatical construction. In both passages the phrase “the laying on of hands” is followed by the genitive case. In II Timothy 1:6 the genitive clearly expresses whose hands were laid on Timothy: *epitheseoos toon cheiroon mou*, “the laying on of my [Paul’s] hands.” In Acts 8:18 we find a similar construction: *epitheseoos toon cheiroon toon apostoloon*, “the laying on of the hands of the apostles.” These parallel passages suggest that the most natural reading of the genitive in I Timothy 4:14 is that it expresses whose hands were laid on Timothy: *epitheseoos toon cheiroon tou presbyteriou*, “the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.” In fact, if Paul intended to tell us that the presbytery had laid their hands on Timothy, the construction found in I Timothy 4:14 would have been the most natural way of saying it. We therefore do not feel inclined to adopt the above method of interpreting I Timothy 4:14.

#### b) Interpretation Two: The Presbytery Ordained Timothy

This interpretation of the three passages quoted above denies that Paul was involved at all in Timothy’s ordination. This interpretation sees the laying on of Paul’s hands mentioned in II Timothy 1:6 not as a reference to ordination, but as a reference to Timothy’s reception of the Holy Spirit at the time of his baptism. Several New Testament passages mention the laying on of hands in connection with baptism and the reception of the Holy Spirit: Acts 8:12, 15-17; 9:17-18; 19:1-6 (and most likely

Hebrews 6:2). This interpretation is at the opposite extreme from the concept of apostolic succession. Not the Apostle Paul but the presbytery ordained Timothy. Ordination by the presbytery then symbolizes the fact that the person so ordained represents the presbytery. While acknowledging the possibility of reading II Timothy 1:6 as referring to Timothy's baptism, your committee considers this interpretation unnatural and artificial, since baptism is not mentioned in this passage. We are therefore not inclined to follow this interpretation.

c) Interpretation Three: Both Paul and the Presbytery Participated in Timothy's Ordination

We must first note two different emphases among those who hold to this third interpretation: (1) Some hold that it is chiefly Paul who ordains to the office of minister or bishop; however, since the presbytery has some powers of authorization at the local level, it is appropriate that the ordination of Timothy should be a corporate act of both apostle and presbytery. Persons holding to this emphasis find that ordination is to be understood as rooting basically in the apostolic office. Thus, to have an ordination someone already holding office must pass on the office to the person being ordained. This emphasis can go along with an "apostolic succession" concept of the ministry, built on the model of the Moses-Joshua laying on of hands. (2) Others hold that it is chiefly the presbytery which ordains—but, of course, Paul joined with the presbytery in laying on his hands, since he too was an elder. This emphasis understands ordination as meaning that the presbytery appoints certain persons to be charged with special tasks and functions in the name of the presbytery as a whole. In this understanding of ordination, the laying on of hands follows the Israelite-Levite model (the Levites having been set aside to function for the entire body of Israelites).

How can we explain why Paul in writing to Timothy would at one time refer to Timothy's ordination as the *presbytery's* laying on of hands, whereas at another time he would refer to it as *his* laying on of hands? Can this difference not best be accounted for in terms of the differences between I and II Timothy? I Timothy deals extensively with problems of church administration and organization. In such a setting it would be natural to refer to Timothy's ordination in terms of the laying on of the hands of the elders—the ruling body of the congregation. II Timothy, on the other hand, is a much more personal letter than I Timothy. II Timothy is a kind of spiritual last will and testament, in which a veteran missionary turns over his work and his concern for the churches he has founded to his younger colleague. In such a setting it would be natural to refer to the gifts which Timothy must continue to rekindle as gifts which had come to him through Paul's instrumentality. Such intimacies are almost to be expected in a letter of this sort.

We do not have to choose, therefore, between "the presbytery's hands" and "Paul's hands." Neither statement needs to exclude the possibility of the other statement's being true. But when it comes to the question of which one of these two statements describes the essence of the ceremony, it would seem that preference ought to be given to the statement in the church administration context (the laying on of the hands of the



presbytery, I Timothy 4:14), rather than to the statement found in the intensely personal second letter (the laying on of Paul's hands, II Timothy 1:6).

Assuming, then, that the presbytery was involved in Timothy's ordination, one can further ask which presbytery it was. Here again we find opinion divided between alternatives: (a) the presbytery in Lystra at the place where Timothy was converted, baptized, and adopted by Paul as his assistant. If Timothy's ordination took place here, it would seem to be an ordination into a kind of general ministry as an apostolic assistant. (b) The presbytery in Ephesus, where Timothy was now ministering. If this were the case, Timothy's ordination would have been of local and temporary significance. It would have been an *ad hoc* laying on of hands which could later be repeated when he was given a new assignment, rather than a once-for-all ordination into an office which would be for life. Interestingly enough, two contemporary Reformed scholars take different positions here: W. Hendriksen opts for the Lystra "consistory" (Commentary on I Timothy 4:14), whereas H. N. Ridderbos votes for the Ephesian "consistory" (Commentary on I Timothy 4:14). Thus the varieties of interpretation as regards the laying on of hands in the Pastoral Epistles continue to multiply. It is difficult to find one's way in this maze of alternative possibilities.

The question of the meaning of ordination in the Pastoral Epistles, therefore, reduces itself to the question of how one understands I Timothy 4:14. Those who adopt Interpretation One interpret the verse as teaching that no presbytery laid hands on Timothy. Your committee has rejected this interpretation, as well as Interpretation Two (only the presbytery ordained Timothy) for the reasons given above. We therefore opt for Interpretation Three: both Paul and the presbytery participated in Timothy's ordination. But now, how must we explain the meaning of the presbytery's participation in this ordination? The fact that the presbytery was involved indicates that Timothy's office was not primarily related to and derived from the Apostle Paul himself. The involvement of the elders suggests that Timothy's office was basically related to and derived from the work of the elders. Elders ordained Timothy to do *for them* that which was their responsibility and prerogative. The presbytery's involvement therefore points to the representative character of Timothy's ordination. The laying on of hands by the elders did not convey some status or prerogative not possessed by elders, but was an appointment by the elders asking Timothy to carry out certain duties ordinarily performed by elders. I Timothy 5:17, in fact, indicates that the preaching and teaching Timothy was appointed to engage in was precisely the work of elders: "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and in teaching" (ASV). Those described in the latter half of this verse are obviously elders who have been given specific assignments.

We may at this point make an observation about the distinction between clergy and laity which is commonly made in the church today. According to this distinction, ministers belong to the clergy and elders to the laity. If, now, the elders were meaningfully involved in Timothy's

ordination, and if the purpose of the ordination was to ask Timothy to carry out certain duties ordinarily performed by elders, as we believe, then any distinction between clergy and laity which gives ministers some kind of elevated status not possessed by elders is unscriptural and false.

Before we leave the subject of biblical teaching on ordination we must look at one more matter. What about the "gift" Timothy is said to have received in connection with his ordination? We find references to this gift both in I Timothy 4:14 and in II Timothy 1:6. Here again, however, we find differences between these two passages. In I Timothy 4:14 the gift is said to have been given *with* the laying on of hands, whereas in II Timothy 1:6 it is said to have come *through* the laying on of hands.

I Timothy 4:14 says, "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by (*dia*) prophecy, with (*meta*) the laying on of the hands of the presbytery" (ASV). Must we understand the prophecy or prophetic utterance as having been simultaneous with the laying on of hands? I Timothy 1:18 speaks of prophetic utterances which pointed to Timothy, or "led the way" to him (ASV). In the light of this statement, it seems preferable to think of the prophetic utterances which pointed to Timothy as one who was well equipped for the Lord's service as having preceded the laying on of hands. On the basis of this interpretation, the laying on of hands did not so much confer the gift Timothy obviously had as certify its presence. Further, we may believe that in response to the prayers of the assembled Christian community, Timothy's gift was increased, expanded, and intensified. In view of the fact that the Holy Spirit confers all gifts (I Corinthians 12:4, 11), the laying on of hands must not be understood as a magical kind of action which in some mysterious way communicates a spiritual gift, but rather as a gesture which certifies the presence of such a gift. The gift had been bestowed by God; the prophetic utterances had led both Timothy and the congregation to recognize the presence of the gift; the laying on of hands was the public certification of this invisible gift. What was Timothy's gift? It appears to have been his ability to teach, exhort, interpret Scripture, and refute objectors. The gift must not be understood as some indelible character conveyed to Timothy by the imposition of hands, since Timothy is told that he must use and cultivate his gift. He must not neglect it (I Timothy 4:14), and must be diligent in rekindling it or stirring it up (II Timothy 1:6).

II Timothy 1:6, however, brings us face to face with a problem. It reads, "For which cause I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee through (*dia*) the laying on of my hands" (ASV). One could interpret this passage as teaching that Paul was communicating some of his apostolic status to Timothy; in this way the passage would serve as proof for apostolic succession. This interpretation would understand ordination as conferring upon a person some indelible character, authority, or power. As a matter of fact, this passage has often been appealed to by those who believe in the apostolic succession of bishops. This interpretation of II Timothy 1:6 would be consistent with Interpretation One of I Timothy 4:14 (see above). Your committee, however, has rejected Interpretation One as well as Interpretation Two,

which sees II Timothy 1:6 simply as an allusion to Timothy's baptism. We propose, therefore, that I Timothy 4:14 and II Timothy 1:6 are somehow to be harmonized, or must at least be held in tension. On this basis, we would understand that whatever took place through the laying on of hands was already in some sense evident and operative prior to the laying on of hands. We interpret the laying on of hands as a public acknowledgement of the fact that the Holy Spirit has given a certain gift to Timothy. We also understand the laying on of hands to mean that the elders are now appointing Timothy to exercise his gift in their behalf. Such an appointment or commissioning may also be used by the Holy Spirit as a means by which he increases, expands, and intensifies the gift or gifts he has given.

### 3. Summary

In drawing together this study of the meaning of ordination as taught in Scripture, we make the following observations: word studies have not been helpful. There are no words in the Hebrew Old Testament or in the Greek New Testament that convey the kinds of conceptions which the church later associated with "ordination." The biblical words studied conveyed no meaning beyond that of appointing, putting in charge, or selecting for some duty or function.

Two ceremonies are described in the Bible, however, which might suggest some kind of "ordination" content. The one is anointing, an Old Testament practice which found its fulfillment in Christ, God's Anointed One, and in the anointing of all believers with the Holy Spirit. The New Testament, however, knows of no anointing ceremony in connection with church appointments or offices. The other ceremony is that of the laying on of hands. In Old Testament times this ceremony publicly designated a person as the representative, substitute, or successor of someone. The New Testament usage of this ceremony apparently carried the same significance. No rule or pattern can be detected as far as the usage of this ceremony is concerned. There is no evidence that this ceremony was used for all appointments, or even that it was a regular part of certain kinds of appointments.

Whenever the New Testament does speak of a laying on of hands in connection with an appointment, the context does not suggest that some new gift was being received, or that the ceremony communicated to the recipient a new status or a new quality of life. In other words, the ceremony of the laying on of hands did not produce a "clergy" which had gifts, status, or a quality of life differing from those found in "lay" people. Neither does the Bible give us any warrant for using this ceremony only for people being set aside for the work of teaching and preaching. In fact, to allow only pastors to lay hands on people in a ceremony of this sort is a departure from biblical example, since it was elders who laid their hands on Timothy.

The ceremony of the laying on of hands symbolizes the appointment of a person as the representative of the group which has laid hands on him. After such a ceremony the person appointed acts in behalf of this group and on the authority of the group. The group has empowered him

to use in their name certain divinely bestowed gifts which they recognized in him.

There is no indication in Scripture that an authorization or appointment symbolized and confirmed by the laying on of hands was necessarily to be for the lifetime of the person appointed. The appointment seems to have been only for the special task assigned, according to the terms set at the time of the appointment.

In the laying on of hands, therefore, we have a ceremony which the New Testament church sometimes used for publicly confirming its call and appointment of certain people to special ministries. More advanced "ordination" than this your committee has not been able to find in the New Testament.

## B. The Nature of Ecclesiastical Office

### 1. Word Study on "office"

Little can be gleaned from an examination of the words for *office* in the Old Testament. In fact, it may safely be said that the writers of the Old Testament had no word for office as we understand it. On this rather fine point the King James Version, which has had a considerable influence on the English-speaking church, is quite misleading. Although we encounter the word *office* about thirty times in the King James Version of the Old Testament, in only ten cases is it the translation of a Hebrew word. In the other twenty cases there is no Hebrew word for office, but the King James translators rendered the verb *kahan* (act as priest) as follows: "minister in the priest's office."

It is also true that the term *office* is a much more familiar ecclesiastical term for us today than it was for the New Testament writers. In fact, the New Testament writers seemed purposely to avoid available Greek words which would connote what is commonly understood as *office*. These writers, for example, did not use such words as *archee* (office in the sense of position of dignity) to designate ecclesiastical positions.

As a general term for what we call *office* (namely, a certain type of the sense of precedence, ruling, being at the head) or *timee* (office in service within the church), the word *diakonia* (service) is commonly used by the writers of the New Testament. This word never connotes exalted status or dignity. In view of the many terms for *office* available in Greek, the choice of this word by the New Testament writers tells us something significant about the way we are to understand the concept of office. The word *diakonia* suggests a position of service to God and to fellowmen, rather than a position carrying with it rights and powers which elevate one above his fellows.

The word *office* in the King James Version of the New Testament is the unfortunate English translation of various Greek words which do not have the same meaning as the English word *office* does today. For example, the King James Version renders both *diakonia* in Romans 11:13 and *praxis* in Romans 12:4 as *office*, whereas the Revised Standard Version translates these terms by *ministry* and *function*, respectively. The Greek word *hierateuoo*, rendered "serve as priest" in the RSV, is translated "execute the priest's office" in the King James.

It can therefore be seen that our English translations of the Bible, particularly the King James, have made the term *office* a much more familiar ecclesiastical term for us today than it was in biblical times. Really to know, therefore, what the Bible says about what we call *office*, we must study the biblical material in the original languages.

## 2. Officers and Other Functionaries in the Bible

### a. In the Old Testament

#### 1) The Priests

Aaron and his sons were the first priests to be officially appointed in Israel (Exodus 28). Though in Exodus 19:6 it is said of the entire nation, "You shall be to me a kingdom of priests," there was a separate group of functionaries in Israel called priests. Though Exodus 19:22 and 24 suggest that Israel must have had pre-Aaronic priests, these are never referred to again.

It is important to note that Aaron and his sons were not appointed to be priests *over Israel*; they are to serve the Lord as priests (Exodus 28:1). The role of the priest is to mediate between God and man. As mediator he represents God, speaking for God to the people as he teaches the Law. As mediator, however, he also represents the people, speaking and acting for the people to God when he brings sacrifices. The priest as priest, therefore, was not over any man; he was to serve both God and man.

The task assigned to the priests was theirs and theirs alone. Anyone else who attempted to perform priestly duties did so at his peril (see I Samuel 13:8-13 and II Chronicles 26:18). The priest was to observe meticulously all the regulations for performing priestly duties which the Lord had given. Any priest who deviated from these regulations did so at his peril (see Leviticus 10:1-2).

Does all this mean that today, in the New Testament era, we must still preserve a carefully selected priestly caste who must meticulously carry out rigidly prescribed ceremonies? If Luther and Calvin were right in teaching the priesthood of all believers in the New Testament church, then to maintain a priestly caste within the family of God today is to turn back the clock of history. The Old Testament data concerning the priesthood must be understood as pointing forward to Christ—the Christ who is the last, and for us the only, high priest. The exclusivism with respect to the persons who were to serve as priests points to Christ as the exclusive high priest, whose is the only name whereby we must be saved. The specifically patterned function of the Old Testament priesthood underscores the fact that there is only one way by which God and man can be reconciled: by the atoning work of Christ. The proper New Testament response, therefore, is not to imitate the procedures outlined in the Old Testament, but rather to recognize the great difference which the coming of Christ and the outpouring of his Spirit have brought about. The New Testament knows of no class of priests other than the total number of those who constitute the church (cf. I Peter 2:9, "But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood").

## 2) The Kings

Whereas it is clear that the priests in early Israel did not rule, it is equally clear that the kings of Israel did rule. Several matters should be noted with respect to the appointment and function of Israel's kings:

First, we should note that monarchical government was instituted in Israel despite the Lord's warning (I Samuel 8:7ff.). The Lord had foretold that when unlimited power was vested in one man, oppression would be inevitable.

Secondly, although the approval of the people was not required before priests were anointed, kings were usually not anointed without such approval, since it was common for the governed to give their consent (cf. I Samuel 10:24, II Samuel 5:1ff., I Kings 1:39ff.). This provision was no doubt intended as a means of checking unbridled tyranny.

Thirdly, the kings mainly functioned in an area we would not consider ecclesiastical. This observation should keep us from drawing parallels too readily between the kingly office of the Old Testament and the office of elder in the New Testament church. We may, however, at least draw the following inference: If the Lord found it necessary to warn against a coercive exercise of authority on the part of Old Testament kings, how much more sensitive ought we not to be concerning coercive authority in the church today?

Finally, the picture of the ideal king which the Old Testament paints is still instructive for us today; the ideal king is an impartial judge (I Kings 3:28); he promotes righteousness (Isaiah 11:1-4; Jeremiah 33:15); he relieves the fatherless and widow (Psalm 146:9; Jeremiah 22:3). The true king is not a leech who drains his people dry, but one who builds his nation by serving his people. Isaiah sees the fulfillment of the ideal king in the Servant of the Lord who will serve God by being of service to men.

We conclude that the way in which Israel's kings are depicted reveals that there is an evil tendency in man to use authority for selfish ends. On the positive side, however, the Old Testament also depicts for us the ideal king. It thus points forward to Him who was to come, whose example we are now called to follow.

## 3) The Prophets

Only once do we read of the anointing of a prophet (I Kings 19:16), and even then it is not recorded that the anointing literally took place. It appears that no external ceremony of anointing was necessary for prophets. The prophet's validity was judged on the basis of his message, rather than on the basis of a properly executed ceremony by which his official status as a prophet had been publicly ratified.

The manner in which some of the prophets were chosen and prepared for their tasks was unique; we find no exact parallel to it in the history of the church after Christ, who is the culmination of all the prophets. This is not to deny that the church may draw inspiration from the prophets. But the manner in which these prophets were chosen and prepared for their task was *sui generis* (unique). Conclusions about the

proper calling and preparation of ministers in the church today must therefore not be drawn from biblical data about the calling of prophets.

*Conclusion:* Though it may seem anachronistic to speak of the prophets, priests, and kings of Israel as ecclesiastical officers, it is true that even during the Old Testament era the Lord provided his people with the necessary functionaries to aid in the nurturing, correction, and regulation of the life of the covenantal community. These functionaries were types of Christ, our great Prophet, Priest, and King; their ministry finds its fulfillment in him. The study of these Old Testament "officers," however, does not offer us a normative pattern for ecclesiastical office and ordination in the church today. The change in the structure of the New Testament church as compared with Old Testament Israel should keep us from drawing unwarranted conclusions about New Testament offices like those of pastor, elder, and deacon from biblical data about Old Testament functionaries like prophets, priests, and kings. The Scriptures do not permit us to posit the derivation of the New Testament offices from those of the Old Testament; nor do they permit us to see a complete and unqualified parallelism between Old Testament and New Testament offices.

#### b. In the New Testament

In the New Testament there is a variety of biblical materials. From the book of Acts we glean a perspective on what various members of the first-century church did and how their functions were viewed and labeled. Four passages in Paul's letters enumerate various gifts, ministries, and appointments. In the Gospels, the book of Acts, and the epistles one meets a number of individuals who function in various capacities. There are also passages in the pastoral epistles which speak specifically about the qualifications of bishops (also called elders) and deacons. From these materials we can reconstruct a picture of the situation in the New Testament church which should give some direction to our study of "the nature of ecclesiastical office and the meaning of ordination."

##### 1) The Book of Acts

Let us see first of all what kind of picture of the first-century church and its functionaries emerges from the book of Acts. From the beginning a differentiation was made between the apostles and the brethren. The twelve apostles had been chosen by the Lord and had been commissioned to be his witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the end of the earth (Acts 1:8). Since Judas had defected from the group Matthias was added to the eleven (1:22,26). Matthias, therefore, was appointed to a special ministry—that of being a witness, along with the other apostles, of the resurrection of Christ.

On the day of Pentecost, however, the gift of the Holy Spirit, together with the special signs which accompanied the bestowal of that gift, was given to all the believers present. Yet the distinction between apostles and brethren was not wiped out, for the Apostle Peter immediately took the lead; in response to his Pentecost sermon about 3,000 souls were added to the church (2:41). Peter and John now became the prominent apostles in the ministry in Jerusalem (Acts 3-5).

The preaching and teaching of the apostles was accompanied by great signs and wonders. A new division of labor arose in the Jerusalem church as seven men were chosen for the ministry of the daily distribution of food (6:1-6), thus leaving the apostles free to pursue the ministry of the Word and prayer. Yet we note that Stephen, one of the seven, also spoke with wisdom and the Spirit and did great wonders and signs (6:8, 7:1-53), and that Philip, also of the seven, proclaimed (*keerussein*) Christ in Samaria (8:5), did many signs (8:6), and even baptized (8:34-38, cf. 8:12). Philip, in fact, is later called an evangelist (21:8). It is also significant to note that those who were scattered abroad after the persecution of Stephen (that is, Christians other than the apostles, since the latter stayed in Jerusalem) went about preaching the word (*euangelizomenoi*, 8:4).

Acts 9 narrates the conversion of Saul. A disciple named Ananias laid his hands on Saul so that the latter might regain his sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit (9:17); at this time Saul was also baptized (9:18). He immediately began to preach in Damascus and Jerusalem (9:20, 29).

Peter's ministry now again becomes the center of attention (9:32-11:18). Again we read that Christians were scattered abroad because of persecution; these Christians, we are told, spoke the Word, mainly to the Jews, but some preached (*euangelizomenoi*) the Lord Jesus also to the Greeks (11:19-20). Since a number of people in Antioch had turned to the Lord, the Jerusalem church now sent Barnabas to that city (11:22). Barnabas went to Tarsus to find Saul, and brought him to Antioch; the two together worked in Antioch for about a year, teaching the people (11:26). It is significant to note that the church now had, in addition to apostles and the seven, prophets and teachers—a group which included Barnabas and Saul (Acts 13:1). The Jerusalem church apparently had prophets also (11:27).

Another group of functionaries in this early church were the elders; we meet them first in the Jerusalem church (11:30).

In Acts 13:1-3 we read about the commissioning of Barnabas and Saul as missionaries. The Holy Spirit directed the church at Antioch to separate these two men for a particular task, the task of bringing the gospel to Asia Minor. After prayer, fasting, and the laying on of hands, the church sent Barnabas and Saul on their first missionary journey. As Luke describes this journey, he calls both Barnabas and Saul (whose name has now been changed to Paul) apostles (14:14). We are also told that in the region of Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch of Pisidia Paul and Barnabas "appointed for them elders in every church" (14:21-23).

When the question of the relation between circumcision and salvation arose, Paul and Barnabas, now back in Syrian Antioch, decided to go to Jerusalem to consult with the apostles and elders about this problem (15:1-2). In the conference which followed, the apostles and elders had a predominant role (15:6, 22; 16:4); but the entire church played a part in arriving at the final decision (15:22; cf. vv. 4 and 12). Interestingly enough, the one who presided at this conference and took the lead in formulating the final decision was not one of the apostles but James, the brother of our Lord (15:13ff.). Judas and Silas, prophets from Je-



rusalem (15:32), were sent to Antioch to deliver the letter from the apostles and elders. While they were in Antioch, Judas and Silas engaged in the ministry of exhortation (15:32).

Paul and Barnabas now disagreed concerning their traveling companion on the next missionary journey (15:37-40); it is striking to note that, though Paul dominates the latter half of the book of Acts as the outstanding apostle to the Gentiles, Barnabas did not capitulate to Paul's authority when this dispute arose between them, but made his own decision, and separated from Paul.

At Lystra Timothy, a disciple who was well spoken of by the brethren (16:1, 2), joined Paul and Silas on the second missionary journey.

In Acts 18:24 Apollos appears on the scene as an itinerant preacher. Though he is described as an eloquent man who was well versed in the Scriptures (18:24), it is also reported that Priscilla and Aquila expounded to him the way of God more accurately (18:26).

We read again about elders in connection with the church at Ephesus. When Paul bade farewell to these elders, he told them to take heed to themselves and to all the flock in which the Holy Spirit had made them bishops (*episkopous*) (20:28).

It is interesting to note that Acts also speaks of female prophets: it is said that Philip had "four unmarried daughters who prophesied" (21:9).

From the book of Acts, therefore, we learn that there were a variety of ministries in the early church, that these ministries did not function in exactly the same way as comparable ministries do in the church today, that there were ministries in that church which are not commonly found in the church today, and that the early church felt free to adjust its ministry to others as the need of the time demanded.

## 2) Four specific passages in Paul's epistles.

There are four specific passages in Paul's epistles which enumerate various gifts, ministries, and appointments in the New Testament church. These are: Romans 12:6-8, I Corinthians 12:4-10, I Corinthians 12:28-30, and Ephesians 4:11. These four passages do not specifically answer the question concerning the nature of ecclesiastical office, but they do point out the variety of gifts and ministries given to the church for its edification and upbuilding. One of the problems we face in interpreting these passages is the simple fact that in the lists of the gifts and ministries there are some items which we have always associated with particular permanent offices in the church, whereas there are other items, undifferentiated as such in the lists, which we have considered to be temporary functions found only in the first-century church.

In Romans 12:6-8 Paul exhorts the members of the church at Rome not to think individualistically but communally. Believers are all members of one body—the body of Christ. As in the human body the members, though having various functions, all contribute to the harmonious working of the whole, so it is also in the church. Paul now proceeds to enumerate the variety of gifts given to the church. Both from the list itself and from the comparison which preceded it, it is obvious that gifts are given for functioning. The question might be asked whether this functioning is to be done in the church in an "official" or unofficial

capacity. This question, however, is not answered by the passage, since there is no differentiation between the gifts listed: prophecy, service (or ministry), teaching, exhorting, contributing, giving aid (or ruling), showing mercy. This list does not link these gifts or functions to any specific "offices" in the church. Prophecy, teaching, and exhorting, which we commonly associate with special offices in today's church, are not singled out in this list as having any superior position over against the other gifts or functions. The church is here described as a community in Christ which has a unified task; its members, therefore, must exercise their various gifts and functions for the mutual benefit of the entire body. This passage therefore does not give us a definition of the nature of ecclesiastical office in the present-day sense.

In I Corinthians 12 there are two significant sections: verses 4-10 and 28-30. In the first-named passage Paul speaks about the variety of gifts and workings which the Spirit gives for the common good of the body of Christ (verses 4-7.) These gifts are then described in terms of various functions: the utterance of wisdom, the utterance of knowledge, faith, gifts of healing, working of miracles, prophecy, ability to distinguish between spirits, various kinds of tongues, and the interpretation of tongues. This list gives no indication that some of these items belong to the "official" ministry of the church whereas others belong to the membership in general. On the contrary, Paul is describing what the body of believers at Corinth as a whole possesses for the common good of the church. This passage, therefore, does not substantially contribute to our present-day understanding of office and ordination, except to alert us to the fact that every member who possesses a gift must employ it for the good of the entire church. From this fact one might possibly conclude that the proper exercise of these gifts constitutes an "office" in the church.

In I Corinthians 12:28-31 Paul continues his discussion of the unity of the body of Christ. The intervening verses (11-27) stress the fact that each member of the body is important, and that some should not consider themselves more important than others. The discussion is concluded with a reiteration of the ministries in verses 28-31. In these verses a new element is introduced; other ministries are listed, and the emphasis seems to be on the fact that each member does not have the same gift, ministry, or function: "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments divers kinds of tongues" (ASV). The questions which follow include "Do all interpret?", suggesting that the list above should include interpreters of tongues. The first impression one receives is that Paul is here speaking about specific offices in the church, since 1) he introduces the passage with the acknowledgment that God has appointed men to these "positions," and 2) he begins the list with those ministries which we generally associate with the present-day understanding of office. What should make us hesitate to adopt this conclusion, however, is to note 1) that the appointment by God refers not only to apostles, prophets, and teachers, but also to workers of miracles, healers, helpers, administrators, and the like; and 2) that Paul does not specifically say that some ministries on this list are more "official" than others. It may

well be, in fact, that the "appointment" mentioned in verse 28 means nothing more than what is described in verse 11: "All these are inspired by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills."

What is clear in this passage is that not all the members of the church have the same gifts and therefore the same functions in the body. The individual members serve one another with the peculiar gifts the Lord has given them. All members, however, are exhorted earnestly to desire the higher gifts (verse 31). In chapter 13 the apostle counsels his readers to follow "a still more excellent way"—the way of love, apart from which all the gifts of the Spirit are useless. Every member of the church, therefore, must make love his aim, and earnestly desire spiritual gifts—especially prophecy, so that he may contribute to the mutual upbuilding, encouragement, and consolation of the church (14:1-4).

In the Ephesian letter Paul again stresses the unity of the body of Christ along with the diversity of gifts. "And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the equipment of the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ" (4:11-12). This list is shorter than those in Romans 12 or I Corinthians 12. This list includes two entries which seem to have been included from the other lists: evangelists and pastors; they might have been included in the other lists, however, under different names (for example, under the "exhorters" of Romans 12). On the other hand, this list excludes many of the gifts, ministries, or working found in the others lists: such as healers, workers of miracles, administrators, doers of mercy, tongue-speakers, interpreters of tongues. It seems best, therefore, not to think of any of these New Testament listings as constituting the entire "official" ministry of the church. Included in the Ephesian listing are, however, apostles (in the narrower sense of the twelve apostles or in a broader sense?), prophets (a specific class of "ministers" in the church, or members exercising a gift which all should strive for?), evangelists (in the sense that Philip and Timothy are called evangelists, or in the sense that all those who were scattered abroad after the persecution went about evangelizing?), and pastors and teachers (as a twofold exercise of certain gifts, or as two separate ministries?). However we interpret these terms, we should exercise extreme caution in deducing from Ephesians 4:11, or from any other listing of gifts and ministries in the New Testament, what the finalized structure of the official ministry of the New Testament church was. These passages were evidently not intended to give us an exhaustive description of a finalized order of offices in the church.

### 3) Various functionaries in the New Testament church

In the New Testament church there was obviously no fixed or limited number or order of functionaries such as we have in the church today. The following survey will indicate the variety of functionaries found in the early church:

a) *Disciples*. This term is applied first of all to the twelve whom Jesus appointed and whom he sent out to preach and to cast out demons (Matthew 10:1-4, Mark 3:14-19, Luke 6:14-16; cf. also Mark 6:7 and Luke

9:1). Eleven of these twelve received the commissioning task of discipling the nations, baptizing them and teaching them to observe what the Lord had commanded (Matthew 28:19-20). Another name for these twelve is apostles (Luke 6:14-16, 9:1, 10; Mark 6:30; Acts 1:2, 6: 2, 6). It should be noted that the term "disciples" is not restricted to the twelve. The term is also applied to the greater body of believers and followers of Jesus (Acts 6:1, 7; Luke 6:13, 19:37; John 4:1, John 6:60, 66f.), and it is used specifically of some individuals like Ananias (Acts 9:10ff.) and Mnason (Acts 21:16). "Disciples" in the broader sense obviously continued to be found in the New Testament church.

b) The *Seventy*: Luke records a ministry of seventy individuals whom Jesus appointed and sent out to heal the sick and to proclaim the gospel of the kingdom (Luke 10:1-20).

c) *Apostles*: this term denotes first of all the twelve disciples (Luke 6:13-16, 9:1, 10; Mark 6:30); after Jesus' resurrection, the term was applied to the eleven plus Matthias (Acts 1:2, 25f.). To these eleven (twelve) was given the task of preaching, baptizing, teaching (Matthew 28:19-20), and of witnessing to the person and work of Jesus, especially to his resurrection (Acts 1:8, Luke 24:48). The term "apostles," however, is not restricted to the twelve. This title was given to Barnabas (Acts 14:14; I Corinthians 9:5, 6), perhaps to Andronicus and Junias (Romans 16:7), and possibly to others (I Corinthians 15:5, 7), as well as to James the Lord's brother (Galatians 1:19) and to Paul (Romans 1:1).

d) The *Seven*: Acts 6 describes a group of seven individuals, "men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom," whom the twelve appointed to the duty of ministering to the Hellenistic widows in the daily distribution (common meals?). No specific name is given to these seven in Acts 6. It is later reported that two of these seven engaged in "preaching" (Acts 6:8-14; 8:15, 12), and that at least one of them baptized (Acts 8:38).

e) *Prophets*: In the New Testament we read of the gift of prophecy (Romans 12:6; I Corinthians 12:10, 28; I Corinthians 14:1ff.) for which each member of the Christian community should strive (I Corinthians 14:1, 39), the function of which is to edify, encourage, and console the church (I Corinthians 14:3). The New Testament, however, also speaks of specific prophets: Agabus (Acts 11:27, 21:10); Barnabas, Symeon, Lucius, Manaen, and Saul (called prophets and teachers in Acts 13:1); Judas and Silas (Acts 15:22, 32); and the daughters of Philip (Acts 21:9). Even the women in the congregations apparently engaged in this ministry (I Corinthians 11:5).

f) *Evangelists*: This word occurs three times in the New Testament. Philip, one of the seven, is called an evangelist (Acts 21:8), presumably because he preached (*keerussein*, Acts 8:5; and *euangelizein*, Acts 8:12, 35, 40) the gospel in Samaria and elsewhere. Philip also baptized (Acts 8:38). In Ephesians 4:11 evangelists are listed as included in the gifts the ascended Lord has given to the church. In II Timothy 4:5 Timothy is instructed to "do the work of an evangelist, fulfil your ministry" (cf. Philippians 2:22, I Thessalonians 3:2).

g) *Teachers*: The third group of functionaries listed in I Corinthians 12:28 (cf. Romans 12:7, I Corinthians 12:8) are the teachers. In Ephesians 4:11 the term is combined with "pastors," and in other instances we read of "prophets and teachers" (Acts 13:1). In Mark 6:30 the apostles are said to have told Jesus all they had done and taught, and in Matthew 28:20 Jesus commanded his disciples to teach people to observe all that he had commanded them. Paul is often said to have engaged in teaching in the book of Acts (15:35, 18:11, 20:20, 28:31). Paul occasionally refers to what people were taught by him (II Thessalonians 2:15, Colossians 2:7, Ephesians 4:21), and he exhorts Timothy to engage in the work of teaching (I Timothy 4:11, 6:2). According to II Timothy 2:2 teaching is to be done by those who have the necessary personal qualifications. According to I Timothy 2:12 women are forbidden to teach (cf. I Corinthians 14:34f.); according to Titus 2:3, however, the older women are to teach what is good, and so train young women in right conduct.

h) *Elders and Bishops*: We first read of elders (*presbuteros*) in Jerusalem (Acts 11:30); they are mentioned also in one of the earliest epistles (James 5:14). In Acts 14:23 we are informed that Paul and Barnabas "appointed elders . . . in every church" in the area of Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch (14:21). The elders take their places alongside the apostles in Acts 15 (see verses 2, 6, 22, 23). Paul sent for the elders of the church in Ephesus (20:17), and charged them to take heed to themselves and to the flock in which the Holy Spirit had made them guardians (or "bishops," *episkopous*) "to feed the church of the Lord" (20:28). At this point men who have the function of guardian seem to have the title of elder.

The term "elder" is found occasionally in the epistles. We have already noted the reference in James. Peter includes an exhortation to the elders among the "exiles of the Dispersion" to whom he is writing, calling himself a "fellow elder" (I Peter 5:1). In only one of Paul's ecclesiastical letters is there any specific reference to these functionaries. Paul begins his letter to the Philippian church with the words, "To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the bishops (*episkopois*) and deacons (*diakonois*)" (Phil. 1:1).

In the pastoral letters, however, the situation is somewhat different. Paul's instruction to Timothy includes more specific material about "officebearers" than does any other place of New Testament writing. In I Timothy 3:1-13 Paul distinguishes between the bishops (3:1-7), the deacons (3:8-13), and the women (3:11). To aspire to the task of a bishop is noble (I Timothy 3:1). One who is to engage in this work must be upright in character; must be a good husband and father, able to manage well (or rule, *proistamenon*) his own household; he must also be "apt to teach" (3:2-5). His task is to "care for God's church" (v. 5). In I Timothy 5:17 Paul uses the term *presbuteroi* to designate those who "rule" in the church; he singles out for special mention "especially those who labor in preaching (*on logoo*) and in teaching." It would seem that already at this time a distinction was being made between elders who merely ruled and elders who not only ruled but also taught and preached

(ruling elders and teaching elders). The last-named class is often thought to have been the precursor to our present-day office of "minister of the Word." In Titus 1:5 Paul reminds Titus that the latter had been left in Crete to "appoint elders (*presbuteros*) in every town. Paul now goes on to discuss the qualifications of a "bishop" in verses 5-9; it seems quite obvious that he is using the terms "elders" and "bishops" synonymously.

This leads us to raise a specific question about elders (*presbuteroi*) and bishops (*episkopoi*) in the New Testament. Do these terms designate different offices, or do they refer to the same office? The Greek word *episkopos* (which generally means "overseer") is used only five times in the New Testament. In Acts 20:28 it seems to refer more to a function than to a position. In I Peter 2:25 the word is used to refer to Jesus as the Shepherd and Guardian (*episkopon*) of our souls. In the other three instances (Philippians 1:1, I Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:7) the term seems to refer to what we understand today as an office in the church.

The Greek word *presbuteros* is used more often in the New Testament than the word *episkopos*. The word *presbuteroi* often designates individuals who have been assigned the task of supervision and/or teaching; in some cases the task of preaching also seems to have been given them (see Acts 11:30, 15:6, 21:18, I Timothy 5:17; Titus 1:5; I Peter 5:1).

On the basis of the following evidence, we consider the words *episkopos* and *presbuteros* to be used synonymously in the New Testament: (1) bishops and elders are never joined as distinct classes of officials (like bishops and deacons); (2) in Acts 20:17 and 28 the words refer to the same individuals; (3) Philippians 1:1 is addressed to "bishops and deacons"; (4) I Timothy 3 mentions bishops and deacons but no elders, though elders are mentioned in 5:17, and though Acts 20:17 reports that there were elders at Ephesus where Timothy was now ministering; (5) Titus 1:5-7 describes elders in nearly the same way as I Timothy 3 describes bishops; (6) the words elder and bishop are used interchangeably in Titus 1:5 and 7.

i) *Deacons*: The Greek word *diakonos* occurs very frequently in the New Testament, but it is usually translated as "servant" or "minister." The only exception to this is in Philippians 1:1 and I Timothy 3:8-13, where the term seems to be used in a more technical sense, as designating an office parallel to that of the *episkopos*.

In Acts 6:1-7 we read about the appointment of seven men who were to assist the apostles, taking over the task of ministering to the Hellenistic widows. Though these seven are nowhere called deacons, it is traditionally assumed that the office of deacon had its beginning in Acts 6. Nothing is said precisely about the specific function of deacons, but from the qualifications mentioned it can be inferred that the task of the deacons was a more "private," house-to-house type of ministry than that of the elders, and that the deacons had something to do with the distribution of money (see I Timothy 3:8-13). From Romans 16:1 and I Timothy 3:11 it appears likely that there were female deacons as well as male deacons.

j) A thorough examination of the New Testament will reveal that, in addition to the functionaries already mentioned, there were others whose

tasks or contributions are described with varying degrees of preciseness. Note, for example, Apollos (Acts 18:24-28, I Corinthians 1:12, 3:4-8, 4:6, 16:12) who spoke and taught about Jesus (Acts 18:25); Priscilla and Aquila, who expounded the way of God more accurately to Apollos (Acts 18:26; cf. also Romans 16:3-5, I Corinthians 16:19; II Timothy 4:19); Euodia and Syntyche, who labored side by side with Paul in the gospel (Philippians 4:2f.); Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord (Ephesians 6:21; cf. Colossians 4:7); and a host of individuals who are simply called fellow workers in Christ (for example, see Romans 16:9, 12; II Corinthians 8:23; Philippians 4:3; Philemon 24).

### 3. The servant concept underlying office in the New Testament.

We noted above that the New Testament generally employs the term *diakonia* (ministry, service) for the service of individuals in the church. Let us now look more closely at the significance of this word for our understanding of the concept of office in the New Testament.

The pattern for New Testament teaching about ministry is to be found in the words of Jesus. When at one time there was strife among the disciples as to who among them was the greatest, Jesus said, "Let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves. . . . But I am among you as one who serves" (Luke 22:26-27). According to Mark 10:35ff., the sons of Zebedee were requesting positions of special honor in the Lord's future kingdom. Jesus replied to their request by referring first to Gentile authorities and their standard of greatness: "You know that those who are supposed to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them" (Mark 10:42). Then, by way of contrast, Jesus described the standard of greatness which marks his kingdom: "But it shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve . . ." (Mark 10:43-45).

In these passages Jesus provides a pattern for the ministry of those who would be active in his kingdom. There is a sharp contrast between Jesus' attitude toward service and that of the Greeks, for whom service was not very dignified. "Jesus' attitude to service is completely new as compared with the Greek understanding. The decisive point is that he sees in it the thing which makes a man his disciple" (Hermann Beyer, *diakoneoo*, in Kittel's *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. II, p. 84). "A decisive point for understanding the concept is that early Christianity learned to regard and describe as *diakonia* all significant activity for the edification of the community (Ephesians 4:11ff.), a distinction being made according to the mode of operation" (*ibid.*, p. 87).

All of the Lord's people, therefore, must be servants, and all the functionaries must render service (*diakonia*) to the Lord and to their fellow believers. It is most unfortunate that we have tended to limit this concept of *diakonia* to one particular "office" in the church, that of deacon. This, again, may be due to the Bible versions we commonly use. In the King James Version the term *diakonos* is translated three times as

"deacon," seven times as "servant," and twenty times as "minister." In our usage of the word "minister" the service dimension of the word *diakonos* is often lost sight of (think of titles like *dominee*, from a Latin word which means "lord"; *the Reverend*, suggesting dignity rather than service; and the like), whereas the Greek word for "minister" (*diakonos*) means servant. The noun *diakonia* is likewise variously translated in the King James Version (once each as "to minister," to "do service," "relief," "office," and "serving"; twice each as "service" and "administration"; three times as "ministering"; six times as "ministration"; and sixteen times as "ministry"). Whereas we are accustomed to associate the word "ministry" with a position of authority, the Greek term behind this word commonly suggests the concept of "service."

The choice of the word *diakonia* for these various forms of ministry indicates that what the New Testament wishes to emphasize about functionaries in the church is that they are to be servants of God and of man. This terminology does not suggest that office in the church means first of all a position which elevates one above his fellow-believers, but rather that office in the church describes a specific way in which one may serve his Lord and his fellowmen.

In this connection it is interesting to note that the term *keerux* ("herald" or "preacher,") which occurs frequently in Greek literature, occurs infrequently in the New Testament. This term occurs only three times in the New Testament, always in the later writings. In I Timothy 2:7 and II Timothy 1:11 Paul applies this term to himself, along with the terms "apostle" and "teacher"; whereas in II Peter 2:5 Noah is called a preacher (*keerux*) of righteousness. Why this infrequent usage? Probably because the word *keerux* was commonly used in Greek literature to describe a kind of elevated personage who was inviolable because he was under divine protection. By way of contrast, the messengers of Christ were to be like sheep delivered up to wolves (Matthew 10:16), and were to expect to be persecuted as Jesus himself had been persecuted (John 15:20) (see Gerhard Friedrich, *keerux*, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. III, pp. 688, 696). The very infrequency of the word *keerux* in the New Testament, therefore, underscores the importance of the "servant-concept" underlying office in the New Testament.

#### 4. Functions usually associated with ordination today.

Because the concept of ordination as we understand it today generally includes the right to perform certain ecclesiastical functions, it will be instructive for us to investigate who does the preaching and teaching in the New Testament church, and who administers the sacraments in that church.

##### a. Preaching

Who does the preaching in the New Testament church? When we think of the proclamation of God's Word by men, we almost invariably think of the word *preaching*. The Greek word generally associated with the concept of preaching is *keerusein*. The New Testament, however, uses a number of words to describe the proclamation of God's Word to men. Gerhard Friedrich, in the article on *keerux* in the *Theological*



*Dictionary of the New Testament* (Vol. III, p. 703), lists 32 terms in addition to *keerussein* which are used in the New Testament for proclamation. An exhaustive study of the question of who does the preaching in the New Testament church, therefore, would require a thorough investigation of the usage of all 33 of these terms. Perhaps a limited survey of the use of two of these terms (*keerussein* and *euangelizein*) will suffice for our purpose.

Let us note first of all some common usages of the verb *keerussein*, which occurs about 61 times in the New Testament. In each of the following instances the word *kerussein* is used for *proclaim* or *preach*: John the Baptist is said to *proclaim* the kingdom of God (Matthew 3:1; Mark 1:4, 7; Luke 3:3; Acts 10:37); Jesus is said to have *proclaimed* the kingdom of God (Matthew 4:17, 4:23, 9:35); people who had been healed by Jesus *proclaimed* what Jesus had done for them (the leper, Mark 1:45; the demoniac, Mark 5:20 and Luke 8:39); the apostles were sent to *preach* (Mark 3:14, Matthew 10:7, Luke 9:2; Matthew 10:27, Luke 12:3, Mark 6:12); Paul *proclaimed* (Acts 9:20), as did Silvanus and Timothy (II Corinthians 1:19; II Timothy 4:2); Philip, one of the seven, *proclaimed* Christ (Acts 8:5); the undefined "they" of Mark 7:36 zealously *proclaimed* Jesus' miraculous deeds; and the strong angel of Revelation 5:2 *proclaimed* with a great voice, "Who is worthy to open the book?" Paul also asks the Jews addressed in Romans 2 whether those of them who *preach* against stealing do actually steal (2:21). We conclude that, though the usage of *keerussein* is limited, in a few isolated instances the subjects of this verb are people other than those formally appointed by the church to perform this function.

In addition to *keerussein*, New Testament writers often use *euangelizein* to describe the proclamation of the gospel. *Euangelizein* is often used as a synonym for *keerussein* (see Luke 8:1, 9:2 compared with 9:6, Romans 10:15). The subjects of *euangelizein* may be Jesus, John the Baptist, or a host of witnesses: disciples, apostles, evangelists. We might take particular note of others who are said to engage in the activity called *euangelizein* (in each of the following instances the word *preach* translates a form of *euangelizein*): Philip, one of the seven, *preached* the good news (Acts 8:12, 35, 40); the men of Cyprus and Cyrene went about *preaching* the Lord Jesus (Acts 11:20); those who had been scattered because of the persecution following the death of Stephen went about *preaching* the Word (Acts 8:4); Paul and Barnabas remained in Antioch for some time *preaching* and teaching (*didaskontes*) the Word of the Lord, with many others also (Acts 15:35). So here again we note that a verb which is used to describe the proclamation of the Word of God, and which is often used synonymously with *keerussein*, sometimes has as its subjects people other than those formally appointed by the church to perform this function.

#### b. Teaching

Who does the teaching in the New Testament church? Obviously, Jesus was the great teacher. Teaching was one of the most prominent features of his public ministry (see Matthew 4:23, 5:2, 9:35, 11:1). Already during Jesus' earthly sojourn, in response to his command, the

disciples began to teach (Mark 6:30). In the Great Commission recorded in Matthew 28:20 the risen Lord made the continuation of this task one of the duties of his disciples: "teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you." The apostles diligently pursued this task (Acts 2:42, 4:2, 5:28, 5:42). They were, however, soon joined by others: Paul and Barnabas (15:35), and some men from Judea who were teaching some disputed ideas in the Antioch church (15:1). Apollos, the Alexandrian Jew, also taught accurately the things concerning Jesus (Acts 18:25).

Paul advises those in the Roman church who have the gift of teaching to serve the community through their teaching (Romans 12:7). In Colossians 1:28 Paul indicates that he admonishes and teaches every man in all wisdom, but in Colossians 3:16 all Christians are told to teach and admonish one another (the same Greek verbs are used in both passages). In the Pastoral letters Paul advises Timothy to teach (I Timothy 4:11, 13; 6:2) as well as to preach (II Timothy 4:2). One of the qualifications for the office of bishop is that a man must be "apt to teach" (I Timothy 3:2); elders who rule well are to be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and teaching (I Timothy 5:17). Timothy is also exhorted to entrust the gospel to faithful men who will be able to teach others also (II Timothy 2:2).

The New Testament not only uses the verb *to teach* (*didaskoo*), but also designates certain persons as *teachers* (*didaskaloi*; see previous section on various functionaries in the New Testament church). The word for *teacher* occurs 58 times in the New Testament, most frequently (48 times) in the Gospels. In the Gospels the term is used most often in the form of direct address to Jesus; only on seven occasions is the term applied to others besides Jesus (Matthew 10:24 and Luke 6:40; Luke 2:46, 3:12; John 3:10). According to K. H. Rengstorf the four or five passages in the Gospels where the word *teacher* is used of others than Jesus describe "one who indicates the way of God from the Torah" (*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, II, 153).

Other New Testament passages refer to *teachers* as to a leading group in the early Christian community (Acts 13:1, I Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11; cf. also James 3:1). In I Corinthians 12:28 *teachers* come after apostles and prophets in a list of those who discharge specific functions in the community; in Ephesians 4:11 *teachers* appear in a similar list after apostles, prophets and evangelists, being linked with pastors ("and some, pastors and teachers"). In Acts 13:1 *teachers* are mentioned along with prophets. Interestingly enough, Paul calls himself a teacher in I Timothy 2:7 and II Timothy 1:11. In both passages the term is used in conjunction with the self-designation of "a preacher and an apostle." In the three other occurrences of the word for teacher in the New Testament (Romans 2:20, II Timothy 4:3, and Hebrews 5:12), the term seems to be applied respectively to Jews addressed in Romans 2, the recipients of the letter to the Hebrews, and to people who teach after their own lusts. It is obvious, therefore, that, as in the case of the words used for *preaching*, so it is with the word used for *teaching*: the New Testament sometimes applies the word to people other than those who have been formally appointed by the church to perform this function.

### c. The Administration of the Sacraments

#### 1) Baptism

The majority of passages in the Gospels which speak of baptism designate John the Baptist as the officiator. Repeatedly we read in the Gospels about the baptism of John and about baptisms by John. (See, for example, Matthew 3:7, 11, 13, 14, 16; 21:25; Mark 1:4, 5, 8, 9; 11:30; Luke 3:3, 7, 16, 21; 7:29; 20:4; John 1:25, 26, 33; 3:23). Note also the following references to John's baptism in Acts 1:22, 10:37, 13:24, 18:25, 19:3-4. Only in the Gospel of John do we read of baptisms which are attributed to Jesus—though even here it is said that "Jesus himself did not baptize, but only his disciples" (John 4:2; cf. 3:22, 26, and 4:1). Jesus is also mentioned as one who baptizes in the assertion of John the Baptist, "I need to be baptized by you" (Matthew 3:14), though this statement may not be pressed to force us to the conclusion that Jesus himself administered baptism.

It is interesting to note, particularly in view of the parenthetical statement in John 4:2 ("Jesus himself did not baptize but only his disciples"), that when Jesus sent out the twelve disciples (Matthew 10) or the seventy (Luke 10), no mention is made of baptism. These were obviously not word and sacrament missions, but word and healing missions.

The most important passage in the Gospels for our study of the administration of baptism is probably the Great Commission as found in Matthew 28:18-20. Here the risen Lord specifically commands his disciples both to baptize and to teach: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (vv. 19-20).

On the Day of Pentecost we hear Peter saying to his audience, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins" (Acts 2:38). This passage leads J. K. S. Reid to comment, "Moreover (v. 38), the twelve are already aware that among their duties is the administration of baptism" (*The Biblical Doctrine of the Ministry*, p. 19). The response to Peter's invitation on the Day of Pentecost was phenomenal: "those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:41). The author of Acts does not tell us, however, who administered this "mass baptism." If the twelve apostles did the administering, they would each have had to baptize 250 people.

The next baptisms we read about in the book of Acts were not administered by an apostle but by Philip, one of the seven (commonly called *deacons*). The seven, as we saw above, were appointed to serve tables so that the twelve might devote themselves to prayer and to the ministry of the Word (Acts 6:1-6). It would appear, then, that Philip's role was not to be primarily that of the ministry of the Word. Yet, according to Acts 8:5, "Philip went down to a city of Samaria, and proclaimed to them the Christ." A few verses later we read, "But when they believed Philip as he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women" (v. 12). Later in the chapter we read that Philip baptized the Ethiopian

eunuch (v. 38). From Acts 8 we learn, therefore, that Philip, one of the seven, later called Philip the evangelist (21:8), both preached the Word and baptized.

Acts 9:18 records the baptism of Saul of Tarsus, a baptism apparently administered by Ananias, who is simply called "a disciple at Damascus" in Acts 9:10. We also read that Ananias laid his hands on Saul with the result that the latter regained his sight and was filled with the Holy Spirit (9:17). One might argue that Ananias had received a special commission from the Lord to baptize Saul, but in Acts 9:10-12 we read only of a command to Ananias to lay his hands on Saul so that Saul might regain his sight.

From Acts 8 and Acts 9 we have learned that baptism was administered by one of seven "deacons" and by a "disciple." In Acts 19:10 the word "disciple" obviously has a wider meaning than it does when it is used only of the twelve. (For other examples of the wider meaning of the term "disciple," see Luke 6:13, 19:37; John 4:1, 6:60, 6:66). Does the fact that a "disciple" in the broader sense was permitted to baptize, according to Acts 9, imply that all the "disciples" in the broader sense could likewise administer baptism? Does the fact that one of the "deacons" administered baptism imply that the other "deacons" could also do so? There is nothing in the book of Acts which would rule out an affirmative answer to these questions.

Acts 10 narrates the story of Peter's visit to Cornelius and his household. As Peter was preaching to them, "the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word" (v. 44). Peter went on to declare "Can any one forbid water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" Next we read, "And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ" (vv. 47, 48). Who administered this baptism? Peter? The brethren from Joppa who had accompanied Peter to Caesarea (v. 23)? The passage does not say.

From Acts 19:1-7 we learn that when Paul came to Ephesus he found some disciples who had been baptized into John's baptism. Paul now proceeded to instruct them more fully in the truths of the Christian gospel. Next we read that these disciples "were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them . . ." (vv. 5, 6). What we are not told here is who baptized the Ephesian disciples. All we read is that they "were baptized."

Eduard Schweitzer, in his *Church Order in the New Testament*, p. 186, is of the opinion that Paul laid his hands on these Ephesian disciples after someone else had officiated at their baptism. He finds support for this conclusion in Paul's statement in I Corinthians 1:14-17, "I am thankful that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius (cf. Acts 18:8 and Romans 16:23) . . . I did also baptize the household of Stephanas (cf. I Corinthians 16:15). Beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized any one else. For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel." Schweitzer uses this passage to support his claim that as a rule the apostles did not baptize. It must be granted, however, that Paul is here writing to the church at Corinth. It is at least questionable whether one can use this passage as a key to the interpretation of Acts

19:5-6. But it must be recognized that to the Corinthians at least Paul "plays down" his role as an administrator of baptism, and claims that Christ did not send him to baptize but to preach the gospel. In view of Paul's limited list of those among the Corinthians whom he baptized, one wonders who baptized the other Corinthians (note that, according to Acts 18:8, "many of the Corinthians hearing Paul believed and were baptized").

The two remaining accounts of baptism in Acts are both recorded in the passive voice. Of Lydia it is said, "The Lord opened her heart to give heed to what was said by Paul. And when she was baptized, with her household, she besought us . . ." (Acts 16:14-15). Of the Philippian Jailer it is said, "he was baptized at once, with all his family" (Acts 16:33). These passages do not shed much light on our problem. It is impossible to build a case for specifying certain exclusive administrators of baptism when passive verbs are used to describe these baptisms.

We have now considered all the Acts passages which speak of baptism. We may well agree with G. R. Beasley-Murray when he says,

To insist that the Apostles personally conducted every baptism in the primitive Church is an absurdity that no one, so far as I am aware, has asked us to believe. Apart from the physical impossibility of the Twelve visiting so many places at once, the narrative of Acts excludes it; for in chapter 11 we read of unknown Hellenist Christians, scattered by the persecution at Stephen's death, evangelizing in Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, and in the last-named place "the hand of the Lord was with them and a great multitude that believed turned to the Lord" (11:21) (*Baptism in the New Testament*, p. 113).

There is considerable reflection on the meaning of baptism in chapters like Romans 6, Ephesians 4, and Colossians 2, but these passages say nothing about the administrators of baptism. It is only in the First Epistle to the Corinthians (1:14-17) that the question of the administrator of baptism is considered, as we saw above. And here the point Paul makes is that Christ sent him not to baptize but to preach the gospel!

There is, further, a remarkable silence in the letters to Timothy concerning the sacraments in general and the administration of them in particular. Timothy is exhorted in I Timothy 4:13 to "attend to the public reading of scripture, to preaching, to teaching." We might feel inclined to add to this, "and to the proper administration of the sacraments"—but words of this sort are conspicuous by their absence. To the same effect is II Timothy 4:1 and 2, where Paul charges Timothy to "preach the word, be urgent in season and out of season, convince, rebuke, and exhort, be unfailing in patience and in teaching."

We may summarize the above discussion by saying that the New Testament does not teach that baptism was administered in the first-century church only by the apostles, and that it does not clearly teach that baptism could be administered only by persons specifically appointed by the church for that purpose.

(Note: It may be observed at this point that, on the basis of the parallel between circumcision and baptism, it would be natural for Jew-

ish Christians to expect that no specifically appointed office-bearer in the church was needed to administer baptism. For the Old Testament nowhere indicates that circumcision could only be performed by a priest or other special functionary.)

## 2) The Lord's Supper

The biblical material on the celebration of the Lord's Supper is sparse. The first recorded celebration of the Lord's Supper was administered by Jesus himself (Matthew 26:26-29, Mark 14:22-25, Luke 22:14-23); these accounts, however, contain no instructions for the proper administration of the Lord's Supper in the future. The words, "Do this in remembrance of me," found in Paul's account of the institution of the Lord's Supper (I Corinthians 11:24, 25) and, according to some manuscripts, in Luke 22:19, probably were not intended to indicate who were to be the proper administrators of this supper, but rather to imply that this supper should frequently be celebrated by Christians. It is highly significant that when Paul discussed the problems which the Corinthians had with the proper administration of the Lord's Supper (I Corinthians 10:16, 17, 21, and 11:23-28), he did not address his advice to any official administrator(s) of the sacrament. It is on the basis of this fact that Eduard Schweitzer contends that according to the New Testament every church member may distribute the Lord's Supper (*Church Order in the New Testament*, pp. 186f.).

It is again of interest to note that Paul does not give any instruction on the administration of the Lord's Supper to the young pastor Timothy. Paul gives Timothy many exhortations to preach, teach, exhort, read the Scriptures publicly, to convince and to rebuke, but says nothing about administering the Lord's Supper.

What about references in the book of Acts to "the breaking of bread"? There are four such passages:

2:42, "And they [the 3,000 just converted] devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

2:46, And day by day [all who believed], attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they partook of food with glad and generous hearts.

20:7, [At Troas] On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul talked with them.

20:11, And when Paul had gone up and had broken bread and eaten, he conversed with them a long while.

Although there is some difference of opinion about Acts 2:46, most commentators agree that the expression "the breaking of bread" in these passages refers to the celebration of the Lord's Supper, probably in connection with a regular meal. If this is so, it would seem to indicate that the Lord's Supper was in all probability celebrated at this time without an "official" administrator. It is quite clear that the celebration took place in a fellowship of Christians, large or small; none of the passages, however, give any indication that the Lord's Supper was administered at this time only by an ordained church official.

We may summarize the above discussion by saying that the New Testament does not clearly teach that the Lord's Supper could be administered only by persons specifically appointed by the church for that purpose.

(Note: It may again be observed that, on the basis of the parallel between the Passover and the Lord's Supper, it would be natural for Jewish Christians to expect that the Lord's Supper could be administered by people other than specifically appointed office-bearers in the church. For in Old Testament times it was not the duty of the priest to administer the Passover. In earliest times the Passover was observed in the homes of the Israelites (Exodus 12). Later, after Jerusalem had become the center of Israelite worship, the Passover was celebrated in Jerusalem and burnt offerings were presented there in conjunction with the feast (II Chronicles 30, 35), but even at that time the priests did not administer the Passover to the people. This way of observing the Passover appears to have continued into New Testament times, as is evidenced by the celebration of the Passover by Jesus and his disciples which is recorded for us in the Gospels (Mark 14:12-16, Matthew 26:17-19, Luke 22:7-13).

#### 5. The Fluid New Testament Situation with Regard to Office.

Both at the beginning and at the end of Paul's missionary career we hear about the appointment of elders in the churches. During the first missionary journey Paul and Barnabas appointed elders in the churches of the region of Iconium (Acts 14:23). Near the end of his career Paul is urging Titus to appoint elders in the cities of Crete (Titus 1:5). From data of this sort one might gain the impression that a fixed system of church government was established early in the history of the Christian community, and that this system remained pretty much the same throughout the New Testament era. A careful look at the New Testament materials, however, does not support this impression.

We do not read about elders in Paul's letters except in the Pastoral epistles which he wrote near the end of his life. Before this, Paul had mentioned "bishops and deacons" in the opening address of the letter to the Philippians. In Acts 20 Luke also tells us about a meeting between Paul and the elders of the Ephesian church, a meeting which took place near the end of Paul's third missionary journey.

Before this, however, the situation is quite unclear. Paul, in his earliest letter, called on the Thessalonians "to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work" (I Thessalonians 5:12, 13). In similar vein, he wrote to the Corinthians: "Now, brethren, you know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints; I urge you to be subject to such men and to every fellow worker and laborer" (I Corinthians 16:15, 16). It is obvious that there were in these congregations men who were giving leadership and service; their fellow-Christians were to respect them for their work and to cooperate with them. Had these men been formally appointed as office-bearers? Were they giving leadership because they had been officially appointed by the congregation or by some church official? On the basis of the New Testament evidence, it

is impossible to answer these questions with a definite *yes* or with a definite *no*. We must at least take account of some evidence which suggests a rather loose organization of the early New Testament churches. The letters to the Corinthians are suggestive on this score.

It is Paul's consistent teaching that every Christian has received the Holy Spirit. To the Romans he said, "Any one who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him" (Romans 8:9). In I Corinthians Paul calls attention to the freedom with which the Holy Spirit operates within the Christian fellowship. All members of the body of Christ have been given some form of ministry (I Corinthians 12:7, 11, 18; 14:26; cf. Romans 12:3-8). The fact that Christians have different gifts and therefore different ministries is the Spirit's doing. The Spirit "apportions to each one individually as he wills" (I Corinthians 12:11).

In the Corinthian church some rivalries had developed concerning these gifts of the Spirit. Some believers at Corinth were apparently highly impressed with the value of the ability to speak in tongues. By way of correcting these wrong emphases, Paul pointed out that since the Spirit has given the gifts, it is the Spirit who accounts for the variety of the gifts. No one may treat his neighbor's gift as being of little account. No gift is inherently superior or inferior to any other gift (I Corinthians 12:12-31). If there is to be any measure of relative importance, the standard must be how well the gift serves the Christian community and how useful it is for strengthening the members (12:7; 14:1-5, 12). In this connection, Paul emphasized the greater importance of prophesying over tongue-speaking, and urged his readers to seek this gift (14:1, 5, 39).

With regard to prophesying also, however, there must be no rivalry. If several members of the group have been given a prophetic message, they must take turns in presenting it. All things must be done in an orderly way (14:29-33, 40). Further, the other members of the group do not remain inactive while someone is prophesying. "Discernings of spirits" (*diakriseis pneumatoon*) are among the gifts given to members of the congregation (12:10). While the prophets speak, others are to discern or weigh what is said (*diakrinetoosan*, 14:29). The entire congregation must be able in an intelligent way to say *Amen* to what has been said by others (14:16). So even the gift of which Paul speaks most highly (prophesying) does not place someone on a different level or rank in the congregation. Even prophecy remains a gift operating in conjunction with all the other gifts present in the congregation.

The picture we get of the Corinthian church is that of a church which is like a living organism, in which all kinds of spiritual powers are freely coming to expression. The members actively serve each other and complement each other. No one may lord it over another, and no one may isolate himself from another. What we see in Corinth does not appear to be a highly formal organization, in which conscious distinctions are made between those who hold office and those who do not.

This fact becomes more apparent as we probe further. There are a number of passages in I Corinthians which make us question whether any single person or any group of persons in Corinth bears special respon-



sibility for what is happening in the congregation. Consider, for example, the following four passages:

a) Paul does not appeal to any one particular person or persons to straighten out the disorders that have developed in connection with the communal meal. Nobody seems to be in charge of things. The advice Paul offers for correcting the situation is simply: "Wait for one another" (11:33).

b) With regard to the collection for the Jerusalem poor, each one is asked to keep his own contribution until Paul arrives. Then, when the gifts have all been brought together, the congregation is to designate whom they wish to deliver this money to Jerusalem (16:1-4).

c) With regard to the matter of taking disputes into the civil courts, it is not merely the disputing parties for whom Paul has harsh words. Paul implies that the congregation as a whole was negligent in not providing a judge to settle such matters ("can it be that there is no man among you wise enough to decide between members of the brotherhood . . .?") Somebody should have offered to be the judge or arbiter here. Is not Paul's point that the members of the congregation are not availing themselves of the gifts which are present among them? (6:1-6, especially v. 5).

d) With respect to the sexual scandal within the congregation, the congregation is at fault because nobody had enough Christian boldness to stand up and condemn this sin. Therefore Paul will have to do it from afar. He clearly implies, however, that what he is now doing from a distance ought to have been done at a public gathering by some member of the congregation. Paul is not condemning some office-bearer's laxity. He is condemning the entire congregation (chapter 5).

Whatever, therefore, may have been the position of Stephanas and the others to whom the Corinthians were to be subject (16:15, 16), it does not appear that Stephanas had the kind of responsibility for supervising congregational affairs which would later be associated with a formal ecclesiastical office. The Corinthian situation appears to have been very fluid, open, and free. Every member of the congregation was to be open to following the working of the Spirit both in himself and in his fellow members. Obviously some were giving some kind of leadership. Obviously the Gospel was being preached and applied. But what does not appear to be so obvious is that those who were doing these things were doing them "officially." In other words, the pattern of formal office-bearers with clearly defined duties which emerges later in the New Testament is difficult to discern in Corinth.

By the time of the Pastoral Epistles the ecclesiastical situation is quite different. The church has come up against a serious threat. The church is struggling to maintain herself against a highly destructive kind of *gnosis*—"the knowledge which is falsely so called" (I Timothy 6:20). Paul found this early form of gnosticism a most subtle and pervasive influence, issuing in all kinds of doubts, confusions, and departures from the faith (I Timothy 1:4, 6:3-5; II Timothy 2:16-18). This heretical system of thought was being propagated from house to house. Women

seemed to be most vulnerable to it (II Timothy 3:6-7; I Timothy 5:11-13). In short, the church was facing possible disintegration.

In this situation Paul did not speak in the same way that he had spoken to the Corinthians. To be sure, the Corinthians had also had some problems with a certain type of *gnoosis*. Paul had reminded them that "knowledge (*gnoosis*) puffs up, but love builds up" (I Corinthians 8:1); he had also said, "If I have . . . all knowledge (*gnoosis*) . . . but have not love, I am nothing" (I Corinthians 13:2). But by the time of the Pastorals the *gnoosis* problem had grown to new and threatening proportions. Paul was not now reminding Timothy and Titus of the freedom with which the Spirit distributes his various gifts to believers. Rather, he now recommended that Timothy and Titus find men able to teach and able to rule, and appoint them bishops or elders over their congregations (I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9). He now urged Timothy and Titus, and those whom they had appointed, to hold fast to the Apostolic teaching which has been received. Paul's emphasis in these epistles was on a kind of organizational structure for the church which would enable it to stand firm against of the devastating threats which now confronted it. Hence Paul charged Timothy and Titus to appoint elders, urged them to do so with great care (I Timothy 5:22), and enumerated the qualifications for this position (I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9). It may be noted that the office of deacon had now also come into prominence (I Timothy 3:8-10, 12-13). Apparently a changed situation had brought about a new emphasis in the Pauline writings.

Was the entire church reacting to the threatening situation of the later New Testament times in the same way that Paul did? We cannot find many clues with regard to this matter in the rest of the New Testament. In the Epistle to the Hebrews it is said to be to the discredit of the readers that they have not all become teachers (Hebrews 5:12). There were, to be sure, leaders in the congregation(s) to which the readers of Hebrews belonged. These are not called by any of the regular names for office-bearers in the New Testament, but simply "leaders" (Hebrews 13:7, 17, 24). These leaders were responsible for the care of the people under them, and the congregation was to recognize this, obeying them and submitting to them (13:17).

In I Peter the situation seems closer to that of the Pastorals. "Elders" (*presbuteroi*) may here simply mean the older man (I Peter 5:5). But the word is also used to refer to a specific group of men with official standing (I Peter 5:1-4); in fact, in verse 1 of this chapter Peter calls himself "a fellow elder." These elders have been placed over the flock; they are specifically instructed, however, not to lord it over the flock, but to be examples to them (v. 3). We get the impression here of a well ordered situation, with office-bearers who have specific duties.

The letters of John contain only slight hints about the organizational structure of the church. The threat to the churches to which John wrote was apparently similar to that confronted in the Pastorals. False teachers and confusing prophets were abroad, spreading the Gnostic line of thought (I John 4:1-6, II John 7). In these short letters, however, John was not promoting offices or a specific type of church organization.

Rather, his approach seems more like Paul's approach in I Corinthians. John reminded his readers that every believer has sufficient knowledge to cope with the situation: "You have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all know" (I John 2:20). Or, again, he wrote, "The anointing which you received from him abides in you, and you have no need that any one should teach you; as his anointing teaches you about everything, and is true, and is no lie, just as it has taught you, abide in him" (I John 2:27). Individual believers are told not to believe every spirit, but to "test the spirits to see whether they are of God" (I John 4:1). Individual believers are able to detect false teachers and should treat them as such, refusing them hospitality (II John 10-11). Though it is possible that there may have been regular office-bearers in the churches to which John wrote these letters, officials of this sort are not given prominence in these letters as means whereby the Gnostic threat is to be averted. John's appeal is rather to individual believers and to their own ability to discern false teaching.

In view of this kind of material in the New Testament, it appears that the office-structure of the church was in a fluid state during New Testament times. There is a shift in Paul from the Corinthian emphasis on spiritual gifts to an emphasis on specifically qualified office-bearers in the Pastoral Epistles. I Peter suggests an approach similar to the Pastorals. The Johannine letters appear to be more in the spirit of I Corinthians. In other words, there is variety on this matter within the New Testament. Possibly the development of church structure was different in different localities. It is, therefore, not surprising that various traditions in church organizations have been able to appeal for support to various types of New Testament material.

The New Testament materials which we have been examining in this report are instructive and helpful; they give us much necessary guidance in church-organizational matters. These materials contain guiding principles significant for the church of every age. But they do not present a definitive church-organizational structure to which the church must remain bound for all time. Neither do they describe the offices of the church with such finality that no changes may be permitted in their number or in their functioning.

## II. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONCEPTS OF OFFICE AND ORDINATION

### A. The Ancient Period

#### 1. Statement of the problem

To arrive at a proper understanding of the nature of office and ordination in the church, it is necessary to consider not only the biblical evidence, but also the major historical developments from the beginning of the Christian church to the present. It is evident that current understandings and practices with regard to office and ordination cannot be supported by Scripture in every detail. What we propose to do in this historical review is to weigh the major historical developments in the understanding and practice of office and ordination on the following

scale: what is required by Scripture, what is allowed by Scripture, and what is forbidden by Scripture.

In order for us to accomplish this, we do not need to scrutinize every century of the history of the church. Two eras are particularly important for our purposes. The first is the era which witnessed the formation of the order of the ancient church. The second is the era of the Protestant Reformation, at which time certain correctives and modifications were applied to this order which have shaped the practices we are following today.

The problem involved in the first of these two inquiries is that of determining how and why the church moved from the situation pictured in the New Testament to that reflected by the end of the ancient period. The problem is far from simple. The evidence is so scanty as to have led scholars to speak of the earliest years (up to the beginning of the second century) as the "tunnel period." It is hard to determine exactly *what* happened in that period, and even harder to determine, except by way of conjecture, *why* what happened did happen. In addition, the evidence available does not give us a clear and simple picture. It includes such a variety of obscure, ambiguous, and even contradictory statements as to make certain only one negative conclusion: that at the end of the "tunnel" there was no one clearly defined and established concept of office and ordination.

As the picture is clarified, however, it becomes possible to assert three things regarding early church organization: 1) There was diversity in the concept of office in the early church. 2) This diversity progressed toward a standardization which came to prevail throughout the church. 3) In this standardization the church made use of some of the organizational models available to it in shaping its concept of office.

An additional element in the complexity of this problem lies in the fact that the situation at the beginning of the "tunnel" shares some of the characteristics of the situation which emerged at its end. Diversity is evident in the New Testament also; the order of the Jerusalem church did not match exactly that reflected in the epistles of Paul. Progress is evident in the New Testament, since the later epistles reflect some changes in emphasis as compared with the earlier ones. And there was at least some degree of imitation of existing models, evident in the elements of similarity between the organization of the early church and that of the synagogue.

From all the available evidence it appears that up to the year 100 A.D. the organization of the local church was not a matter of paramount concern. All Christians belonged to the church as a whole. Among the considerations leading to greater attention to church organization were the following: 1) The expectation of the imminent return of the Lord waned, leading to the need for firmer church organization. 2) The leadership the original apostles had given disappeared with their death; thus the need was created for understanding apostolic authority and regulating the transmission of that authority. 3) The growth of the church and the rise of divergent or heretical views accentuated the need for an established court of appeal. All three of these factors, especially the last-

named, contributed to the rise of a canon of Scripture, to the emergence of a common creed, and to the development of the concept of office. These developments were not arbitrarily foisted upon the church, but arose out of pressing need, when Gnostic (and, later, Montanist) false prophets appeared, threatening to lead many astray.

The changes in the concept of office which occurred during the ancient period were often subtle and obscure. What is beyond dispute is that a major change did take place during that period. In the New Testament era many offices or functions existed alongside of each other. Apostles and prophets seemed to be recognized throughout the church. Alongside of these arose certain offices which were more closely associated with local churches than those of apostles and prophets: the office of bishop or presbyter (probably used interchangeably) and the office of deacon. The organization of the church at this time was relatively free, and there was little indication of a radical difference between Christians in general and those appointed or elected to special functions. All believers were "priests."

By the end of the fifth century, however, many changes had taken place. The apostles and prophets of whom the New Testament had spoken had disappeared. Their places had been taken and, to some extent, their functions had been assumed by regular officers, who had either been appointed or elected. Among these officers bishops had emerged to special prominence in the monarchical episcopate; they were now considered the administrative successors of the apostles (apostolic succession). A distinct hierarchy had developed among church offices, culminating in the chief patriarchates and in the papacy at Rome. The ministry had become a priesthood, with powers which the laity did not share. The Lord's Supper had become a sacrifice offered to God by the priest. The clergy had become a distinct class, with special powers and special privileges; even in the election of the clergy the laity had only a minor role. Though some of these developments were not completed until the fifth century, their general shape was quite clear by the close of the second.

## 2. Specific Developments

As was stated above, the evidence on the basis of which we attempt to reconstruct this period is scanty. "Any reconstruction of the primitive church's ministry—as indeed any other phase of its outward life—must rest upon what are regarded as the implications of a very few scattered passages in a very meager literature" (John Knox in Niebuhr and Williams, *The Ministry in Historical Perspectives*, p. 2).

In the early literature available to us after the New Testament writings, special attention attaches to the *First Letter of Clement* (A.D. 93-97), the *Didache* or *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* (A.D. 115), and the *Epistle of Ignatius to the Smyrneans* (A.D. 117). These three can be grouped together because the last two, dating from the early second century, contain slightly different responses to the same situation in the Syrian Church, and in them appeal is made to Clement of Rome. The *Didache* reflects a situation in which the authority of the apostles and

prophets is waning but the authority of bishops and deacons has not yet taken its place. The *Didache* seeks to establish such a resident ministry more firmly. Bishops and presbyters, however, are still viewed as constituting a collegiate office, held by several men in common. Ignatius, in contrast with the *Didache*, represents more of an emphasis on the authority of the bishop; he seeks to establish the monarchical authority of the bishop in a situation in which such authority was not yet generally recognized.

In so doing Ignatius appeals to the earlier writing of Clement. Clement, intervening in a Corinthians dispute, reflects the fact that bishops have taken over the functions of the "prophetic" officers, though he does not define in what way this took place (the term "prophetic" is applied by scholars to the apostles and prophets in the very early church, whose prerogatives were recognized throughout the church). Ignatius was probably pushing Clement a bit too far when he used him to buttress the monarchical episcopate.

Thus we see here the rise of bishops and deacons in the place of the "prophetic" offices, and an emerging emphasis on the value of the so-called monarchical episcopate (one man should be at the head of each local church). With respect to the matter of the rise of the monarchical episcopate, which has been the subject of much theological debate, there is little argument on the fact that the development took place, but a great deal of uncertainty as to why it did so. In part the development seems to have been the natural emergence of one man as a leader among many, due probably to the leader's exceptional gifts of teaching or administration. In part the development may have been hastened by the rise of heresy, which accentuated the need for an authoritative voice to "test the prophets." Perhaps some New Testament models of church government or the model of Roman civil organization played a role in this process. Even if all these forces were operative, however, the development of the monarchical episcopate is less clear than the understanding of that development advanced by Roman Catholic apologists, who trace a direct line of appointment from the original apostles to the bishops. This development does, however, reflect the effort of the early church to adjust to changed conditions and to meet some very real crises, and it suggests quite clearly that the church must have some latitude to make such adjustments.

That what we say above falls short of reflecting the Roman Catholic position on the matter will be evident from another consideration. For Roman Catholic apologists, attached to the idea of the monarchical episcopate was the idea that the bishops were the successors of the apostles. This idea went through an evolution. Irenaeus, writing in approximately 175 A.D., speaks of a "charisma" of truth given to the bishops as the successors of the apostles. The role of being guardians of the apostolic tradition—a role which was assigned to bishops—was the church's safeguard against the ever-present threat of false teaching. This idea was later to furnish the basis for the belief that the bishops assembled in a church council could speak authoritatively in defining the truth. Clement, meanwhile, had spoken of the bishops as being successors of the

apostles. This conception of bishops as the successors of the apostles eventually came to be understood as including the authority of bishops to administer and appoint. It is highly significant, however, that Ignatius, writing shortly after Clement, does not make use of the argument that bishops were the successors of the apostles. This, we may assume, Ignatius would almost certainly have done if he had been aware of the existence of that argument. It was when the ideas of the monarchical episcopate and of the apostolic succession of bishops were later combined that the prestige and power of the bishop's office were tremendously enhanced.

At least as important as the new offices which developed in the church at this time was the revised conception of what the offices entailed. Clement of Rome already spoke of the ministry as a priesthood. He spoke of distinctions within the church between high priests, priests, and Levites, and of a *laity* which was to be distinguished from all three of these groups. In this he had the model of the Old Testament to go by. An additional model for the early church was found in the priestly practices of the pagan religions with which the early Christians were familiar. It should be noted, however, that the New Testament, far from supporting this development, argues for the priesthood of all believers.

By the middle of the third century Cyprian, following the lead of Tertullian, had developed the idea of the ministry as a priesthood to the point where the Lord's Supper was viewed as a sacrifice offered by the officiating "priest" to the Lord. In Cyprian the priestly conception of the Christian ministry had come to full flower. The distinctions within the major offices had now become distinctions within the priestly character of the ministry of the church. The question of whether one was a presbyter, deacon, or subdeacon was now less important than the question of whether he was a member of the clergy—and, as such, endowed with clerical and priestly powers—or a mere member of the laity. The concept of "office" had now become official and authoritarian, in contrast with an earlier emphasis on "ministry" as service—a service which, in one form or another, all Christians exercised.

This development was a late step in the gradual decline of the laity in the early church. It appears that in the New Testament church all believers were considered to be ministering members of the church by reason of their baptism. There is no evidence that only a few people were permitted to administer the sacraments. That leaders and people with special functions in the church should emerge into greater prominence was to be expected. But there was a gradual decline in the role the "laity" played in the choosing of these leaders. Lay participation in the election of bishops never entirely disappeared, but such participation soon became mere lip service to an earlier principle. The development of the priestly conception of the ministry and of the sacraments introduced an essential difference between clergy and laity. When the functions and characteristics of the "prophetic" ministry also began to be ascribed to the institutional ministry, the gap between clergy and laity could only be widened.

Two other developments may be added to complete the picture. a) The gap between clergy and laity was widened even further by the in-

roduction and gradual growth of clerical privileges and immunities. These included exemption from trial in civil courts and from certain civic duties which the general citizenry had to perform. Certain outward signs accentuated the distinction between clergy and laity, such as clerical garb and the tonsure. Clerical celibacy was an additional mark of distinction, although it must be added that this requirement had a relatively slow development and a stormy career.

b) Furthermore, in Gregory of Nyssa (who died in 394 A.D.) and in Augustine (who died in 430) the idea developed that "ordination"—that is, the induction of a person into sacred orders—conferred upon the recipient an indelible character, comparable to the military brand or to the regal imprint on a coin. According to this view, when the ceremony of ordination is performed in a formally correct manner, a change takes place. The ordained person is suddenly given a character which he did not formerly possess, and certain new qualities; as a result of this endowment he is now enabled to be a teacher of righteousness, an instructor in hidden mysteries, and a performer of potent ecclesiastical rites.

### 3. Evaluation

It would be difficult to maintain that all of the changes described above were illegitimate. This would be tantamount to saying that the process of adjustment to changed conditions, already under way during New Testament times, should have stopped at the end of the period of special revelation. This would be particularly unfair because of the major change which the closing of the biblical canon signalized.

Though all this is true, the developments just sketched are open to serious criticism. The departure from the spirit and tenor of the New Testament situation was too wide to be excused. The most obvious point of criticism has to do with the development of a hierarchy of offices. One of the most serious results of this development was the demotion of the lay member of the church to the status of second-rate citizen. Furthermore, the concentration of sacramental power in the office of the priest violated the freedom of access which the believer has to Christ. And, to mention but one more point, the ascription of apostolic authority to the leading members of the hierarchy tempted the church to replace biblical authority with the authority of ecclesiastical tradition. History is replete with evidence that this temptation was not resisted with any great success.

It remains now to trace the correctives applied to this situation by the Protestant Reformation. The Reformers certainly did apply biblical correctives, both in the area of doctrine and in the area of church organization. When that has been acknowledged, however, two things remain to be considered: whether the revision in church organization which the Reformers carried out was complete enough, and whether the post-Reformation church has fully carried forward the insights of the Reformers in their address to the problem of office and ordination—or even maintained the degree of biblical normativity in this area which the Reformers achieved.



## B. The Reformation Era

### 1. Introduction

The view of office and ordination which had developed by the close of the ancient period prevailed throughout the medieval period of the Roman Catholic Church. During these medieval centuries, that view became deeply embedded in Roman Catholic tradition. One could call it a "priestly" or "sacerdotal" view of office and ordination. According to this view, the office of priesthood was limited to a specially ordained class within the church, and ordination was elevated to the position of a sacrament. The sacrament of ordination was thought to confer an indelible character of power and grace upon the ordained; as a result, office came to be associated more with status than with service. By virtue of his office, the priest became the dispenser of sacramental graces, and the possessor of special spiritual powers: the power to bind and loose with respect to the forgiveness of sins, and the power necessary for the administration of the sacraments—especially the power to change the elements in the celebration of the Mass. This special spiritual power and grace was not available for the laity. As a result of these developments, therefore, a wide gulf was created between clergy and laity, with the laity being reduced to second-class citizenship in the church of Christ.

The Protestant Reformation involved, among other things, a reaction against this priestly, hierarchical development. Without exception, the Reformers adopted a new stance with regard to office and ordination. But the question, "What precisely was the meaning of office and ordination according to the Reformers?", is difficult to answer. This difficulty stems, in part, from the fact that for the principal Reformers the order of the church was not a primary concern. The focus of their concern was the doctrine of grace. Church order concerns, therefore, arose only secondarily, usually when the medieval priestly developments were thought to obscure or interfere with the doctrine of grace. Hence the Reformers usually tended to be quite pragmatic in matters of church order. Moreover, there were many Reformers working quite independently of one another, and there was no collective attempt to give *the* definitive answer to our question. Finally, none of the individual, main-line Reformers gave a neat, convenient, summary definition of the terms "office" and "ordination." In fact, those terms were often used rather loosely and ambiguously in Reformation literature. And yet, in spite of these difficulties, it is possible, by way of implication, to draw from a study of the Reformation era some conclusions that have bearing on our problems in the area of office and ordination today.

If this study is to be kept within reasonable scope, it will be impossible to examine the views of *all* the Reformers. Rather, we shall take as being generally representative of the basic Protestant approach to office and ordination the views of Luther and Calvin, with occasional references to other sources. In view of the particular community that is to be served by this report, furthermore, the bulk of attention will be given to Calvin.

Another limitation should be mentioned at this point, namely, that this study of office and ordination in the Reformation era will be largely limited to the ministerial or pastoral office. Such a limitation is quite

natural when office and ordination are to be studied in tandem, as is being done by this committee. For implicit in this combination is the suggestion that our interest with regard to office should focus on the pastoral office, since it is historically with reference to that office that the term "ordination" is used. In Reformation literature, for example, "ordination" is a word used normally, if not exclusively, in connection with the special ministerial office. We shall therefore deal here particularly with the Reformation view of the ministerial office and of ordination to that office, and only incidentally with the other offices.

Finally, in order to gain perspective on Reformation developments, it is important to recognize at the outset that the Reformers did not work in some sort of non-historical vacuum. Whether they were developing theologies or church orders, they were working in a historical context. With regard to developments specifically in the area of office and ordination, it is helpful to keep in mind that the poles between which the Reformers were working were Roman Catholicism on the right and Anabaptism on the left (see Wilhelm Pauck, "Ministry in the Time of the Continental Reformation," in Niebuhr and Williams, *The Ministry in Historical Perspective*; and Helmut Lieberg, *Amt und Ordination bei Luther und Melancthon*). With regard to the development of church orders in the Reformation, Pauck observes, "The Roman Church was firmly established in the common life. Innumerable ties linked it to the political and social order, to economics and law, to mores and customs. New church orders could not come into being except by a transition in the course of which much that was old and traditional had to be preserved." In addition to these ties with the Roman past, the mainline Reformers were sensitive to what they regarded as excessive disorder in Anabaptism, the left-wing of the Reformation. Both of these pressures help us to understand on the one hand, the gap that at times existed between the Reformers' ideals for the life and order of the church and what they were actually able to accomplish; and on the other hand the rather conservative position eventually taken by the Reformers themselves on the matter of office and ordination.

Having noted the medieval background for the Reformation as well as certain problems, limitations, and perspectives with regard to the Reformation era, let us now go on to examine some specific Reformation developments that bear on the concept of office and ordination.

## 2. Specific Reformation Developments

### a. With regard to office

Out of the Reformation emerged the well-known phrase, "the priesthood of all believers." This phrase was particularly associated with Luther, but is designated a teaching held by all the Reformers, including Calvin—as is evident from his prayer in the commentary on Malachi 2:9.

Grant, Almighty God, that since thou hast deigned to take us as a priesthood to thyself; and hast chosen us when we were not only in the lowest condition, but even profane and alien to all thy holi-

ness; and hast consecrated us to thyself by thy Holy Spirit; that we may offer ourselves as holy victims to thee.

Grant that we may bear in mind our office and our calling and sincerely devote ourselves to thy service. May we so present to thee our efforts and our labors that thy name may be truly glorified in us, that men may know that we have been ingrafted into the body of thine only begotten Son.

As he is the chief and the only true and perpetual priest, may we become partakers of that priesthood with which thou hast been pleased to honor him; so that he may take us as laborers with him. Thus may thy name be perpetually glorified by the whole body as well as by the Head. Amen.

This doctrine of the priesthood of all believers (along with the companion emphasis on the sharing of all believers in Christ's prophetic and kingly offices, cf., Calvin's *Institute*, II, 15, 2ff; and *Heidelberg Catechism*, Q. 32) was a potentially revolutionary doctrine in the historical development of the concept of office and ordination, for it contradicted on at least one essential point centuries of tradition pertaining to that concept. Universal priesthood meant, as the quotation from Calvin indicates, that in some sense all Christian believers are office-holders in the church of Jesus Christ! It meant that the office of ministry in the broad sense of Christian service is basically conferred not upon a select group but upon the whole church. It may be said that simply by virtue of our general baptism into the body of Christ, and not by special ordination, all believers are "ordained" priests and prophets, and kings. There is therefore essentially no special order of priests existing above and separate from the rest of the body of Christ.

This recovery of an important New Testament teaching was probably the major contribution of the Protestant Reformation toward the development of a new view of office and ordination. At the very least, the doctrine of universal priesthood was bound to blunt the clericalism and sacerdotalism that had attended the ancient and medieval developments. If the universal priesthood of all believers would not eliminate the gulf between clergy and laity, it would at least diminish that gulf. And it would of necessity force a change in the concepts of office and ordination in the direction of a broader, less priestly, more functional interpretation of those terms.

It can be well questioned, of course, whether the full potential of the teaching of universal priesthood was ever realized in Protestantism. For in that tradition, too, there has grown up a clericalism that has resulted in a back-seat position for the laity with respect to the total ministry of the church—a clericalism that is inconsistent with Reformation theories of universal office-sharing. At this point it is important to recall an observation made in the introduction to this section on the Reformation era. To some degree, the historical context in which the Reformers worked affected the extent to which the doctrine of universal priesthood would alter the traditional ideas of office and ordination. For example, in his recent study of office and ordination in Luther, Helmet Lieberg concludes that the later Luther became more conservative than before

in response to the Anabaptist wing of the Reformation, therefore emphasizing more than he had earlier the need for particular special offices, and even permitting again a greater distinction between clergy and laity than he had previously permitted. Likewise, Calvin's fear of the Anabaptists as disturbers of civil and ecclesiastical peace is well known; it is more than likely that this fear contributed to moving Calvin in the direction of a rather firm ordering of the church and its ministry. Of course, Calvin appealed to Scripture in order to legitimate his church order. But that appeal was not made in the abstract, apart from a historical context.

In spite of the distinctive Protestant emphasis on universal priesthood or universal office-sharing into which all are baptized, the Reformers retained the traditional idea of the need for special office-holding in the church into which one is ordained. There is very little evidence that the Reformers saw any inconsistency here. There are only occasional references in Reformation literature that may suggest a slight feeling of tension between the ideas of universal priesthood and special office. Zwingli says, for example, "It is true we are all fully ordained to the priesthood . . . which means nothing else but that everyone offers himself. But we are not all apostles and bishops." And the *Second Helvetic Confession* Chapter 18 asserts that there is a difference between universal priesthood and special ministry, but does not really clarify what that difference is.

The Apostles of Christ indeed call all believers in Christ priests, but not by reason of a ministerial office, but because through Christ all who are the faithful, having been made kings and priests, are able to offer spiritual sacrifices to God. Accordingly there are great differences between a priesthood and a ministry. For the former is common to all Christians . . . but the same is not so with the latter. And we have not removed the ministry out of the midst of the church when we have cast the papistical priesthood out of the church of Christ. (Both Zwingli and the Confession are quoted in J. L. Ainslie, *The Doctrines of Ministerial Order in the Reformed Churches of the sixteenth and seventeenth Centuries*, pp. 7, 8.)

The principal reason why the Reformers saw no real inconsistency between universal office-sharing and special ministry is very important, because it offers us a basic insight into the "meaning of office and ordination" in the Reformation era. That reason is that the Reformers regarded the special offices as being *functional* or *instrumental* in character. The church appoints some of its members to special tasks in order that the total ministry of the church, which remains basically the responsibility of all, can be most efficiently carried out. Although such division of labor is necessary for good order and efficiency, it does not create an essentially different order or hierarchy in the church that may be regarded as an end in itself. As Luther viewed it, for example, within the body of Christ some of the priests are chosen or elected to become "the other priests' workmen, servants, and officers." (*Werke*, Weimar Edition, Vol. 7, p. 633). Consequently, it is wrong, said Luther, to understand the office of ministry in terms of status, authority, privilege or dignity. Rather, the primary emphasis is to be placed on function, duty, and work.

(Vol. 12, p. 190) When Calvin uses the term "office" in his *Ecclesiastical Ordinances* of 1541, it often means work or function rather than position or status. For example, "The office proper to doctors is the instruction of the faithful." And again, when writing of the elders, "Their office is to have oversight of the life of everyone . . ." (*Theological Treatises*, Vol. 22, of Library of Christian Classics, V, pp. 62, 63).

On this important point, Robert Clyde Johnson in an essay on "The Reformation and the Ministry" in *The Church and Its Changing Ministry*, (ed. by R. C. Johnson), observes the following:

It is significant that in the Reformers' use of Latin, *officium* meant primarily "service," "duty," "work," "function," or "obligation," and only secondarily meant "office" in the sense in which we commonly understand this word today. . . . The fact that the principal connotations we today bring to the word "office," which appears repeatedly in English translations of Reformation writings, are primarily those of position and status, and only secondarily those of service and work, could be a hidden source of one aspect of the ambiguity that surrounds the questions of ministry. We might do well to read "work" each time the word "office" appears in discussions of the nature of the ministry (p. 57).

The same author expresses the Protestant functional view of office by speaking of special offices as the result of the ordering of the church for the purpose of enabling "the church to deploy its forces most effectively in its assigned mission in and for the world" (p. 21). And ordination is then the "appointment to a post that is strategic to the accomplishment of this mission."

This functional view does not mean that the Reformers regarded the special offices as mere human contrivances. On the contrary, Calvin speaks of the special office of ministry as "a most sacred ordinance of Christ." He further states, "To Christ we owe it that we have ministers of the gospel, that they abound in necessary qualifications, that they execute the trust committed to them. All, all is his gift" (Commentary on Ephesians 4:11). But although Calvin views the ministry as an institution of God, he still speaks of it in strongly functional terms. God uses the ministry of men, he writes, "not by transferring to them his right and honor, but only that through their mouths he may do his own work—just as a workman uses a tool to do his work" (*Institutes* IV, 3, 1). He adds that the minister is a "puny man risen from the dust," that "he excels us in nothing," and that as a class ministers are "weak and earthen vessels" (*Ibid.*).

The functional approach is also evident in Calvin's comments on the several offices mentioned in Ephesians 4:11—apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers.

Of these only the last two have an ordinary office in the church; the Lord raised up the first three at the beginning of his kingdom, and now and again revives them as the need of the times demands. . . . These three functions were not established in the church as permanent ones, but only for that time during which churches were

to be erected where none existed before, or where they were to be carried over from Moses to Christ. Still, I do not deny that the Lord has sometimes at a later period raised up apostles, or at least evangelists in their place, *as has happened in our own day (Institutes, IV, 3, 4; italics ours).*

Calvin's functionalism allowed him to be somewhat pragmatic and flexible, sensitive to the immediate situation, to the exigencies of the times. He saw that the offices were not an end in themselves, but a means to the end of the building up of the people of God, "for the equipment of the saints for the work of ministry" (Ephesians 4:12). Calvin therefore allowed for the establishment of what he called extraordinary offices "as the need of the time demands."

#### b. With regard to Ordination

It is important to recognize at the outset that there is a certain ambiguity in the Reformers' usage of the term "ordination." The term is used both in limited sense (as referred to the ceremonial act of the laying on of hands) and in a broader sense (as referring to the church's appointment and authorization of a minister to preach and to administer the sacraments). The ceremony of the laying on of hands may be included in such an appointment, but it is not essential to it. Luther was speaking of ordination in the broader sense when he said, "We single out a man, and through the power of the Word which we possess we give him authority to preach the Word and to administer the sacraments. This is to ordain." (*Werke*, Vol. 15, p. 721) The Westminster Assembly was also using the broader meaning when it described ordination as "the solemn setting apart of a person to some public church office." (Quoted in H. G. Goodykoontz, *The Minister in the Reformed Tradition*, p. 71.)

Calvin wrote little about ordination, but when he did he apparently had in mind the ceremonial act of the laying on of hands (see *Institutes*, IV, 3, 16). He regarded the ceremony of the laying on of hands as useful, but not essential. There is no good evidence that he himself was ordained in the ceremonial sense. What Calvin emphasized when he wrote about the appointment of a person for the ministry of the Word was not the ceremony of the laying on of hands but the call, election, and examination of such a person. In the *Ecclesiastical Ordinances* he writes,

Now in order that nothing happen confusedly in the Church, no one is to enter upon this office [the office of pastor] without a calling. In this it is necessary to consider three things, namely: the principal thing is the examination; then what belongs to the institution of the ministers; third, what ceremony or method of procedure it is good to observe in introducing them to office (*Theological Treatises*, p. 58).

In this same document, written in 1541, it was recommended that the ceremony of the laying on of hands should not be used:

As to the manner of introducing him, it is good to use the imposition of hands, which ceremony was observed by the apostles and then

in the ancient church, providing that it take place without superstition and without offence. But because there has been much superstition in the past and scandal might result, it is better to abstain from it because of the infirmity of the times (*Ibid.*, p. 59).

On the other hand, Calvin states in the *Institutes* that the ceremony of the laying on of hands was of sufficient standing in the tradition of the apostles that it should not be abandoned, for "their very careful observance ought to serve in lieu of a precept" (IV, 3, 16). He even speaks of this ceremony as proceeding from "the Spirit of God" who "establishes nothing without cause in the church" (*Ibid.*). And yet Calvin concludes on that functional, pragmatic note we have heard before. He says that the ordination ceremony is "not useless, provided it be not turned to superstitious abuse" (*Ibid.*). So even though this ceremony proceeds from the Spirit of God, whether it should continue to be practiced depends on whether it is properly used or abused.

Calvin used the phrase "superstitious abuse" whenever he wished to oppose Roman Catholic sacramentalism. By means of this phrase, therefore, he denied by implication that any spiritual grace or sacramental grace is conferred by the ceremony of ordination. This denial becomes explicit in his commentary on II Timothy 1:6:

It is a question of knowing if grace has been given by the external sign. I reply to this question that whenever ministers were ordained, they were commended to God by the prayers of the whole church. It is in this way that grace was obtained for them from God, and not by virtue of the sign. But the sign was not in vain or uselessly applied. It was the external and sure testimony of the grace that they received from the hand of God himself.

It appears that Calvin considered the laying on of hands not as a sign effectual in itself (and therefore not indispensable) but as a sign which is *useful* as a means of assuring the ordained that God grants the grace sought on his behalf. Calvin, in other words, assigns to ordination a certain teaching function. It is "an external and sure testimony of the grace . . . received from the hand of God himself" (*Ibid.*). And it is used "to warn the one ordained that he is no longer a law unto himself, but bound in servitude to God and the church" (IV, 3, 16). Calvin's view of ordination has been summarized as follows in an essay by Henri d'Espine.

The church recognizes by ordination the call that God has addressed to one of its members. It grants him authority for the exercise of the ministry within the church to which God has called him. It prays earnestly on his behalf for the graces necessary to the work of the ministry. It ordains him to the service of God, by the laying on of hands, and expresses its certainty that God grants its prayer. (*The Church and its Changing Ministry*, p. 122.)

Finally, a few observations should be made regarding the special function or "office" to which one is ordained. The primary office (using "office" in the Reformation sense of function) is the preaching of the gospel in the Reformed tradition. The secondary office is the administra-

tion of the two sacraments. Ordination was the normal route prescribed for securing proper authorization to carry out these functions. In other words, it was the normal procedure and practice of the early Reformed churches to limit both the preaching of the Word and the administration of the sacraments to the ordained ministry—largely, if not wholly, in the interest of maintaining good order in the churches. Calvin's *Ecclesiastical Ordinances* of 1541, however, do apparently allow for some limited exceptions to that rule.

Baptism . . . should be administered only by ministers or coadjutors.

. . . The ministers are to distribute the bread in proper order and with reverence; and none are to give the chalice except the colleagues or deacons with the ministers (*Theological Treatises*, pp. 66, 67).

The Reformers' general practice of limiting the administration of the sacraments to the ordained ministry can be traced to two concerns: first, their concern for good order; and, second, their concern that Word and sacrament remain together for theological reasons. The latter point is the key to Calvin's view reflected in his Genevan Catechism, where he says,

Does the administration of both baptism and the supper belong indiscriminately to all?

They are the proper function of those to whom the public office of teaching is entrusted. For the two things, feeding the church with the doctrine of salvation and administering the sacraments, are joined to each other by a lasting tie (*Theological Treatises*, p. 139).

It is worth noting here that Calvin does not tie the administration of the sacraments to ordination *per se*, but ties this function to the "teaching" or preaching of the Word. His primary concern is simply to keep the two together. In Calvin's view "those to whom the public office of teaching is entrusted" are thereby authorized to administer the sacraments.

### 3. Summary

In summary we may observe that the Reformation emphasis on the priesthood of all believers—or, more broadly, on "universal office-sharing"—means that "office" is primarily committed to the whole church, and that the task of ministry is assigned to *all believers*, not simply to a special, professional class. At the same time, it is not inconsistent with this universal office-sharing, and it is in keeping with apostolic practice, that, in the interests of good order and efficiency, some individuals within the body at large be appointed to certain special offices or ministries, thereby enabling the church "to deploy its forces most effectively for its assigned mission in and for the world." The Reformation view of these special offices is quite functional and pragmatic. Special offices are a God-given means to an end, and in the usage of the Reformers office often means work or function, rather than position or status.

"Ordination," in Reformation usage, refers either broadly to the entire procedure by which a church appoints some members of the body to special ministries, or more narrowly to the ceremony of the laying on of



hands. In the former sense, ordination is essential to the good order and well-being of the church; in the latter sense, ordination is useful but not essential, and possibly subject to superstitious abuse. For the Reformers, ordination in the sense of the laying on of hands was not a sacrament, did not create a special priestly order in the church, and did not confer sacramental grace or power *ex opere operato*. It was simply the rite by which the church publicly confirmed its call and appointment, and as such it had a certain symbolic and instructional value. Ordination was not performed in the abstract, for it was appointment to a particular post that was strategic for the accomplishment of the church's ministry.

In the Reformation view, the primary "office" (function) of the ministry is the preaching of the Word; the secondary "office" is the administration of the sacraments. In keeping with the theology of sacramental dependence upon the Word, these functions should be kept together; and in the interest of good order they should be assigned to those whom the church sees fit to appoint.

Finally, it is important to emphasize that the Reformation view of office and ordination was developed both out of response to New Testament apostolic practice, and out of response to the exigencies of the time. In the Reformation view, therefore, there is room for adjustments to historical circumstances, in Calvin's words, "as the need of the times demands."

### C. Post-Reformation Developments in the Dutch Reformed Tradition

Among the Reformers, Calvin held a relatively high view of church office. He saw the order of the church as having been basically prescribed in the New Testament. He shared with the other Reformers the view that the church as the school of Christ expresses itself through the ministry of the Word. On the other hand, he did leave some flexibility as to the number and definition of the offices, and he raised some doubts as to the wisdom of continuing the laying on of hands as a part of the ceremony of ordination.

The Dutch Reformed tradition has generally followed Calvin quite faithfully. Herman Bavinck, as he expresses himself in his *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek*, may be taken as representative of such agreement with Calvin. Bavinck recognizes a certain freedom and flexibility in the church with respect to the offices, and yet argues that basic, scriptural principles are reflected in the Reformed church order. He recognizes that there were differences of opinion in the Reformed camp on many questions. For example, were the offices two, three, or four in number? Was the office of the teacher distinct from that of the preacher? Or, on the other hand, was the ministry of the Word itself only a subdivision of the office of elder? How were office-bearers to be chosen? What was the proper term of office for an elder? These and other questions are considered proper questions to raise in the area of church order. But Bavinck concludes this discussion as follows:

It may safely be said, however, that the Reformed, by restoring the office of elder and the office of deacon alongside of that of the minister of the Word, have most purely grasped the intent of Scripture and have most effectively recognized the rights of the congrega-

tion (*Gereformeerde Dogmatiek*, 3rd ed., Vol. IV, p. 424; translation ours):

Bavinck also points out that Christ's prophetic ministry is the task of the entire community of believers, but that it comes to special expression in a specially appointed minister of the Word. He also speaks of the close relationship of Word and sacrament, of the secondary position of the sacrament, and of the administration of the two. Whoever administers the Word, he says, can and may administer the sacraments (*Ibid.*, pp. 456-57).

Finally, Bavinck seeks to set the ceremony of the laying on of hands in its proper place. This ceremony, he says, is not an essential element of ordination. He goes on to say:

It [the laying on of hands] cannot and may not be conceived of as a mechanical impartation of a particular qualification for office. For, according to Scripture, the laying on of hands does not bestow but rather presupposes the presence of the *charismata* required for the office. This ceremony is also not to be identified with a person's election or calling to an office; it can therefore be nothing other than a public designation of someone who has been called to an office, and a solemn induction into and setting apart for that office. Just as a marriage ceremony does not constitute the essence of a marriage, and just as a coronation ceremony does not make a person a king, so also ordination, with or without the laying on of hands, is not the impartation of an office or of the qualifications for office. Ordination is simply the solemn, public declaration, before God and his people, that the one who has been called has been sent in a lawful way and hence by God himself, that he possesses the required gifts, and that he must therefore be received, recognized, and honored as such by the church (*Ibid.*, p. 149; translation ours).

The question must be faced, however, whether the Reformed tradition has in fact remained true to this understanding. Some of the developments in that tradition have carried forward the official character of the offices at the expense of the office of all believers. This is especially true of popular conceptions or misconceptions, but it is also true to some extent of official and semi-official positions. It is understandable that offices have to be established and regulated in the church. But there is a tendency in Reformed circles to add a veneer of officiousness to what is essentially a specialized service in the church. In part this tendency takes the form of an uncritical acceptance of growing traditions, and in part it involves an inclination to lend biblical weight to what are essentially practical considerations of good order. The following are representative examples of such subtle changes.

#### 1. The terminology for office.

What we call offices were called *diensten* (meaning *services*; the Latin term was *functions*) in the original Dutch text of the Church Order of Dordt. For the sake of convenience we call them "offices," but the convenience is dearly bought if the term obscures the basic connotation of

service (*diakonia*) involved in the concept of ministry in and for the church. The concept of office (*ambt*) and office-bearers (*ambtsdragere*) has ingrained itself so deeply into our religious life that we still have to reckon with it (Cf. Jansen, *Korte Verklaring*, p. 10; Van Dellen and Monsma, *The Revised Church Order Commentary*, p. 22; K. Dijk, article on "Ambt" in *Christelijke Encyclopaedie*, 2nd ed.).

## 2. The meaning of laying on of hands.

Calvin recognized the value of the precedent for the laying on of hands in the work of the apostles and in the practice of the early church. But because of the danger of superstition he advised on at least one occasion against the use of this ceremony. The early Dutch synods rejected the laying on of hands as a remnant of superstition, but by 1581, at the Synod of Middelburg, the laying on of hands was required for those entering office for the first time. Reformed commentators since that time have been at pains to point out that this is not a sacrament and does not confer special powers. The very effort to avoid a superstitious interpretation of the ceremony probably reflects the constant presence of the temptation to give it just such an interpretation.

It has become the invariable practice in the Christian Reformed Church to employ the laying on of hands in the ordination of ministers, but not to use it in the ordination of elders and deacons. If the symbolism conveyed by the laying on of hands is as carefully restricted as Bavinck says it should be, does not this symbolism apply equally to elders and deacons? Although the form used when elders and deacons are inducted into office speaks unequivocally of "ordination," the suggestion conveyed by common practice is that ministers are in a class by themselves. Common parlance underscores this kind of distinction in speaking of ministers alone as ordained. Thus credence is given to the idea that there is a clerical class, restricted to ministers alone, who have special gifts and powers not shared by the laity.

## 3. The identification of the offices.

Certain Reformed commentators have tended to identify the three recognized ecclesiastical offices with the prophetic, priestly, and kingly offices of Christ. This is a theological gloss on the New Testament, where support for this contention is lacking. A particularly strong statement of this contention is found in Van Dellen and Monsma's *The Revised Church Order Commentary* (pp. 23, 24), where the loss of true knowledge, righteousness and holiness in the Fall is interpreted as the loss of the threefold office. Christ is represented as restoring man in each of these respects. Thereupon the *Commentary* goes on to say:

For this reason the Old Testament knew three primary offices; no more, no less prophets, priests, and kings. They were representatives of the Christ to come. For this same reason the New Testament period has three primary offices; no more, no less: ministers, deacons, and elders, representing Christ respectively as Prophet, Priest, and King of His Church (p.24):

#### 4. Differences in term of office.

Reformed church order makes ministry a lifelong occupation while requiring periodic retirement from office by elders and deacons. Commentators on this distinction seek to give it a biblical basis. Jansen (p. 56)—followed by Van Dellen and Monsma (p. 65)—buttresses the argument for lifelong ministry as follows:

. . . Yet we hold that a minister is bound to the service of the church for life. Why? In the first place because this is biblical. Even in the Old Testament days Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and other prophets were called to the ministry for life. The disciples also and the apostles and evangelists were "separated" unto their ministry, not temporarily, but permanently, for life.

Scripture also indicates that the service of the Word demands our undivided love (John 21:15-17); II Cor. 5:14), our full time (John 9:4), our readiness of will (I Cor. 9:16, 17), our unflinching perseverance (II Tim. 4:1-6), and our complete separation unto the work (Rom. 1:1).

But with respect to elders it is argued that the absence of scriptural stipulations leaves the churches free to regulate this matter according to their best interests (Jansen, p. 128; Van Dellen and Monsma, p. 94). Even if one grants the relevance of the scriptural citations given above, the question must be faced why the same passages do not apply to elders and deacons as well. Were not priests and kings also called to office for life in the Old Testament? And do the New Testament texts cited prove, upon examination, to apply only to the ministry of the Word, or to all of Christian service?

The danger does not lie in making distinctions as to term of office, but in misapplying scriptural proof to support these distinctions. A distinction between the term of office of a minister and an elder or deacon may be defended on practical grounds. The length of preparation for the ministry argues for a long-term commitment to it. The demands of time and the necessity of earning a living may speak for periodic retirement of elders and deacons. But the introduction of biblical arguments for the distinction comes dangerously close to recognizing a priestly or clerical class in the church and to reviving the Roman Catholic idea that ordination confers an indelible character on its recipient. Furthermore, this sort of argumentation is rendered suspect by the fact that in the New Testament those servants whom we now call ministers are described as elders who labor in the Word and in teaching (I Tim. 5:17).

#### 5. The official character of preaching.

Reformed theology rightly holds that Christ is the only head of the church and that all authority in the church is his. The church, however, has a role in transmitting this authority. This is reflected in the question found, with a minor variation, in the forms for ordination of ministers, elders, and deacons: "Do you feel in your heart that you are lawfully called of God's church, and therefore of God himself, to this holy office?" The manner of the transmission of authority, and therefore the nature of

the authority itself, is subject to some ambiguity. But in distinction from Lutheran and certain forms of Presbyterian theology, Reformed theologians hold that the office-bearers are not representatives of the church, but of Christ (cf. T. Hoekstra, *Gereformeerde Homiletiek*, pp. 105, 106).

This concept of authority of the office-bearers comes to focus on the official character of preaching. Many theologians comment on the authority of preaching by an ordained minister in an organized congregation. Another quotation from Van Dellen and Monsma, *The Revised Church Order Commentary*, (p. 30) may serve to represent a widespread consensus:

Dr. H. Bavinck is thoroughly biblical when he maintains that all believers have a calling to preach or to witness, but that only those who have a definite charge of God may do so with authority and in the name of the Lord, preaching the Gospel as a savor of life unto life and as a savor of death unto death. See Isaiah 43:10, 12; Luke 10:16; Acts 8:4; II Corinthians 2:14-17 (Cf. H. Bavinck, *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek*, 1918, IV, pp. 410-415).

A sharp distinction is here made between the preaching done by an ordained minister and the exhorting done by anyone else. Mission preaching or evangelistic preaching may, according to some (e.g., Jansen, and Hoekstra) be another story.

Again the question may be raised whether too strong a case has been made for a possibly legitimate distinction. Is the argument weightier than its biblical support? It may be quite proper and defensible that the church open its pulpits only to properly qualified and duly designated men. But it would be very difficult to demonstrate on the basis of the texts cited above that it is ordained men alone to whom these texts apply, and that it is ordained men alone whose words of witness are a savor of life unto life or of death unto death.

The instances cited above reflect a slight but dangerous tendency to blur the lines on several important points. There is a tendency to lend scriptural authority to practical decisions and time-hallowed traditions. There is a tendency to lose the distinction between service and office. There is a lack of clarity as to who are the recipients of ordination and what is the meaning of this ceremony. These are sufficient reasons, it seems to us, for the church to re-examine its practices and to see in how far they still conform to the biblical requirements.

### III. CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of its study and discussion, your committee has arrived at the following conclusions with respect to the nature of ecclesiastical office and the meaning of ordination:

1. The term for office in the Greek New Testament is **DIAKONIA**, meaning "service" or "ministry." In this basic sense ecclesiastical office is one and indivisible, for it embraces the total ministry of the church, a ministry that is rooted in Christ.

2. This comprehensive ministry (office) is universal, committed to the whole church, not to a select group of individuals within the church. The

task of ministry is shared by all and is not limited to a special, professional class. The ministry of the church is Christ's ministry, shared by all who are in Christ.

3. It is not inconsistent with this universal office-sharing, and it is in keeping with apostolic practice, that some individuals within the church be appointed to certain special tasks. The Scriptures report a setting apart to special ministries or services. Both in the Old and New Testaments God calls particular people for particular tasks.

4. From the beginning these special ministries were functional in character, arising under the guidance of the Spirit primarily in the interests of good order and efficiency in the church, created as a means to the end of enabling the church to carry out Christ's work in the world most efficiently and effectively.

5. The special ministries are primarily characterized by service, rather than by status, dominance, or privilege. The authority which is associated with the special ministries is an authority defined in terms of love and service.

6. The special ministries of some believers are to be distinguished not in essence but in function from the comprehensive ministry shared by all believers, and distinctions among the special ministries themselves are also functional. There is therefore no essential distinction but only a functional one between ministers, elders, deacons, and all other members of the church. There is a difference in manner of service, but all are commissioned to serve.

7. The tasks of the preaching of the Word and of the administration of the sacraments have been given by Christ to the church. Although in the Scriptures these tasks are not explicitly limited to special office-holders, historically they have been assigned to and carried out by those whom the church has appointed. The church assigns these functions to certain individuals not on the basis of an essential, priestly distinction between clergy and laity, but with a view to maintaining good order in the church so that it may carry out its ministry most effectively.

8. There are no valid biblical or doctrinal reasons why a person whom the church has appointed to bring the Word may not also administer the sacraments.

9. "Ordination" should be understood as the appointment or setting apart of certain members of the church for special ministries that are strategic for the accomplishment of the church's total ministry. In this sense of appointment or setting apart, ordination has biblical precedent and is valuable for the good order and well-being of the church.

10. The ceremony of the laying on of hands, often associated with the ordination of ministers, is not a sacrament, does not create a special priestly order in the church, and does not confer sacramental graces or mystical powers upon the one ordained. This ceremony is a symbolic rite by which the church may publicly confirm its call and appointment to special ministries, and as such it is useful but not essential.

11. There is no biblical warrant for limiting the laying on of hands to those being appointed to the special ministry of teaching and preaching

the Word. Furthermore, to assign the act of the laying on of hands to ministers and not to elders is a departure from biblical example.

12. Because the Scriptures do not present a definitive, exhaustive description of the special ministries of the church, and because these special ministries as described in Scripture are functional in character, the Bible leaves room for the church to adapt or modify its special ministries in order to carry out its service to Christ effectively in all circumstances.

#### IV. ADDITIONAL MATTERS REFERRED TO OUR COMMITTEE

The Synods of 1970 and 1971 referred to our committee two additional matters (see introduction, above). On these matters we submit the following:

A. With respect to the question raised at the Reformed Ecumenical Synod of 1968 by the Reformed Churches of Brazil concerning the legitimacy of having an elder give the blessing or benediction at a regular church service, we observe that:

1. It would be inappropriate for our synod to make a judgment on this matter until our report has been acted on; and

2. The R.E.S. study committee on "Office in the New Testament" has made a recommendation on this problem (see *R.E.S. Agenda*, 1972, p. 87, last paragraph).

In view of the above, we suggest that synod take no action on this request.

B. With respect to Overture 25 from the Acts of 1971, we have a recommendation, which will be given under V, C.

#### V. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. That synod give the privilege of the floor to the following representatives of the study committee, when the report is discussed: Dr. John Primus, chairman, and Dr. W. De Boer.

B. That synod adopt the following conclusions which have arisen from this study, and designate them as guidelines toward the solution of practical problems in the area of office and ordination:

1. The term for office in the Greek New Testament is DIAKONIA, meaning "service" or "ministry." In this basic sense ecclesiastical office is one and indivisible, for it embraces the total ministry of the church, a ministry that is rooted in Christ.
2. This comprehensive ministry (office) is universal, committed to the whole church, not to a select group of individuals within the church. The task of ministry is shared by all and is not limited to a special, professional class. The ministry of the church is Christ's ministry, shared by all who are in Christ.
3. It is not inconsistent with this universal office-sharing, and it is in keeping with apostolic practice, that some individuals within the church be appointed to certain special tasks. The Scriptures report a setting apart to

special ministries or services. Both in the Old and New Testaments God calls particular people for particular tasks.

4. From the beginning these special ministries were functional in character, arising under the guidance of the Spirit primarily in the interest of good order and efficiency in the church, created as a means to the end of enabling the church to carry out Christ's work in the world most efficiently and effectively.
5. The special ministries are primarily characterized by service, rather than by status, dominance, or privilege. The authority which is associated with the special ministries is an authority defined in terms of love and service.
6. The special ministries of some believers are to be distinguished not in essence but in function from the comprehensive ministry shared by all believers, and distinctions among the special ministries themselves are also functional. There is therefore no essential distinction but only a functional one between ministers, elders, deacons, and all other members of the church. There is a difference in manner of service, but all are commissioned to serve.
7. The tasks of the preaching of the Word and of the administration of the sacraments have been given by Christ to the church. Although in the Scriptures these tasks are not explicitly limited to special office-holders, historically they have been assigned to and carried out by those whom the church has appointed. The church assigns these functions to certain individuals not on the basis of an essential, priestly distinction between clergy and laity, but with a view to maintaining good order in the church so that it may carry out its ministry most effectively.
8. There are no valid biblical or doctrinal reasons why a person whom the church has appointed to bring the Word may not also administer the sacraments.
9. "Ordination" should be understood as the appointment or setting apart of certain members of the church for special ministries that are strategic for the accomplishment of the church's total ministry. In this sense of appointment or setting apart, ordination has biblical precedent and is valuable for the good order and well-being of the church.
10. The ceremony of the laying on of hands, often associated with the ordination of ministers, is not a sacrament, does not create a special priestly order in the church, and does not confer sacramental graces or mystical powers upon the one ordained. This ceremony is a symbolic rite by which the church may publicly confirm its call and appointment to special ministries, and as such it is useful but not essential.
11. There is no biblical warrant for limiting the laying on of hands to those being appointed to the special ministry of teaching and preaching the Word. Furthermore, to assign the act of the laying on of hands to ministers and not elders is a departure from biblical example.
12. Because the Scriptures do not present a definitive, exhaustive description of the special ministries of the church, and because these special ministries as described in Scripture are functional in character, the Bible leaves room for the church to adapt or modify its special ministries in order to carry out its service to Christ effectively in all circumstances.

C. That synod return Overture 25 from the Acts of 1971 (p. 643) to Classis Alberta South, asking that classis reconsider it in the light of the



guidelines given above. If after such reconsideration, classis should still deem it necessary to send another overture on this matter to synod, it may do so.

Respectfully submitted,

John H. Primus, Chairman  
Anthony A. Hoekema, Reporter  
William P. Brink  
Willis P. De Boer  
John H. Kromminga  
Clarence J. Vos  
Louis A. Vos

## REPORT 41

### ABORTION

#### DEAR BROTHERS:

In response to various communications and overtures, the Christian Reformed Synod of 1971 appointed a study committee "to search out and set forth the scriptural teaching relative to (induced) abortion and recommend a statement to synod for adoption." The grounds adduced in support of this recommendation were:

(a) Proposed alteration of various state laws demands a consistent Christian approach in this area.

(b) Such a statement could give moral guidance for our membership in this complex problem.

(c) The diversity of personnel required for a qualified committee makes impossible an adequate study on the local level.

The committee's report follows:

#### INTRODUCTION

Within the past few years there has developed an increasing interest in the subject of induced abortion. Not only have various churches made official pronouncements on the subject, but various states have liberalized their abortion laws and women's liberation groups have kept the issue before the public mind.

Abortion has increasingly been advanced as a partial solution to the developing problem of overpopulation and has been suggested as the final solution to a large number of personal and family problems caused by unwanted and unplanned pregnancies. Further, increased medical knowledge and advanced medical techniques have made abortion easier, safer and less expensive and hence within the reach of more and more women. Moreover, these same advances in knowledge and skills have made it easier to determine well before completion of gestation when there are evident indications of significant mental or physical deformity in the developing embryo.

All of this is compounded by an increasing materialism and an attendant rise in the standard of living which have led many to feel their personal freedom or style of life severely threatened by the addition of another family member. Moreover, there are many instances of genuine poverty or unusual family situations where the addition of another child to the household would result in severe psychological or material hardships in the life of the mother or in the lives of other members of the family.

And not to be neglected is the fact that there is an increasing sexual permissiveness which, in spite of the advances in contraceptive techniques, results in an increase in unwanted pregnancies. Though the

number of children conceived through rape or incest is not as high as is sometimes thought, there are many children who are conceived out of wedlock and under circumstances which are considered "illegitimate."

It should be carefully noted, however, that a large number of those currently seeking legal abortions are women who, though married and legitimately pregnant, simply prefer not to have another baby. Though many of these may well advance some more or less plausible reason for desiring an abortion, the fact is that in these instances the baby is usually perfectly well and there really is no significant threat to the life or wellbeing of either the mother or her family.

#### DEFINITION OF ABORTION

By "induced abortion" in the present discussion, we understand any action by which a human embryo or fetus is voluntarily and intentionally destroyed or removed from the mother's womb at a time when it is not independently viable.

#### THE BIBLICAL WITNESS

The effort of the church to come to a clear, unanimous statement on the question of induced abortion on the basis of biblical teachings is made particularly difficult by the fact that the Bible nowhere speaks directly to the question of abortion. Moreover, those biblical passages which may possibly have some bearing on the question are frequently given differing interpretations by those equally committed to the final authority of Scripture. (Consider, for example, the following: Genesis 25:22; Exodus 20:13; 21:22-25; Job 3:3; 10:8-12; 31:15; Psalm 51:5; 119:73; 139:13-16; Isaiah 49:1, 5; Jeremiah 1:5; Luke 1:41-44; Galatians 1:15.) Consequently, those passages even remotely relevant still do not serve as explicit guidelines for determining a biblically based position relative to the problem.

In spite of that fact, however, it is possible to achieve agreement among Reformed believers on certain cardinal questions of major importance.

(1) The first of these is that human life is in a very special sense a gift of God and is inestimable value in his sight. God created man in his own image, so that man stands unique among the works of God as one bearing a special relationship to him and as one who bears the special imprint in his life of the work of his Creator. (Cf. Genesis 1:26, 27; 2:7; 9:6; Psalm 8; Ecclesiastes 12:7; Luke 3:38; I Corinthians 11:7. Consider also the fact of the incarnation, that God identified himself with man in the flesh in order to redeem him: John 1:1, 14; 3:16; Galatians 4:4; Hebrews 2:5-8; 4:15.)

(2) Man has a unique eternal destiny so that he, in apparent distinction from the rest of terrestrial beings, in some way or other lives forever (Cf. Mathew 10:28; John 5:23,29; I Corinthians 15:53, 54. Only the believer enjoys eternal life, but even the unbeliever continues to exist forever. Cf. Matthew 25:41, 46; Mark 9: 48; John 11:26; Revelation 14:11; 20:10; Daniel 12:2.)

(3) Because of man's uniqueness as God's image bearer, his life is specially protected by God's commandment, "Thou shalt not kill" (Genesis 9:6; Exodus 20:13; 21:12-14; Leviticus 24:17; Numbers 35:16, 30, 31; Deuteronomy 19:10-13; cf. Matthew 5:21; Revelation 21:8). The Bible does recognize the right of men to terminate another's life under certain carefully prescribed circumstances (such as in a just war, at God's express command, or under circumstances determined judicially by duly constituted authorities), but man is never given the right arbitrarily or wantonly or for selfish gain to destroy human life (cf. Genesis 9:6; Leviticus 24:17; Exodus 21:12-16; I Samuel 15:3; Romans 13:4).

(4) The Bible specifically requires that man is always to act toward his neighbor in love, to promote his wellbeing, and to seek his best interests (cf. Matthew 5:44; 22:39; John 15:17; Romans 12:14-21; 13:8-10; I Corinthians 10:24). An attitude of deliberate hatred toward another human being, therefore, is to desire or to promote that person's destruction and is thus considered tantamount to the sin of murder (I John 3:15; cf. Leviticus 10:17).

#### THE PROBLEM

There are basically two issues in relation to abortion which need to be resolved in the light of the preceding biblical givens. The first is to determine the nature of the embryo or fetus being carried in the womb of an expectant mother, and the second is to determine whether there are any circumstances or conditions under which the product of conception may be intentionally aborted.

#### THE NATURE OF THE EMBRYO OR FETUS

If, as some allege, the product of conception is little or nothing more than some localized, extraneous tissue developing within a woman, then it is quite probably the right of every woman to do with this foreign growth as she deems best. If, on the other hand, the product of conception is in some sense an individual human life, then it becomes necessary to treat this life with the special respect due such life.

Some on the committee contend that the union of sperm and egg, by the act of fertilization, forms a new, unique, independent human individual. These affirm that this new being with its own genetic code requires only a compatible environment, adequate nutrition and time to continue the process of self-development and self-differentiation begun at the moment of conception. The development, therefore, is seen as a continuous process extending from the time of fertilization until the time of the individual's death, so that there is no point *after* fertilization at which the embryo or fetus *becomes* an individual human.

Other members of the committee are not prepared to go so far as to equate the fertilized ovum simply as such with a veritable human being. They do, however, recognize and declare that the fertilization of a human egg cell (and, some would add, its subsequent implantation in the uterine wall) initiates a process in which is formed a new human being which as such is included in the family of mankind and thus be-

comes the object of God's eternal concern and a creature of eternal destiny.

All agree, however, that though at the point of fertilization and implantation this emerging being is still in its very earliest stage of development, it must still be treated with the special respect due to developing human life (cf. Psalm 139:13-16; Jeremiah 1:5; Matthew 1:20). It is significant in this connection to note that believers confess that even in their mother's womb they were under God's notice and care (Psalm 139:13-16). The Scriptures also testify that believers and, indeed, all men born of women were from their beginning involved in a special convenantal relationship to God, either in Adam as the father of mankind, or in Jesus Christ as the second Adam (cf. Genesis 3:20; Acts 17:25; Romans 5:12-19; I Corinthians 15:22).

#### THE PERMISSIBILITY OF ABORTION

Those who believe that the developing embryo does not become human at some given stage of its development, but is already an individual human from the moment of conception regard the wanton, arbitrary destruction of an embryo at any stage of development as clearly contrary to the will of God. These, therefore, maintain that wilful abortion is never permissible under any circumstances whatever except on those rare occasions when the life of the mother is genuinely threatened by the continuation of the pregnancy. Moreover, those who believe that individual human life begins at conception are strongly opposed to the use of any means that destroy the developing individual's environment or that deprive him of nutrient and so passively deny his continued existence. Hence, they contend that it is not permissible to use the intra-uterine device (the I.U.D.), the "morning-after pill," the prostaglandins or any other abortifacients, since these are seen as agents that insure the negating of continued human life to one who is already an individual in the human family with the inherent right to life.

On the other hand, those who are not ready to equate the fertilized ovum simply as such with a veritable human being contend that the biblical givens are not sufficiently clear to condemn categorically all abortion or abortifacient other than those intended to preserve the life of the mother. These, while acknowledging the sanctity of human life at every stage of its development, and while deploring all wanton destruction of human life, maintain that there may be some highly unusual circumstances other than the desire to preserve the life of the mother under which abortion may be considered permissible.

It should be very carefully noted, however, that the committee members all agree that the destruction of a developing human embryo is always of very great significance and should never under any circumstances be considered lightly. In fact, for the Christian the deliberate termination of human embryonic life should never be considered a viable option except under the most unusual circumstances, circumstances in which other biblically sanctioned human values are being threatened by *not* terminating a pregnancy. Moreover, such circumstances are to be considered so unusual that it is undesirable

to seek to spell them out in advance or to codify them in some kind of list. And finally, it should be noted that the decision to terminate embryonic life should never be made by a prospective mother in isolation, but only after prayerful consideration of the judgment of sensitive Christians who have taken into consideration all the relevant personal, medical and psychological factors involved.

#### THE COMMUNITY OF BELIEVERS

It is regrettable that the church of Jesus Christ has not always served as a healing or supporting community for those among them who are faced with the burdensome reality of an unwanted or illegitimate pregnancy. In fact, at times the church has tended to create an atmosphere which has caused some faced with illegitimate pregnancies to turn to the abortionist rather than face the response of the household of faith. Believer, therefore, should seriously examine their own consciences and repent for failing to create in the name and spirit of their Lord a community of concern to which those "overtaken in a trespass" (Galatians 6:1) might readily turn in time of special need.

#### CONCLUSION

A. We recommend that synod adopt the following statements relative to this matter of induced abortion.

1. Synod affirms the unique value of all human life and the special relationship of man to God.

2. Synod, mindful of the sixth commandment, condemns the wanton or arbitrary destruction of any human life at any stage of its development.

3. Synod recognizes the legitimacy of performing an abortion whenever the life of the prospective mother is genuinely threatened by the continuation of a pregnancy.

4. Synod, recognizing that Reformed believers are not agreed about the legitimacy of other kinds of abortion, does nevertheless affirm that the termination of human embryonic life should never be considered a viable option except under the most unusual circumstances, circumstances in which other biblically sanctioned human values are being threatened by not terminating a pregnancy. Moreover, synod is unwilling to specify the other conditions under which abortion might be considered a viable alternative, since this might seem to eliminate the necessity of communal, prayerful deliberation in every individual situation.

5. Synod declares that where the Bible does not speak explicitly or with such clarity that all who read it in faith are able to come to the same conclusions, we should be very slow to judge or condemn those who act before the Lord in good conscience and with the concurring advice of the informed community of prayerful believers.

B. We recommend that synod adopt the following statements regarding the role of the believing community.

1. Synod calls believers to a recognition of the need for Christian compassion and understanding accompanied by positive Christian

action for the unwed pregnant girl, for families for whom the birth of another child looms as a very special burden, for those who are pregnant because of rape or incest, for those families who already have abnormal children or who face the likelihood or possibility of having an abnormal child.

2. Synod calls the churches to offer their full resources of counseling, encouragement, acceptance, material and financial support to any girl or woman faced with the burdensome reality of an unwanted pregnancy. The churches should offer this support joyfully and without recrimination in the name of Jesus Christ by whose grace we all must daily live.

Mr. Roger Boer  
Dr. Joyce DeHaan  
Dr. Edward Postma  
Dr. Edwin Roels  
Dr. Bruce Rottschafer  
Dr. Henry Stob

## REPORT 42

## NEO-PENTECOSTALISM

DEAR BROTHERS:

In response to various overtures and requests the Synod of 1971 appointed "a committee of seven members to study, in the light of the biblical teaching on the Holy Spirit, the teachings and practices associated with that which is popularly called Neo-Pentecostalism and explore the reasons for its growing appeal in the Christian Reformed Church." On the grounds that "there is a crisis situation developing in some congregations and in some areas within the denomination," and that "guidance is urgently needed by consistories and by members of the churches," synod "requested" the committee to submit its report to the Synod of 1972 (Acts, 1971, Art. 116, C, 1, 2; pp. 97-98).

Although some members of the committee had had little or no contact with "Neo-Pentecostalism" prior to their appointment to the present committee, the committee has made an earnest attempt to carry out its mandate responsibly within the requested time limits. It did so spurred on not only by its desire to honor the synodical request but also by its own growing awareness that the matter was indeed urgent. However, the more it probed the issues involved the more it became apparent to the committee that the complexity of the matter and the profound confessional, pastoral and polity implications which inhere in it, together with the limited time and energies available to the already heavily committed members of the committee, made it impossible to serve synod with an adequate report in time for the March 15 deadline for agenda copy. For this reason the committee reluctantly decided on February 24, 1972, to extend its work for another year and report to the Synod of 1973.

We are profoundly sorry for this delay, and for the disappointment it will cause in many quarters. We urge patience and forbearance on all and pray that the Holy Spirit of truth and grace may guide and sustain us all as we seek together to know and yield to the mind of Christ.

Humbly submitted,

Bassam Madany, Chairman  
John H. Stek, Reporter  
Stuart Bergsma  
Michael De Vries  
Dirk Hart  
David Holwerda  
Leonard Sweetman



## REPORT 43

## PROOF-TEXTS FOR THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

DEAR BROTHERS:

*Mandate:*

In conjunction with the decision to appoint a committee to prepare a new translation of the Heidelberg Catechism, the Synod of 1968 appointed a committee "to review and revise the Scripture passages adduced in support of the Heidelberg Catechism" (Acts 1968, p. 25). In 1970 this committee reported to synod that it was awaiting the initial sample of the new translation being prepared by the committee at work on that project (Acts 1970, p. 411).

The Synod of 1970 gave general approval to the plan and effort of the translation committee (cf. Acts 1970, p. 60 and pp. 460-67) so that at that point we had before us a section of the new translation with which we could begin work in connection with our mandate to "review and revise" the proof texts. The result of that beginning is presented to synod in this report.

*Personnel:*

We regret that also this year we must report on a number of changes in personnel. The original membership of your committee consisted of Dr. Willis DeBoer, Dr. A. C. DeJong, Dr. C. G. Kromminga, Dr. C. J. Vos, and Rev. J. Vos. Last year synod accepted the resignations of Dr. A. C. DeJong and Rev. J. Vos and adopted a recommendation of its advisory committee to bring the membership of the committee back to the original number of five, and to appoint two men who are regularly engaged in the pastoral and pulpit ministry (Acts 1971, p. 16). Subsequently synod appointed Revs. F. Guillaume and E. Haan to this committee (Acts 1971, p. 27). However we must now report that Rev. F. Guillaume was not able to serve on our committee for reasons of health. The Synodical Committee appointed Rev. Martin D. Geleyse in his place. Later on in the year Rev. E. Haan felt that he could no longer serve on the committee for personal reasons and the committee calls this vacancy to the attention of synod.

Your committee decided to pursue its work in the following manner: Two men were assigned to each Question and Answer to work independently of each other. Their recommendations were compared and reviewed by the whole committee. This method has proved satisfactory in the pursuit of our work. However, at present we have no members who fulfill the stipulation of the 1971 Synod: "two men who are regularly engaged in the pastoral and pulpit ministry" (Acts 1971, p. 16). (Rev. Martin D. Geleyse is at present on a leave of absence for study and a graduate student at Calvin Seminary, so that he does not strictly fulfill the above stipulation.) Because of our working in pairs we would

be pleased to have a committee of six members, and request that synod once again appoint two men who are regularly engaged in the pastoral and pulpit ministry.

*Interpretation of Mandate:*

Before beginning with the actual work of the committee we tried to come to a common understanding of and approach to the mandate "to review and revise the Scripture passages adduced in support of the Heidelberg Catechism" and to the whole matter of proof-texting. We agreed that the Holy Scriptures should not be used as a commentary to the statements of faith found in the Heidelberg Catechism. Rather we agreed that the Scripture-references should serve the purpose of demonstrating that the language of the Heidelberg Catechism and the concepts found in that confession find their origin in Scripture. When it comes to the language used it is sometimes possible to point to direct or nearly direct quotations from Scripture and in that case a straight text-reference is most certainly in order (for instance cf. Q. and A. 6: God created man good—refer to Gen. 1:31; and in his own image—refer to Gen. 1:26, 27). But in the case of concepts the committee feels that the reference to Scripture should do more than just give texts in the sense of one or two specific verses where the same thought is expressed in a very narrow sense of the word. Sometimes there are whole paragraphs or chapters in Scripture that present a complete unit of thought supporting the statement of faith in the catechism at this point. We have tried to reflect this in the way Scripture is referred to in such a case (for instance cf. Q. and A. 7: Where does this depraved nature of man come from? From the fall and disobedience of our first parents Adam and Eve, in paradise—refer to Gen. 3).

This is not an arbitrary decision of your committee. We have tried to stay in line with the historical data in this respect. As a basis for our work we have used

a. the third German edition of the text dating from 1563, cf. *Collectio Confessionum* ed. H. A. Niemeyer (1840), p. LXIII,

b. the Latin edition of the Heidelberg Catechism dating from 1584/5 also found in Niemeyer (1840), p. LXIII,

c. the Psalter Hymnal edition as it is found in our present hymnbooks, (We have compared the proof-texts here with those found in the Dutch *Psalm en Gezang-boek in gebruik bij de Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland* and found that our Psalter Hymnal has almost completely followed the Dutch edition.)

d. the 400th Anniversary Edition, a translation from original German and Latin texts by Allen O. Miller and M. Eugene Osterhaven, authorized by the North American Council of the World Alliance of Reformed and Presbyterian Churches, and published in 1959.

In addition to these we have consulted in certain cases the texts used in the old Latin and German editions published by Wilhelm Niesel in 1938. Comparing these editions we found that they have all been struggling with the question whether to give direct text-references in the most narrowly conceived sense of the word, or to refer to whole Scripture

passages or chapters. That is seen especially when we compare the Latin edition (b. above) with the German edition (a. above) both dating from the early years of the Heidelberg Catechism. The German consistently refers to chapter and refrains from making any particular verse-reference while the Latin edition faithfully and in every instance is very precise in giving the verse.

We also found that the present edition in the Psalter Hymnal, following the example of our Dutch brothers, is very lavish in its use of proof-texts. There is no other version we know in which so many text-references are given. But in many cases we fail to see why they have felt constrained to add to the witness of the early editions. We have felt that we wanted to eliminate texts that prove the point only by inference. By the same token we have felt that here and there we wanted to include texts which are more explicit and to the point.

## THE PROOF-TEXTS WITH THE TEXT OF THE NEW TRANSLATION:

### LORD'S DAY 1:

Q. 1: What is your only comfort in life and death?

A. That I am not my own,\*

\*1 Cor. 6:19, 20

but belong —

body and soul,

in life and in death —\*

\*Rom. 14:7-9

to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ.\*

\*1 Cor. 3:23, Tit. 2:14

He has fully satisfied for all my sins with his precious blood,\*

\*1 Peter 1:18, 19, 1 John 1:7-9, 2:2

and has set me free from the tyranny of the devil.\*

\*John 8:34-36, Heb. 2:14, 15, 1 John 3:1-11

He also watches over men in such a way\*

\*John 6:39, 40, 10:27-39, 2 Thess. 3:3, 1 Peter 1:5

that not a hair can fall from my head

without the will of my Father in heaven:\*

\*Matt. 10:29-31, Luke 21:16-18

in fact, all things must work together for my salvation.\*

\*Rom. 8:28

Because I belong to Christ,

the Holy Spirit assures me of eternal life\*

\*Rom. 8:15, 16, 2 Cor. 1:21, 22, 5:5, Eph. 1:13, 14

and makes me whole-heartedly willing and ready

from now on to live for him.\*

\*Rom. 8:1-17

Q. 2: What must you know to live and die in the joy of this comfort?

A. Three things:

First, how great my sin and misery are.\*

\*Rom. 3:9, 10, 1 John 1:10

Second, how I am set free from all my sins and misery.\*

\*John 17:3, Acts 4:12, 10:43

Third, how I am to thank God for such deliverance.\*

\*Matt. 5:16, Rom. 6:13, Eph. 5:8-10, 2 Tim. 2:15, 1 Peter 2:9, 10

## PART I: MAN'S MISERY.

### LORD'S DAY 2

Q. 3: How do you come to know your misery?

A. The Law of God tells me.\*

\*Rom. 3:20, 7:7-25

Q. 4: What does God's Law require of us?

A. Christ teaches us this in summary in Matt. 22:

"You shall love the Lord your God

with all your heart,

and with all your soul,

and with all your mind.\*

\*Deut. 6:5

This is the great and first commandment.

And a second is like it,

You shall love your neighbor

as yourself.\*

\*Lev. 19:18

On these two commandments depend

all the law and the prophets."

Q. 5: Can you live up to all this perfectly?

A. No.\*

\*Rom. 3:9-20, 23, 1 John 1:8, 10

I have a natural tendency

to hate God and my neighbor.\*

\*Gen. 6:5, Jer. 17:9, Rom. 7:23, 24, 8:7, Eph. 2:1-3, Tit. 3:3

### LORD'S DAY 3:

Q. 6: Has God then created man so wicked and perverse?

A. No.

God created man good\*

\*Gen. 1:31

and in his own image\*

\*Gen. 1:26, 27

that is, in true righteousness and holiness,\*

\*Eph. 4:24

so that he might

truly know his Creator,\*

\*Col. 3:10

love him with all his heart,

and live with him in eternal happiness

for his praise and glory.\*

\*Ps. 8

- Q. 7: Where does this depraved nature of man come from?  
 A. From the fall and disobedience of our first parents,  
 Adam and Eve, in Paradise.\*  
 \*Gen. 3  
 This fall has so poisoned our nature\*  
 \*Rom. 5:12, 18, 19  
 that we all are conceived and born with the taint of sin.\*  
 \*Ps. 51:5
- Q. 8: But are we as depraved —  
 totally unable to do any good  
 and disposed toward all evil?  
 A. Yes,\*  
 \*Gen. 6:5, 8:21, Job 14:4, Isa. 53:6  
 unless we are born again, by the Holy Spirit.\*  
 \*John 3:3-5

#### LORD'S DAY 4

- Q. 9: But doesn't God do man an injustice  
 by requiring in his Law  
 what man is unable to do?  
 A. No,  
 for God created man with the ability to keep the law.\*  
 \*Gen. 1:31, Eph. 4:24  
 Man, however, tempted by the devil,\*  
 \*Gen. 3:13, John 8:44  
 in reckless disobedience,\*  
 \*Gen. 3:6  
 deprived himself and his descendants of these gifts.\*  
 \*Rom. 5:12, 18, 19
- Q. 10: Will God permit such disobedience and rebellion to go un-  
 punished?  
 A. Certainly not.  
 He is terribly angry  
 about the sin which we are born,  
 and about the sins which we personally commit.  
 He is a just judge and as such  
 will punish them both now and in eternity,\*  
 \*Ex. 34:7, Ps. 5:4-6, Neh. 1-2, Rom. 1:18, Eph. 5:6, Heb. 9-27  
 as he has declared:  
 "A curse upon any man who does not fulfil this law  
 by doing all that it prescribes."\*  
 \*Deut. 27:26, Gal. 3:10
- Q. 11: But isn't God also merciful?  
 A. God is certainly merciful,\*  
 \*Ex. 34:6, 7, Ps. 103:8, 9  
 but he is also just.\*  
 \*Ex. 34:7, Deut. 7:9-11, Ps. 5:4-6, Heb. 10:30, 31  
 His justice demands  
 that sins committed against his supreme majesty

be punished with the supreme penalty —  
eternal punishment of body and soul.\*

\*Matt. 25:35-46

## PART II: MAN'S DELIVERANCE:

### LORD'S DAY 5:

- Q. 12: According to God's righteous judgment,  
we deserve punishment,  
both in this world and forever after:  
how can we then escape this punishment  
and return to God's favor?
- A. God requires that his justice be satisfied.\*  
\*Ex. 23:7, Rom. 2:1-11  
Therefore the claims of his justice  
must be paid in full,  
either by ourselves or by another.\*  
\*Rom. 8:3, 4
- Q. 13: Can we pay the debt ourselves?
- A. Certainly not.  
Actually we increase our guilt every day.\*  
\*Matt. 6:12, Rom. 2:4, 5
- Q. 14: Can another creature—any at all—  
pay this debt for us?
- A. No.  
To begin with,  
God will not punish another creature for man's guilt.\*  
\*Ezek. 18:4, 20, Heb. 2:14-18  
Besides,  
no mere creature can sustain the weight  
of God's eternal wrath against sin  
and so release others from it.\*  
\*Ps. 49:7-9, 130:3
- Q. 15: What kind of Mediator and Deliverer, then, should we look  
for?
- A. He must be truly human\*  
\*Rom. 1:3, 1 Cor. 15:21, Heb. 2:17  
and truly righteous,\*  
\*Isa. 53:9, 2 Cor. 5:21, Heb. 7:26  
yet more powerful than all creatures,  
that is, he must also be true God.\*  
\*Isa. 7:14, 9:6, Jer. 23:6, John 1:1

### *Recommendations:*

Your committee recommends that synod

1. give Dr. Willis DeBoer and Dr. Carl G. Kromminga the opportunity to answer any questions on behalf of the committee.

2. appoint two additional members to the committee from the list of men who are "regularly engaged in the pastoral and pulpit ministry."
3. express its agreement with the approach of the committee as exhibited in the sample of its work.

Respectfully submitted,

Willis P. DeBoer, Chairman  
Martin D. Geleyse  
Carl G. Kromminga  
Clarence J. Vos

## REPORT 44

## THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF BIBLICAL AUTHORITY

DEAR BROTHERS:

## PREFACE

The Synod of 1969 appointed this committee to study the nature and extent of biblical authority. The mandate for this committee reads as follows:

"Synod appoint a committee to study the nature and extent of biblical authority, and in particular the 'connection between the content and purpose of Scripture as the saving revelation of God in Jesus Christ and the consequent and deducible authority of Scripture,' to evaluate critically in the light of the above-mentioned study and our confessional standards the manner of interpreting Scripture presently employed by some contemporary Reformed scholars, and to serve the churches with pastoral advice in these matters. (Note: the quotation is from the letter of the Gereformeerde Kerken to the RES 1969 as cited on pp 86-87 of our 1969 Agenda.)

"Grounds:

"a. The Gereformeerde Kerken have expressed the desire 'for a continued joint discussion of these questions'. (Letter addressed to RES dated August 1, 1969; cf. Acts of RES, pp. 307-309).

"b. The Reformed Ecumenical Synod has requested this study. (cf. Agenda, Report 16, VI d, pp. 86, 87). (See Supplement 16).

"c. In this way the pastoral concern of Overture 5 can be met (Acts, 1969, p. 102)."

In addition to the materials contained in the mandate and grounds listed above, the Synod of 1970 referred to this committee certain documents involved in the matter which the Central Avenue Consistory had raised concerning Dr. Willis De Boer's interpretation of the first chapters of Genesis. These documents were referred to the committee "for their consideration in making their report" (Acts, 1970, p. 43).

In fulfillment of its mandate the study committee submitted its original report to the Synod of 1971. Initially the advisory committee of the 1971 Synod recommended that synod adopt the points of pastoral advice contained in the report (Acts, 1971, pp. 102-103). But after some discussion on these points, synod instructed its advisory committee to reformulate its recommendations along the following lines:

"1. The entire report be submitted to the churches for study and reactions."

"2. The entire report be submitted to the RES for consideration and reactions."

"3. The study committee be retained to receive and evaluate these reactions." (Acts, 1971, pp. 128-129).



In reformulating its recommendations, the advisory committee of the 1971 synod did not recommend that the report be submitted to the Reformed Ecumenical Synod. It felt that it was inappropriate to send to the RES a report on which our churches had taken no decision. Instead it recommended the following four points which were adopted by synod:

"1. That synod submit the entire report to the churches for study and reactions. Ground: This will provide the churches opportunity for consideration of the report.

"2. That the study committee be retained to receive and evaluate these reactions, and structure the discussion as it deems best, with a view to presenting a report in 1972.

"3. That synod make this report available to the churches in booklet form.

"4. That synod declare that this is its answer to Overture 57." (Acts, 1971, p. 129).

During the past year your committee set itself to the task of implementing these decisions of 1971. Now, in reporting to the Synod of 1972, we call your attention to this past year's activities, hoping that this resumé will serve as helpful background for a better understanding of this revised report on the Nature and Extent of Biblical Authority.

In compliance with the decisions of the Synod of 1971 the original report was made available to the churches in booklet form. Taking into account the discussions of this report at last year's synod, the committee included in the booklet a preface to the report to assist the churches in the continuing discussion. In this preface a number of explanations were offered in an attempt to clarify some questions and remove some misunderstandings which had arisen. The preface also made an appeal to the churches and members of the churches to share their reactions to the report with the committee for its consideration in submitting its report anew to the Synod of 1972.

It appears that this original report has enjoyed a wide circulation in the churches and sparked some lively discussion. Over 10,250 copies of the booklet were printed in September. Within six months the entire stock was exhausted. The committee received responses from ninety-seven consistories, plus sixty-one personal letters. Random conversations indicate that many more consistories and church groups also discussed the report, but chose not to submit their reactions. The committee also took note of articles on the report in various publications and reactions voiced at various public meetings. In an attempt to help structure the discussion, members of the committee contributed a series of six articles in *THE BANNER*, plus some writings in other publications. Members of the committee also participated in various meetings to discuss the report with consistories, classes, ministerial associations, a seminary seminar, and other church-related organizations.

A word of appreciation is in order for the many lively and meaningful discussions which this report occasioned in the life of the church. Honest and healthy discussion in matters of agreement as well as disagreement is very important for the well-being of the church. We make bold to suggest that synod seek ways of encouraging our people to keep

alive in our churches continuing brotherly discussions of these vital issues surrounding biblical authority. A word of commendation is in order for the way many have undertaken a careful and thorough study of this report. The committee was able to benefit greatly from many points of valid concern and criticism arising out of the bosom of the church. It was encouraged by those who expressed general agreement and even enthusiastic endorsement of the report. Even the large volume of negative critics proved in great measure to be very helpful. At the same time, however, the committee feels constrained to add a word of deep disappointment concerning wholesale condemnation sometimes heaped upon the report and the irresponsible charges sometimes leveled against it. Nevertheless, constructive criticism born out of mutual concern for a faithful witness to the truth of God's Word is always a tremendous asset in the life of the church. The committee therefore openly acknowledges its indebtedness to many consistories and church members for the valuable contributions they made to our continuing reflection upon the meaning of biblical authority.

The committee acknowledged by return mail all communications addressed to it. All correspondents were assured that their reactions would be given serious consideration by the committee. In making this promise we have tried to keep our word. Accordingly, in the light of both positive and negative criticisms and the ongoing discussions, we now submit to the Synod of 1972 our revised report on the Nature and Extent of Biblical Authority.

After continued study and reflection the committee feels compelled to maintain the major thrust of its original report, convinced that the main lines of that report are true to Scripture and the creeds. However, to clarify the intent of the report and to remove some misunderstandings, the committee has introduced a number of minor revisions and expanded its discussion on a number of points in the report. In addition, on the four matters which follow the report has undergone some rather substantial revisions.

First, further reflection on the two formulations of authority as sketched in the original report has resulted in a more unified presentation in this revised report. The committee does not wish these two formulations to be construed as two distinct positions, but as integral aspects of the same truth. The present report was therefore revised accordingly.

Secondly, the committee discovered that the section in the original report dealing with two approaches to Genesis 1-11 was subject to interpretations radically different from that intended by the committee. It was therefore decided to restructure and expand this section in such a way as to more clearly express the intent of the report, namely to maintain the clear witness of Scripture and the creeds to the historical reality of the events recorded in Genesis 1-11, yet without imposing upon the church an official binding interpretation of all the details which enter into the composition of this unique segment of biblical revelation.

Thirdly, early in the discussion of the original report it came to the attention of the committee that the phrase "the historical reality of redemptive events", which occurred three times in the section on Pas-

toral Advice, was the occasion for some misunderstanding. In this revised report the committee seeks to remove this occasion for misunderstanding. These passages have been rewritten to make clear that the report does not intend to introduce into biblical interpretation a dualism between some events recorded in Scripture which do participate in the history of redemption and others which do not. All events recorded in Scripture, even creation and the fall in their own unique way, are viewed as belonging to the over-all history of redemption, and as such come to us with the full authority of the Word of God.

Fourthly, the revised report proposes seven points of pastoral advice rather than five. These changes were accomplished, first, by drafting a new first point of pastoral advice in order to summarize more adequately in a positive way the results of our study on the nature and extent of biblical authority. Furthermore, the second point of pastoral advice in the original report was divided into two points of pastoral advice in the revised report in order to set those two parts in clearer focus. Moreover, the first point of pastoral advice in the original report was made the final point of pastoral advice in the revised report because of its comprehensive nature as a practical conclusion.

Against the background of these introductory comments, your committee now respectfully submits its revised report on the Nature and Extent of Biblical Authority to the Synod of 1972 for its consideration and action.

## I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS OF THE MANDATE

### A. *The Occasion for the Mandate*

The grounds given for the mandate indicate that the background lies in the work of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod. For even Overture 5, which is given as the third ground for the mandate, had for one of its two grounds the request of the Gereformeerde Kerken submitted to the Reformed Ecumenical Synod (cf. Acts, 1969, p. 503). The doctrine of Scripture has been on the agenda of the RES since its inception, but it was not until Potchefstroom, 1958, that the RES issued a declaration concerning that doctrine. The declaration was to the effect that Scripture in its whole extent and in all its parts is the infallible and inerrant Word of God; and even though the Holy Spirit used human authors, inspiration entails that what they wrote was an infallible communication of God's self-revelation. This declaration was directed primarily against the error which characterizes Scripture as a fallible human witness to divine revelation.

At the next meeting of the RES in 1963, the Gereformeerde Kerken submitted a letter expressing their basic agreement with the declaration of Potchefstroom while raising a question concerning the adequacy of that declaration:

“. . . The synod readily expresses its agreement with the vigorously expressed confession concerning the inspiration and authority of Holy Scripture as an absolute and infallible rule for the faith and life of the church, and it also agrees with the rejection of such qualified views as would hold the Scripture to be a fallible human witness to revelation.

On the other hand, it is the judgment of synod, that the pronouncements of the RES do not make sufficient distinctions in dealing with the nature and extent of the authority of Scripture which follow from its inspiration to be able to satisfy the demands which may be made of a new, elucidative confession of the inspiration and authority of Scripture. In particular, it fails to find in the pronouncements of the RES any connection between the content and purpose of Scripture as the saving revelation of God in Jesus Christ *and* the consequent and deducible authority of Scripture" (Acts, RES 1963, p. 202).

In response the RES requested the Gereformeerde Kerken to present a supplementary report which would suggest solutions to the problems they themselves had raised. The RES also called attention to the report, "Infallibility and Inspiration in the Light of Scripture and the Creeds," which had meanwhile been presented to the Synod of the CRC in 1961. The Gereformeerde Kerken informed the RES in 1968 that they could not comply with the request for a supplementary report. They felt that a number of questions concerning the scope and nature of biblical authority were still very much in discussion and that therefore the time was not ripe for a common declaration on these matters. Instead, they requested a continued joint discussion of these questions (cf. Acts, RES 1968, p. 308).

Therefore, the RES in 1968 recommended.

"that the two sentences from the letter of the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland to the RES 1963 (Acts, 1963, p. 202; cf. earlier quotation) be referred to the churches of the RES, and they be urgently requested to give earnest and prompt study to the questions so urgently asked by the Gereformeerde Kerken, and that the churches send their conclusions in these matters to the other member churches as soon as possible, and the General Secretary be asked to stimulate studies and conferences on this subject" (Acts, RES 1968, p 74).

We must remember this historical sequence. That sequence indicates both the limited nature of the mandate given to the present committee and the starting point of its work. This mandate does not call for studying all over again the entire issue of the Bible's inspiration and infallibility or trust-worthiness. Rather, it calls for the study of the nature and extent of biblical authority in relation to the content and purpose of Scripture.

### *B. Relation of the Present Study to the Reports of 1958 and 1961*

Before proceeding to the study of the nature and extent of biblical authority, the committee desires to call specific attention to the two above-mentioned reports on inspiration and trustworthiness and to some attendant pronouncements of the synods of the RES and the CRC on these matters. We do so to indicate our agreement with their thrust and to focus attention upon some of their givens and conclusions that are immediately relevant to this study.

#### 1. Agreement with the RES Report

As a starting point and a source of relevant material we turn first to the "Report of the Committee on Inspiration to the Reformed Ecu-

menical Synod of 1958" (*Acts of RES, 1958*, pp. 33-56). This is a substantial report on inspiration and inerrancy. It presents a detailed study of two most informative Scripture passages on inspiration, II Timothy 3:15, 16 and II Peter 1:21, to which it adds an analysis of the New Testament view of the Old Testament and of the witness of the apostles. It gives furthermore a doctrinal analysis of inspiration beginning with the witness of the creeds. The comprehensive conclusion of the report is: "Holy Scripture alone and Holy Scripture in its entirety is the Word of God written, given by inspiration of God to be the rule of faith and practice, an inspiration of an organic nature which extends not only to the ideas but also to the words of Holy Scripture, and is so unique in its effect that Holy Scripture and Holy Scripture alone is the Word of God." (*Acts of RES, 1958*, p. 55).

Significant is that the authors of the report saw the need for including a section entitled "Organic Character of the Revelation of the Two Covenants" (*Acts, 1958*, p. 44f.). The report here calls for "due regard to Scripture as an organism." While the revelation of the God in the Bible is a unity, that unity is not without diversity. Thus there is a *history* of redemptive revelation, there is progression from the Old Testament to the New, and there are contrasts between the two covenants. Recognition of Scripture as an organism will keep us, the report asserts, from treating the oracles of God as "... a multitude of isolated sentences which may be understood apart from their place in their immediate context and in that of the larger context" as well as from "... a mechanical and forced method of harmonistics." The report asks for recognition of the organic nature of inspiration intending thereby neither to detract from the divine inspiration nor to limit the authority of Scripture. It does so rather to clarify the avenue through which God reveals himself in a wholly trustworthy manner. Its conclusion on this point is the following: "This doctrine of inspiration, while holding that the human authors of Scripture were moved by the Holy Spirit so as to insure that what they wrote communicated infallibly God's self-revelation, also maintains that the Holy Spirit did not suppress their personalities, but rather that he sovereignly prepared, controlled and directed them in such a way that he utilized their endowments and experience, their research and reflection, their language and style. This human aspect of Scripture does not, however, allow for the inference that Scripture may be regarded as a fallible human witness to divine revelation, for such an evaluation constitutes an attack upon the glorious sovereign work of the Holy Spirit in inspiration" (*Acts of RES, 1958*, p. 55).

The report observes a direct relationship between inspiration and the content and purpose of Scripture. It asserts that Scripture is inspired with a view to a particular purpose and that that purpose will bear significantly upon one's understanding of inspiration. "Broadly speaking it may be said that the content of Scripture is concerned with the unfolding of the divine plan of redemption . . ." It observes how Paul in II Timothy 3:15-17 "lays remarkable emphasis upon the fact that the inspired Scriptures have been provided with a view to the saving

transformation of man by way of faith in Christ" (p. 38). While warning that this observation may not be thought of as restricting the extent of inspiration, the report holds that "the redemptive purpose of revelation and inspiration will have far-reaching consequences for our interpretation of the Bible" (p. 38). Thus the report affirms that it is valid and necessary to understand the inspiration of Scripture as integrally tied in with the redemptive purpose of Scripture.

Finally, the report acknowledges that the historic Christian church's sustained faith "that Scripture in its whole extent and in all its parts is the infallible and inerrant Word of God" is explained by the fact of Scripture's pervasive witness to its own God-breathed origin and character, and by the fact that as redemptive revelation Scripture is necessarily characterized by the divinity which belongs to redemption. (Acts of RES, 1958, p. 56). The conclusions drafted by the committee were adopted by the RES (Acts of RES, 1958, p. 56). They were also adopted, with appropriate editorial changes, by the CRC Synod of 1959 (Acts, 1959, p. 64).

## 2. Agreement with the CRC Report

The action of the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church in 1961 on the report "Infallibility and Inspiration in the Light of Scripture and our Creeds" together with that report itself form another significant basis for our study. That synod commended this report to the church because it felt that the report would serve to remove misunderstandings that had arisen and would function at the same time as a framework for further study of the nature of the relationship between inspiration and infallibility. The report was occasioned by a spirited discussion in our denomination about how the infallibility of Scripture ought to be understood.

The report is a detailed study of inspiration and infallibility and the relationship between them. With care and precision relevant passages of Scripture are exegeted. In connection with each of these the report seeks to answer the question on what matters Scripture speaks with divine authority and trustworthiness. The word 'infallible' connotes, so says the report, "non-deceptiveness, inerrancy and non-failingness, i.e. all those qualities which make for complete trustworthiness." In the light of the witness of Scripture and the meaning of the concept 'infallible', the report concludes: "The inference from inspiration to infallibility is indeed legitimized by revelation itself" (Acts of Synod, 1961, p. 285).

In what way does the report understand infallibility as applied to Scripture? The following quotations pinpoint its position. "Initially we may say that infallibility as an inference drawn from inspiration is to be ascribed to Scripture only in accord with the extent, nature and purpose of inspiration . . . . The extent of inspiration, we affirm, is both plenary and verbal. It reaches to the whole of Scripture and to all its parts. We must therefore assume that Scripture's trustworthiness extends to every word. However, inspiration with its sequent divine trustworthiness does not apply to each word, each 'jot and tittle', considered in isolation . . . . As to the nature of inspiration, we begin with the as-

sumption that it is organic . . . . The organic nature of inspiration precludes defining infallibility in terms of purity of literary style, pedantic regularity in grammatical construction and orthography or monotonous uniformity in literary skill. It warns us further not to expect that the human authors wrote from the vantage point of omniscience and full comprehension. They were men whose knowledge did not run ahead of their day until they were acted upon by the inspiring Spirit of God, and then their knowledge advanced only in those matters on which God would have them speak with authority . . . . Finally, there is the purpose of inspiration. The purpose was . . . to constitute Scripture a self-revelation of God possessing an authority and a trustworthiness . . . that is divine. As 'an inspired rule for faith and practice' Scripture must be supposed to speak with divine trustworthiness on all matters . . . on which Scripture claims to speak authoritatively" (Acts, pp 285-287).

Even more clearly than the RES report, the 1961 report emphasizes the redemptive focus of Scripture. The inspiration, authority and trustworthiness of Scripture cannot be properly understood apart from that focus. The report asserts: "To be sure, Scripture does not range encyclopedically over the whole spectrum of human knowledge. There is a central point of focus. Its purpose is to make men 'wise unto salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.' Therefore it centrally and pervasively witnesses to Christ and the way of salvation which God has both wrought and supremely revealed in him. It is for this purpose and for this purpose only that Scripture makes use of Scripture, and it is from this perspective and from this perspective only that Scripture makes claims for itself. Scripture presents itself solely as a divine self-revelation of God for redemptive purposes. But in communicating this redemptive self-disclosure of God, Scripture claims to speak authoritatively and infallibly on all matters on which it finds necessity to speak" (Acts, p. 290).

On the basis of this report the Synod of 1961 declared "that both Scripture and the creeds establish an essential relationship between inspiration and infallibility, in which the infallibility of Scripture is inferred from inspiration, and inspiration secures the infallibility of all of Scripture." That same synod affirmed the faith of the church in the infallibility of Scripture and urged upon the church the approach of humble faith in the Word of God. (Acts of Synod, 1961, pp. 78, 79.)

This report on the Nature and Extent of Biblical Authority should be viewed in the light of the two above-mentioned studies and the synodical decisions concerning them. We do not distantiate ourselves from the positions taken there. Rather, we acknowledge our agreement with the thrust of those reports and proceed on the basis of the church's common confession concerning these matters. But the issue before us has a distinctly different focus from those of the previous reports. The issue now is whether the church can come to greater clarity on the nature and extent of biblical authority and what has been called "the connection between the content and purpose of Scripture as the saving revelation of God in Jesus Christ *and* the consequent and deducible authority of Scripture."

### C. *The Specific Mandate*

The attempt to gain a perspective on the nature and extent of the authority of Scripture by viewing it in relationship to the content and purpose of Scripture is, as the reports of 1958 and 1961 testify, not a new development in the Reformed tradition. Herman Bavinck already insisted on this relationship in his discussion of organic inspiration. "Scripture," he said, "is the Word of God because in it the Holy Spirit witnesses to Christ and because the incarnate Word is both its material and its content. Form and content interpenetrate each other and may not be separated" (*Gereformeerde Dogmatiek*, 1928, I, p. 414). Thus the recommendation of the RES to study this issue does not involve the development of a completely new idea, but rather the explication of the consequences of an idea commonly accepted in the Reformed tradition.

It may seem strange then that the study of an idea commonly accepted should become a matter of such urgent consideration. The reason for this is well known to those who are aware of recent theological developments in the Reformed community. Some publications dealing with the doctrine of Scripture have vigorously stressed this perspective which closely ties the inspiration and authority of Scripture to the content and purpose of Scripture as the saving revelation of God in Jesus Christ. The results of this emphasis and the development of methods for the study of Scripture within the framework of this emphasis have not received unanimous acceptance. In fact, some within the Reformed community believe that the manner in which this perspective functions in some recent publications is not really merely an acceptable development of an undeveloped nuance in the Reformed tradition, but that it actually constitutes an unacceptable delimitation of—and to that extent a denial of—our common confession concerning the full authority of the Word of God. Overture 5 speaks of the "feelings of uncertainty, grief and even distrust" caused by these recent theological developments (cf. Acts, 1969, p. 502).

In this way the concern of the RES to have the doctrinal issue studied and the pastoral concern of Overture 5 come together, for the central issue in both cases is the same. Thus it is the task of this committee first of all to study the authority of Scripture in relationship to the content and purpose of Scripture (Section III of this report), to ascertain then whether some of the recent developments remain within our common confession concerning the authority of Scripture (Section IV), and finally in the light of this to give some pastoral advice to the churches (Section V).

## II. PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF A KEY SENTENCE

The sentence quoted in our mandate is taken from the letter of the Gereformeerde Kerken to the RES in 1963 in which they point out what they judge to be the inadequacy of the RES declarations of 1958. In their judgment those declarations failed to make sufficient distinctions in dealing with the nature and extent of the authority of Scripture, and in particular failed to discuss the "connection between the



content and purpose of Scripture as the saving revelation of God in Jesus Christ *and* the consequent and deducible authority of Scripture.”

The major obstacle in interpreting this sentence lies in the fact that it occurs in a letter without an interpretative context. Hence the sentence remains somewhat ambiguous and it is open to more than one interpretation. For example, it could appear to suggest that the authority of Scripture only follows upon and is to be deduced from its content and purpose. If so, it would be possible to conclude that the authority of Scripture is somehow limited to a canon within the canon which must now be discovered. This in turn would produce some form of dualistic approach to the authority of Scripture expressed perhaps in terms of kernel and husk, content and wrapping, the divine and the human factors, or in terms of that which is and that which is not the infallible Word of God. Although obviously it is necessary to make some distinctions in interpreting the concrete expressions of Scripture's authority (e.g. the traditional distinction between historical and normative authority), any attempt to separate in a *dualistic* fashion the content of Scripture from the form in which it comes to us runs counter to the genius of the Reformed tradition. That tradition has consistently opposed any attempt to separate the formal and the material aspects of Scripture, or to separate Jesus Christ as the content of Scripture from the garment of Scripture in which he comes to us. It has affirmed that both the form and the content of Scripture participate in the single, unified, authoritative Word of God, and that any distinction deemed necessary for interpretation should not imply that certain aspects can be removed or isolated from the authority in which they share precisely as aspects of the revelation of God. It has insisted upon dealing with the Scripture and its authority as an integrated whole. If the sentence in question therefore intends to suggest dualistic approach to the authority of Scripture, it is not acceptable.

There is, however, reason to doubt that such a dualism is the intent of the sentence. Although the English version of the letter is the official version sent to the RES, the Dutch version written for the Synod of Apeldoorn is less ambiguous and less deductivistic. Instead of speaking of “the *consequent* and deducible authority of Scripture” it speaks of “*het daarmee gegeven en daaruit af te leiden gezag der Schrift*” (the concomitant and deducible authority of Scripture). Thus the Dutch version is much closer to affirming that the authority of Scripture is given along with—and is not simply to be deduced from—the content of Scripture. It then speaks in addition of the authority that is to be deduced from the content and purpose of Scripture, but by this they intend to refer only to the nature and extent of that authority. When seen in this light, the sentence does not intend to suggest that the authority of Scripture pertains to something less than the whole of Scripture. Whether this sentence expresses as clearly as possible the intent lying behind the letter is questionable.

Therefore, we believe that we should not focus our attention upon that sentence and its manner of formulating the issue, but should deal with the issue out of which it arose. That issue came to expression in the

discussion of the 1958 RES resolutions on Scripture at the 1961 Synod of the Gereformeerde Kerken at Apeldoorn. There the general criticism expressed was that the 1958 resolutions, while stressing the divine character of Scripture, failed to do justice to the "human side" of Scripture. For example, although the resolutions speak of organic inspiration, their primary intent is to affirm that human authorship does not infringe on the divine authority of Scripture. Again, although the resolutions characterize Scripture as redemptive revelation, the only conclusion drawn from that fact is that Scripture is characterized by the divinity which belongs to redemption.

Although accepting all of this as true, the Synod of Apeldoorn did not consider this to be an adequate confession in the context of the questions being asked today. In this century there has been a tremendous increase in knowledge concerning the past history of mankind. In addition, modern man is conscious of his distance from that past, and he is aware of the differences in the human situation as man moves from one era to the next. Consequently, because Scripture is in one sense an historical book recording past events and written by men who lived many centuries ago, questions are being asked today precisely about that historical character of Scripture. Is the authority of Scripture in any way influenced or qualified by its historical character? That is the question that must be answered today. And although organic inspiration does not in any way reduce the divine authority of Scripture, it does affect the concrete form and manner in which the divine authority is expressed. Although the character of Scripture as redemptive revelation implies its divine authority, that same redemptive character has much to say concerning the nature and extent of that authority. Thus the criticism of the 1958 resolutions by the Synod of Apeldoorn was not that they are incorrect, but that they do not provide us with the kinds of distinctions or the framework necessary in order to answer the questions being asked today about the authority of Scripture.

A subsidiary concern running through the discussion at Apeldoorn was the desire to avoid an atomistic approach to the concept of inspiration and authority (i.e. one that views each word or verse as being inspired and authoritative in and by itself). That same desire was expressed in the 1958 RES report, but the Synod at Apeldoorn felt that this desire could not adequately succeed when one stresses only the divine character of Scripture. An exclusive emphasis upon divine inspiration could lead to the conclusion that each passage or verse in Scripture has authority in and of itself quite apart from the central content and purpose of Scripture. The synod was not suggesting that such a conclusion was to be derived from the 1958 report, but only that a more adequate defense against such an atomistic view of the inspiration and authority of Scripture requires a discussion of that authority in relationship to the pervasive content and center of Scripture, Jesus Christ. In this way a clearer insight would be gained into the nature of the authority of Scripture both in terms of its totality and in terms of its various parts.

### III. THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF BIBLICAL AUTHORITY

#### A. *A Confessional Stance*

The mandate of this committee concerns the nature and extent of biblical authority. However, discussion of biblical authority is never a simple matter. There is a mystery surrounding the authority of the Bible which we can never fathom. The authority of the Bible is the authority of God himself, and we acknowledge the authority of the Scriptures "because the Holy Spirit witnesses in our hearts that they are from God, and also because they carry the evidence thereof in themselves" (Belgic Confession, Art. V). We can never adequately define but only acknowledge and confess God's authority. We confess that the Bible is the inspired Word of God and that it is unconditionally authoritative for faith and life. The nature and extent of Scripture's authority can really be discovered only through a life of obedient submission to it, a life guided by the Holy Spirit. The entire Scripture in its entirety, as the inspired Word of God is authoritative. The Scripture is a comprehensive Word, a Word addressing the whole of life and calling one's whole life into the service of God. It is the Word of him who created all things and who is now through his Son and Spirit recreating all things. The written Word as the message of salvation in Christ sheds light upon the whole creation and upon man within the creation, for it is the revelation of the whole counsel of God.

This confessional stance is clearly expressed in our Reformed Confessions. In the words of the Belgic Confession we confess that we know God by two means: "First, by the creation, preservation, and government of the universe; . . . a most elegant book . . . sufficient to convince men and leave them without excuse. Second, he makes himself more clearly and fully known to us by his holy and divine Word, that is to say, as far as is necessary for us to know in this life, to his glory and our salvation" (Art. II). Further, we confess that this Word of God was not sent nor delivered by the will of man, but that 'men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit' . . . and that afterwards God, from a special care which he has for us and our salvation, commanded his servants, the prophets and apostles, to commit his revealed word to writing and he himself wrote with his own finger the two tables of the law. Therefore we call such writings holy and divine Scriptures" (Art. III). And "we believe that the Holy Scriptures are contained in two books, namely, the Old and New Testament, which are canonical, against which nothing can be alleged" (Art. IV). After mentioning the sixty-six books of Scripture, we confess that "we receive all books, and these only, as canonical, for the regulation, foundation, and confirmation of our faith; believing without any doubt all things contained in them, not so much because the church receives and approves them as such, but more especially because the Holy Spirit witnesses in our hearts that they are from God, and also because they carry the evidence thereof in themselves" (Art. V). And, with respect to the sufficiency of the Scriptures as the only rule of faith, we confess "that those Holy Scriptures fully contain the will of God, and that whatsoever man ought to believe unto salvation is sufficiently taught therein" (Art. VII).

This confession, we are convinced, is required by Scripture and is faithful to Scripture itself. Scripture is our final and absolute authority in this life for it is the Word of God. Neither the creed itself nor "any writings of men" may be regarded as "of equal value with those divine Scriptures"; Scripture is "the infallible rule" of faith and life (Art. VIII).

Scripture's own claim to authority as the Word of God is the basis for this confessional stance. Jesus' attitude toward the (Old Testament) Scripture is decisive. In his entire ministry he teaches and demonstrates that "Scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:34). In withstanding the temptations of Satan, Jesus Christ simply responded: "It is written" (Matt. 4:4, 7, 10). In a comprehensive way Christ relates his entire ministry to the fulfillment of Scripture: "Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets. I have come not to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished" (Matt. 5:17-18).

All Scripture speaks with the authority of "thus saith the Lord." Paul asserts that the "sacred writings . . . are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus" because "all Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work" (II Tim. 3:15-17). Similarly Peter writes: "First of all you must understand this, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, because no prophecy ever came by the impulse of man, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God" (II Peter 1:20-21). Thus what Scripture says, God says. The entire "God-breathed" Scripture is the authoritative Word of God. That is Scripture's claim, and the Christian believingly responds to God's Word in confession.

### *B. Description of Biblical Authority*

The confessional stance surveyed above also underlies this report. We not only judge this confession to be correct and faithful to Scripture; we also judge it to be adequate in itself—also for the present day. All that one can really do in fulfillment of our mandate is to state this confession in different ways, explain its meaning and implications, and defend it in the face of alternative views. This is now part of our task as we respond to synod's mandate "to study the nature and extent of biblical authority."

At the outset it may be observed that the terms "nature and extent" are not ordinarily applied to the authority of Scripture. Our creeds speak of the authority of Scripture in terms of God as the divine author. This reflects the Reformation emphasis upon the divine authority of Scripture in contrast to the Roman Catholic emphasis, at least in practice, upon ecclesiastical authority. Protestant theologians also distinguished between the formal authority and the material authority of Scripture; formal authority referring to the divine author, and material referring to the content of Scripture. With reference to the content of Scripture, a distinction was sometimes made between historical authority and normative authority; historical authority indicating that everything in Scrip-

ture is historically true and trustworthy even when reference is to Satan and godless men; and normative authority referring to that which is normative for us, excluding, for example the words of Satan and godless men.

The terms "nature and extent" are regularly applied to inspiration, but their application to the authority of Scripture is rare in the history of the church and theology. However, these terms have been applied to the authority of Scripture in recent discussions and synod's mandate requires that this be the focus of the present study.

*The Nature & Extent of Biblical Authority — The Content & Purpose of Scripture.*

The Bible addresses man with divine authority. The Holy Spirit inspired men to write the Scriptures, and by means of inspiration God himself is the author of Scripture. Thus Scripture speaks with the authority of its divine author. All Scripture speaks with the authority of "Thus saith the Lord." Recognition of this divine authority of Scripture was the basis for Jesus' appeal to "It is written." What Scripture says, God says. Thus it must be affirmed that the *nature* of Scripture's authority is *divine*. And because the entire Scripture is the inspired Word of God, it must be affirmed also that the *extent* of the authority of Scripture is *pervasive*; it is a *plenary and verbal authority* just as it is a plenary and verbal inspiration. The entire Scripture—its whole extent, all its parts, its very words—is the *inspired* and *authoritative* Word of God.

This affirmation of the *nature and extent* of the authority of Scripture as a *divine, plenary authority* is basic to every true faith-response to God's Word. However, this faithful confession requires further elaboration. What it is that God specifically says in the authoritative Scripture can be grasped only by a faithful hearing and interpretation of Scripture itself. While the entire Scripture speaks with divine authority, this divine authority is understood concretely and specifically only when one takes account of what God said, how he spoke, to whom he spoke, etc. Thus a description of biblical authority requires an understanding of the content and purpose of the divine message as well as the acknowledgment of the authority of the divine author of Scripture.

The importance of understanding the content and purpose of Scripture in connection with authority can be clarified by a comparison with what we commonly call general revelation. When one speaks of the divine, plenary authority of Scripture, he must recognize that it is also warranted to speak of the divine, plenary authority of 'general revelation'. We must confess that God's revelation is always presented with divine authority. We confess that God reveals himself in the "creation, preservation, and government of the universe." This revelation, usually called general revelation or creation revelation by Reformed theologians, is also given with divine authority. While this revelation in creation and history is a non-verbal revelation, we must confess that the divine authority of this revelation is also pervasive; it is also a divine, plenary authority—that is, all of general revelation is addressed to us by God with divine authority. Of course, as a result of the fall man is not a faith-

ful respondent to the creation revelation; the sinner now needs the Scripture as the "spectacles" by which he, through faith in Jesus Christ, is again enabled to read God's revelation in creation faithfully.

Thus, while one must speak of the divine, plenary authority of general revelation as well as the divine, plenary authority of Scripture, the difference between these two is rooted in the message or content of each. In a comprehensive way we can say that general revelation reveals God the Creator, while Scripture reveals God the Creator-Redeemer. Or we can say that general revelation is a non-redemptive revelation while Scripture is a redemptive, saving revelation of God in Jesus Christ. Scripture in its entirety is addressed to fallen man, man the sinner. Scripture reveals what God has done for man's salvation; it sets forth the saving revelation of God in Jesus Christ. All Scripture presents this redemptive, saving message as it unfolds the theme of creation, fall, and redemption. In other words, Scripture's message is not partly redemptive and partly non-redemptive. All Scripture is redemptive in character; it is addressed to fallen man in order to redeem him totally by redirecting him in faith to God, his Creator-Redeemer. As such Scripture reveals God's good creation of all things, man's rebellious fall into sin, and God's saving work through Jesus Christ for man's salvation and the building of the kingdom of God.

Thus the entire Scripture is redemptive, even as it republishes and interprets the creation revelation (Ps. 19, Rom. 1:18 ff, etc.), as it reveals God's dealings with mankind from creation to the time of Abraham, as it reveals God's covenantal activity with Abraham and Israel, as it reveals the life and work of Jesus Christ. The whole of the Scriptural message is aimed at redirecting the sinner to know God and himself so that he may serve God with all his heart in all his ways. What Scripture reveals concerning the creation, the role of the state and society, the nature of man and the world, and whatever else, is God's redemptive revelation to man. Salvation must be seen in its comprehensive dimensions, and any form of dualism between nature and grace—whether Roman Catholic, Barthian, fundamentalistic, or whatever—must be rejected.

In the light of the above considerations, we must say that the divine, plenary authority of Scripture is expressed in its totally redemptive, saving message. Furthermore, this redemptive, saving message of the Scripture is given in the history of a progressively unfolding revelation. While all Scripture speaks with divine authority, the reader of Scripture must pay attention to what God says, how he speaks, to whom he speaks, etc. The progressively developing covenant history must be considered in rightly understanding God's revelation. There is fulfillment in Jesus Christ, and therefore not all of the authoritative Word of God applies in the same way to faith and conduct today. God's command to Abraham to sacrifice his son is not a command of God to all covenant parents to sacrifice their first-born in the same way. The ceremonial requirements of the Old Testament are no longer to be observed after the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, whether applicable for a limited time or for the whole of history, the address of God is divinely authoritative. But questions as to its specific intent and

meaning, and its present applicability arise in connection with faithful hearing and interpretation of that divinely authoritative Word. In this way the nature and extent of biblical authority involve both the authority of the divine author and the content and purpose of his authoritative message. These are like the two sides of one coin.

### *Excluded Positions*

From the description of the nature and extent of biblical authority presented above, it should be clear that various contemporary views of biblical authority are rejected. Clearly rejected, both by our creeds and the above description, is the traditional Roman Catholic view which, at least in practice, views the authority of the Bible as a church-imposed, ecclesiastical authority. The liberal view is also rejected; it regards the authority of Scripture as only that of the unique religious consciousness of gifted men who wrote the Bible. The neo-orthodox view of Karl Barth in which the authority of Scripture is regarded as merely "witness to revelation" is also rejected. Unacceptable also is the view of biblical authority suggested by Rudolf Bultmann (and carried on in the "new quest" and the "new hermeneutics" of G. Ebeling, E. Fuchs etc.) in which the Gospels are regarded in varying degree as the creation of the early church (*Gemeinde-theologie*). The view of biblical authority set forth in this report is clearly incompatible with any of these major contemporary views.

In the theological literature of our day, the views just mentioned are very common. At the same time one frequently discovers complex variations of these views as well as combinations of features of these main views. In this report it is not possible to mention all the complex variations of the views of biblical authority. However, this report is mainly concerned with the new theology that is being developed within the Reformed community. This new theology often reflects nuances of some of the main contemporary views, but here they become even more complex because these theologians continue to affirm their allegiance to the Reformed position. In the following sections of this report, as well as in the preceding sections, attention is focused upon representative issues in this new theology within the Reformed community which affect the nature and extent of biblical authority.

### *C. Explication of the Divine Authority and the Redemptive Message of Scripture.*

At this point it may be helpful to explicate further why the description of the nature and extent of biblical authority requires holding close together the divine authority and the redemptive message of Scripture. Hence attention now is focused upon the message of Scripture as this helps us to understand the nature and extent of Scripture's authority.

The Scripture itself clearly states its own central purpose. The self-proclaimed purpose of the Gospel of John is that these things are written "that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name" (20:30, 31). The Gospel is characterized by the apostle Paul as "the power of God for salvation to every one who has faith" (Rom. 1:16). He also ascribes that same

purpose to the whole of Scripture. In II Tim. 3:15-17 he speaks of the "sacred Scriptures which are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ." He affirms that "all Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work."

These affirmations not only describe the purpose of Scripture but provide us with the key for the proper understanding of Scripture. The Bible is a unique book and it has been inspired with a particular purpose in view. Unless one acknowledges that purpose and uses it as the key for understanding, even though he confesses the inspiration and authority of Scripture, he has not submitted himself to the real authority of Scripture. Such was Jesus' criticism of the Jews in John 5:39, 40: "You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life, and it is they that bear witness to me; yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life." The divine authority of the Word of God is actually recognized only when one has submitted himself to the one of whom the Scripture speaks. Any understanding of the Word of God which does not recognize this key for understanding its various parts, is erroneous, no matter how vigorously it affirms the inspiration and divine authority of the Scriptures.

The Jews, who were criticized by Jesus, affirmed the inspiration and divine authority of every word and letter of the Old Testament. They believed that the Word of God addressed itself to every issue of life, and then if one used the proper methods he could answer any question on any subject. Consequently, they derived from the Old Testament numerous teachings and laws which they claimed to be as authoritative as the Old Testament itself. However, Christ declared that they did "not have his word abiding" in them because they did not believe in him (John 5:38). When interpreters today refuse to accept the Christ of the Scriptures, they have also failed to submit to the authority of Scripture. And when Christian interpreters, although confessing the full authority of Scripture and believing in Jesus Christ, derive from the Scriptures teachings which do not reflect the intended meaning of Scripture, then they are not submitting to the authentic authority of the Word of God. Also when passages or texts or phrases or words are isolated from their scriptural meaning and intent, they do not express the divine authority of Scripture.

What the 1961 Christian Reformed Church Report on Inspiration and Infallibility said about plenary, verbal inspiration also applies to the authority of Scripture. That report warned against taking words "considered in isolation" as inspired words. "Words get their meaning from their usage in their respective contexts else they can be made to do violence to the author's intent. By the same token we may not lift any portion of Scripture, however large or small, out of its original context in the larger body of inspired literature and still claim for it, in its artificial isolation, divine trustworthiness. That is to say, we can distil from the doctrine of plenary, verbal inspiration (and authority) only that Scripture possesses a divine trustworthiness on matters concerning which it speaks, not on matters on which certain passages in



isolation, may seem to speak nor yet on matters on which men, by improperly handling Scripture, may seek to force Scripture to speak" (Acts 1961, p. 286). Similarly, while the extent of Scripture's *authority* is plenary and verbal, the words must be understood in the context in which they are given and with the meaning intended by the divine author.

Such a concentration upon the content and purpose of Scripture implies, among other things, the following for an understanding of the nature and extent of biblical authority. It implies that the authority of Scripture is properly understood only when the various parts of Scripture are interpreted as functioning in their role within the history of redemption and revelation. It implies further that the authority of Scripture is properly understood only when one takes into account that the Scripture is written by men and that it is originally addressed to a people living at a certain time and under particular circumstances. It is not possible, nor is it necessary, to write exhaustively about these various implications. We shall attempt only to make several basic observations about each.

The content of the Bible is properly described as the history of redemption. That description emphasizes that the Bible is history and not myth. In classical myths of ancient time that which was important occurred in the arena of the gods and not in human history. In the Bible God acts and speaks and makes man his covenant partner in history. The redemption he promises and brings takes place in historical events, and without this historical foundation the Bible loses its meaning. Consequently, the Bible is filled with historical records of what God has done for his people in the past; it stresses the role of the eyewitness; and it guards jealously its anti-mythical nature.

As the history of redemption the Bible contains revelation given over a long period of time. Not everything happens all at once. There is action and progress, address and response, promise and fulfillment. God is involved with his people over a period of centuries. There are different epochs; there is an old and a new covenant. Consequently, not all of the words or commandments of Scripture apply to us in the same manner in which they applied to those to whom they were first spoken (e.g. the laws concerning purification in the Old Testament). However, we should not conclude that such things are no longer divinely authoritative, but rather that they participate in the divine authority only as they function within this history of redemption. For such things were written for our instruction (Rom. 15:4) and admonition (I Cor. 10:11). This biblical perspective is reflected in the Belgic Confession when it speaks of still using "the testimonies taken out of the law and the prophets to confirm us in the doctrine of the gospel" because their "truth and substance" remain with us in Jesus Christ (Art. XXV).

As the history of redemption the Bible speaks of beginnings and ends. The Bible is not a record of unrelated actions and sayings of God, but it is a record in which the various events, saying, and responses bear a fundamental relationship to each other. There is a single plan of

redemption and the whole of revelation points in that direction. Hence the history of redemption as recorded in the Bible can be characterized as the saving revelation of God in Jesus Christ. From its beginning to its end, from the beginning of history to the final coming of the kingdom, the history of redemption moves toward and flows from Jesus Christ. Thus the only correct understanding of the tremendous variety contained within Scripture is that which interprets it in its relationship to Jesus Christ. He is its unifying theme.

The Bible, as the authoritative Word of God, has been written by men. This fact also affects the manner in which the divinely authoritative Word is communicated. We have long been aware of the differences in grammar, style, spirit, and word choice among the authors of the various books of the Bible. Such differences have led to the development of the concept "organic inspiration." Inspiration did not suppress the personality of the author. God used men to write his Word. But this means also that the eternal Word of God is communicated through a time and culture conditioned vehicle, *viz.* human language. The biblical authors used the language they spoke: Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek. Their inspired writings reflect the time and circumstances in which they lived. Yet the Scriptures written by these men is the authoritative Word of God.

These human authors, commissioned to proclaim what God has said and done, stand within and write from within the history of redemption. They do not write mere chronicles, nor do they even write a history of Israel or a biography of Jesus Christ. What we call the historical books of the Bible are in actuality prophetic history, a selection of events to proclaim what God has done and is doing for the salvation of his people. It is history written to highlight the covenantal relationships between God and his people. Consequently, biblical history is episodic in character. Biblical history is kerygma, proclamation, *i.e.* events together with the interpretation which the events have in God's plan of salvation. Such is the perspective of the biblical author, and therefore criteria used for assessing the character of the Bible as history must not negate the self-proclaimed character of the biblical record.

As the written revelation of the history of redemption, the Bible was originally addressed to definite situations and to people living under particular circumstances. These situations and circumstances affect what is said and how it is said. For example, commandments and exhortations given at a certain time and place are not necessarily universally applicable. The entire legal structure of the Old Testament applied then and there but after the fulfillment in Christ no longer now and here. Not that we no longer learn from that legal structure, but even where it still instructs us the manner in which it applies has drastically changed. This is so because of the fulfillment of the law in Christ, but also because the circumstances under which the Old Testament people lived are no longer those under which we live. Thus, for example, the Old Testament property laws still instruct us concerning basic principles, but the specific laws governed a situation quite different from ours. This same perspective applies to the New Testament. We

no longer feel bound to exchange the holy kiss, to wash one another's feet, or to require women to wear a veil when they pray. Those are exhortations whose form is determined by the culture and circumstances of that time. They still contain an authoritative message for us, but the form of our obedience has been altered by changing circumstances. Similarly, we do not feel bound by the decree of the Council of Jerusalem regarding things strangled and blood (e.g. Jehovah Witnesses see in it, together with Lev. 17:11-14, the basis for their refusal of blood transfusion, and some Christians believe it forbids eating such a thing as bloodwurst). We interpret the meaning of that decree in the light of the particular circumstances to which it was addressed.

All of these observations which stem from the character of the Bible as an historical book are important for our understanding of the nature and extent of biblical authority. Because the Bible is an historical record it is important to take into account the distinction between what it meant originally and what it continues to mean. It is therefore necessary to know as well as we can the original setting, using all the evidence the Bible itself provides as well as the increasing knowledge provided by historical and archaeological research. Due to our distance from the time in which the various books were composed, we often do not possess an awareness of situations, concepts, or trends well-known to those to whom it was originally addressed. Therefore scholarly research can contribute to a better understanding of these matters. This does not mean that our confession of its authority is dependent upon such research, but only that such research can be an aid to faith's understanding of the Word. Our distance from the time of the Bible's composition involves, however, not only a loss which we try to regain, but also a plus which lends dimensions and perspectives to the biblical words of which the original recipients were possibly unaware. This also functions in the Holy Spirit's use of the Word to lead the church into all the truth.

Our confession of the authority of the Bible takes into consideration the observations mentioned above. None of these observations should be understood as introducing a new form of dualism into our approach to the Scriptures by which one is able to dissect Scripture into that which is and that which is not the authoritative Word of God. These observations do not intend to delimit the authority but only to understand the mode in which the Word has come to us, for that mode affects how that authority functions. The Bible is not a system of theological dogmas nor a code book of law with an easy and immediate application to every circumstance of life. Our confession has always rejected the simplistic biblicism implicit in that position because that position misconstrues the nature of the Bible itself and how it has come into being. The Bible is covenant history, the history of redemption, and it is only from within that perspective that it sheds its light upon the whole of human life.

The description of the Bible as the saving revelation of God in Christ is also no delimitation of the authority of Scripture. For the entire Scripture is authoritative, and its message is cosmic in scope, involving

man and all of his activities in creation and history. Hence the authority of Scripture touches every sphere of human life and knowledge but it does so in its own way and from its own perspective, *viz.* from the standpoint of creation, fall, redemption and the coming again of Jesus Christ.

We have not said everything that can be said about the nature and extent of biblical authority. We have tried to establish certain basic perspectives on the nature and extent of biblical authority. In the light of these we now proceed to the second part of our mandate. There we intend to discuss concrete problems and thus to illumine and further explicate the basic perspectives developed above.

#### IV. CURRENT METHODS OF INTERPRETING SCRIPTURE

The second part of our mandate requires us "to evaluate critically in the light of the above-mentioned study and our confessional standards the manner of interpreting Scripture presently employed by some contemporary Reformed scholars." Our task is not to adjudicate charges brought against any person nor to assess the acceptability of any particular book, but to evaluate methods or principles that are visible in the interpretation of Scripture by some contemporary Reformed scholars. Since we are considering methods and not persons, we have decided not to mention theologians by name. To assess fully each theologian and the books he has published would have resulted in a very lengthy and highly technical report. Thus in this report we have not attempted to evaluate the entire theology of particular persons, but only the manner of interpreting Scripture that is employed.

In the light of our study of the nature and extent of biblical authority, it has become apparent that the major questions arise in connection with the historical character of the Bible. And in so far as one can speak today of a new hermeneutical development in the Reformed community, the newness consists in a different approach to and a different understanding of the Bible (or parts of it) as an historical record. To evaluate the validity of this new approach we believe that we must consider: (1) the use made of the findings of various sciences for the interpretation of Scripture, (2) the permissibility of the use of the historical method in the interpretation of Scripture, and (3) the historicity of the biblical record, in particular the first chapters of Genesis.

##### A. *Biblical Interpretation and Scientific Findings*

The legitimacy of using knowledge derived from scientific research for interpreting the Bible has been a sensitive issue among us. It has been so because of our continuing commitment to the Reformation principle that Scripture is its own interpreter. That principle stems from the confession that Scripture is the product and instrument of the Holy Spirit, and consequently it may not be controlled by knowledge or methods derived elsewhere. Scripture may not be interpreted contrary to its own intention, and the true meaning of Scripture must control our knowledge and methods. Thus whenever traditional interpretations of Scripture are altered in connection with new insights gained

through scientific or historical research, the suspicion is aroused that this may be an instance in which Scripture has been subjected to our knowledge rather than our knowledge to the authority of Scripture.

It should be noted, however, that by confessing Scripture to be its own interpreter one has not solved all problems of interpretation. The Reformers, while confessing the perspicuity of Scripture, never intended to suggest that there were no problems encountered in interpreting the Bible, problems requiring the application of grammatical and historical exegesis. By means of the principle that Scripture is its own interpreter, they did oppose the imposition of a variety of meanings upon Scripture as occurred in the allegorical interpretation of that time. That Scripture is its own interpreter implied for them a deep respect for the text, for the written Word. Consequently, allegorical exegesis was rejected because it destroyed the integrity of the written text, and so was any form of spiritualistic exegesis which ignored the meaning of words. One honors neither the Bible as the Word of God nor the Holy Spirit through whom the Word was written and by whom it is understood, by adopting methods that lead one away from the written text and its self-proclaimed intention. Hence every interpretation, and every method used for interpretation, must subject itself to the authoritative Word. This is done precisely by honoring Scripture as a written text, with all that this implies for grammatical and historical interpretation.

That the Reformers themselves used and developed the principles of grammatical-historical-theological exegesis is so well known that it needs no illustration, and that this development became a stimulus for the scientific study of the Bible is also an established fact. Consequently we who stand in the Reformed tradition have gladly welcomed and made use of the findings of science that are directly related to the exegesis of the Bible in order to get at the meaning of the biblical text. Basically the Reformed community has been receptive to new insights with respect to the meaning of words gleaned from documents contemporaneous with the biblical writings, to new information on the syntax of the biblical languages, and to new understanding of the literary forms that are used in the Bible.

In addition, we have gladly used insights gained from historical and archaeological research into the history, religion, and culture of the nations surrounding Israel. We have profited from knowledge of the Qumran community, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and rabbinic literature. Such information has helped to bridge the historical and cultural gap that exists between our time and that of the biblical writings; it has helped us to understand better the meaning of the biblical text and in this way it has led to the reinterpretation of certain passages of Scripture. New light from historical and archaeological research has been shed, for example, upon the structure of covenant treaties, the meaning of the prohibition against boiling a kid in its mother's milk, the significance of Rachel's stealing the household gods, the injunction for women to wear veils while praying and prophesying, etc. In using such materials the stated principle has been that these findings may not dictate an interpretation of Scripture contrary to its own intent; but certainly

these findings may, and in fact, must, be used to help to understand the intended meaning of Scripture.

In this way we have acknowledged the historical character of the divinely inspired Bible and have been willing to use the results of scientific research to illumine its meaning. But in addition to these scientific data directly related to biblical exegesis, there are findings in other sciences, not so directly related to biblical exegesis, which must also be taken into account. Here we have in mind such sciences as astronomy, biology, geology, etc. In regard to these sciences, an illustration taken from Calvin will indicate how in his day a new scientific insight in astronomy became the occasion for reexamining a traditional interpretation of Scripture.

The Copernican revolution occurred during Luther's lifetime and Luther still felt compelled to reject vigorously that point of view. He could not accept for theological and philosophical reasons the Copernican theory that the earth was not the center of the universe. But Calvin in his interpretation of the creation account states the following:

"To my mind, this is a certain principle, that nothing is here treated of but the visible form of the world. He who would learn astronomy, and other recondite arts, let him go elsewhere . . . For Moses here addresses himself to our sense, that the knowledge of the gifts of God which we enjoy may not glide away . . . By this method . . . the dishonesty of those men is sufficiently rebuked who censure Moses for not speaking with greater exactness. For as it became a theologian, he has respect to us rather than to the stars . . . Moses wrote in a popular style things which, without instruction, all ordinary persons endued with common sense are able to understand; but astronomers investigate with great labor whatever the sagacity of the human mind can comprehend" (*Commentary on Genesis*, Gen. 1:6, 15, 16).

Thus Calvin did not believe that there was a conflict between the new scientific point of view and Scripture, and therefore did not reject the Copernican point of view. The new scientific advancement did become the occasion of reexamining the traditional interpretation and, in fact, this reexamination did lead to a new perspective on this part of Scripture. To affirm that scientific discovery has led or can lead to a reinterpretation of certain aspects of the Bible is not the same as asserting that science dictates the interpretation of the Bible. Scripture must always be interpreted in terms of principles that are germane to its own nature as the revelation of God. And Calvin's new perspective with its basic assertion concerning the character of biblical writing in Genesis 1 could be substantiated by the character of biblical writing elsewhere. However, scientific discovery does compel us to ask whether a traditional interpretation reflects the intent of the Bible, or whether it is a reading of the Bible in the light of out-dated scientific conceptions. The new interpretation must then manifest, of course, that it does justice to the intention of Scripture and that it is supported by principles of interpretation in harmony with the character of Scripture.

While thus acknowledging that the findings of science in general may be the occasion for reexamining a traditional interpretation, we in

the Reformed tradition have also been on our guard against the possibility of science controlling the interpretation of Scripture. Indeed specific instances of science controlling or dictating the interpretation of Scripture have occurred in modern times. The clearest example is the rejection of miracles in classical liberalism. Nature was viewed as a closed system of cause and effect relationships. Consequently, liberal interpreters were compelled to reject miracle as historical fact and had to look for other ways to account for the miracle stories in Scripture. This reinterpretation of miracle resulted from their acceptance of a current scientific theory concerning what was possible in the areas of nature and history. In this way interpreters allowed a view of nature and history, a view in conflict with Scripture, to determine the interpretation of the biblical message. Such interpretation obviously runs counter to the principle that Scripture is its own interpreter. Methods of interpretation may not be based on principles which contradict the proclamation of Scripture itself.

No one in the Reformed community would basically disagree with this understanding of the principle that Scripture is its own interpreter. Representatives of the new hermeneutical development in the Reformed community, in so far as they address themselves to this principle, also say essentially the same thing, yet certain statements are made in their writings which raise the question whether the principle is being maintained. If one asserts, for example, that science makes it impossible to believe any longer that there was historically an original man and woman who were the ancestors of the human race, then the principle that Scripture is its own interpreter is no longer being maintained. Although scientific evidence may become the *occasion* for a reexamination of a traditional interpretation, any reinterpretation must be based on principles germane to and garnered from Scripture itself. Ultimately, the validity of every interpretation must be judged in terms of whether it agrees with Scripture's own interpretation of itself, and whether it contributes to a clearer insight into the Scripture's message as a whole.

#### B. *The Use of the Historical Method*

"The historical method" means different things to different persons. But in all instances the historical method includes presuppositions as well as procedures. From the time of the enlightenment, the historical method (or the historical-critical method) designated not only commonly accepted procedures used by historians but also certain well defined presuppositions, *viz.* that we exist in a closed universe and that therefore all historical facts occur within discoverable cause and effect relationships. Thus *the* historical method involved the rejection of miracle, and when applied to the Bible resulted in new interpretations which contradicted the biblical presentation. Therefore, *the* historical method was rejected by evangelical scholars.

Our use of the term, "the historical method," is not the same as that above. It is widely recognized today that historians do not all function with the same presuppositions. Some still accept the naturalistic presuppositions mentioned above, others have a different philosophical basis, while still others accept biblical presuppositions concerning reality. In

spite of differences in their presuppositions, all are called historians because working in the same field of inquiry they use procedures or techniques which are generally similar. In fact, since all historians must make critical evaluations of reported fact, all historians (in spite of their different presuppositions) are said to practise the historical method (or the historical-critical method). Thus in the discussion that follows the committee is aware of the need to examine critically the presuppositions that historians use, and emphasizes the necessity for the Christian historian to practise his method within the framework of biblical presupposition.

The committee introduces this discussion of the use of the historical method with some reluctance. For the material is often highly technical involving detailed theological analysis. Some parts are less difficult because they relate to questions raised by many in their reading of the Bible (e.g., why do the Gospels present the same event in different ways?). Other parts, however, are very difficult because they deal with technical questions which are usually not raised by most who read the Bible (e.g., the question concerning what is called the historical Jesus, and the question concerning what one can or cannot say via the historical method about the resurrection). It may be that some who are not interested in such technical questions may wish to pass those sections by.

However, synod's mandate to respond to the request of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod and to analyze the principles employed by some contemporary Reformed scholars, compels us to include these sections. For the question regarding the use of the historical method lies at the center of the debate concerning the interpretation of the Bible. Due to its complexity, we cannot within the limits of this report discuss the use of the historical method in all of its ramifications. We intend only to select several areas as illustrations, to point out problems that appear, and to make some judgments concerning these.

### *1. The Historicity of the Gospels*

The fact that there are four gospels, each having its distinctive emphases and each reporting in its own way events or sayings contained also in one or more of the others, has frequently raised questions concerning the nature of the gospels as historical records. These questions arose already in the second century, and throughout the history of the church there have been various attempts to account for and/or resolve the differences existing in the gospels. These attempts range all the way from the creation of a single gospel out of the four to the popularly held opinion that the gospels are independent biographies. And if the gospels are independent biographies, the differences in the reporting of what appears to be the same event must be explained either in terms of normal differences in eye witness reports or in terms of different situations in Jesus' ministry.

It has often been maintained that our confession concerning the reliability of Scripture means that events occurred precisely as they are reported to us. Little distinction was made between the event and the way in which the event is reported. Although there was some recog-



dition of the differences existing in the reporting of the same event, it was held that these differences did not alter the basic perspective. Differences were considered to be indications that the authors did not function with standards of notarial precision, and consequently the differences should not be analyzed too closely. Even though it was admitted that the gospels could not be harmonized in all details, the significance of these details for understanding the way in which the gospels report historical events was not fully realized.

In recent decades a different solution has been developed. There is a general consensus that there is some form of literary dependence among the synoptic gospels (i.e., the first three). The majority favor the priority of Mark, i.e., that Matthew and Luke use Mark in writing their own gospels, while some argue for the priority of Matthew. In addition, other sources, written or oral, are also thought to have been used (cf. Luke 1:1-4). In either case, whether one accepts the priority of Mark or Matthew or some modification of those theories, the method adopted for answering questions about similarities and differences is essentially the same. When one adopts a theory of literary dependence, one no longer attempts to answer questions concerning differences in the reporting of what appears to be the same event by suggesting different situations in Jesus' ministry. Instead, if the gospels are interdependent, one attempts to answer questions concerning differences by analyzing the intent of the author and/or the situation of those for whom he is writing. This fundamental change in approach to the gospels means that one functions with a different understanding of the way in which the gospels report historical events.

Thus today it is precisely the differences that are considered important for assessing the historical character of the gospels. The general assertion that the authors were not governed by standards of notarial precision is no longer considered adequate. What standards did they follow? How do they report events? What is the intent of the author, and what influences affect the way in which events are reported? Such are the questions being asked and it is believed possible to suggest some tentative answers.

Perhaps an example or two would be helpful. Peter's confession is recorded in three gospels: "You are the Christ" (Mark 8:29), "The Christ of God" (Luke 9:20), "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16:16). What did Peter actually say? The three forms of the confession, although not contradictory, are distinctively different. Those who believe that Matthew and Luke are here dependent on Mark would see in their accounts an interpretative expansion of the confession. In other words, the gospels are not to be viewed as necessarily and always presenting verbatim accounts of words spoken or speeches given. Although actual happenings lie behind the accounts, in this case Peter's confession, the report of those events frequently includes interpretation so that the full light of revelation falls upon those events and sayings. In view of Jesus' promises concerning the work of the Holy Spirit (John 14-16), it should not strike us as strange that the disciples report events in that way. For the Holy Spirit who inspired the authors

is precisely the Spirit of Truth who interprets the meaning of the ministry of Christ.

The story of the rich young ruler provides a second example. The account is essentially the same in Mark and in Luke: "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone" (Mark 10:18-19). Matthew presents a different account: "Teacher what good deed must I do to have eternal life? And he said to him, Why do you ask me about what is good? One there is who is good" (Matt. 19:16-17). Again one can ask, what did the young ruler and Jesus actually say? Obviously Matthew is reporting the same conversation as that recorded in Mark and Luke. Here again it is possible to give reasons for the changes found in Matthew's account which are related to the type of audience for which he is writing. To prevent the conversation from being misunderstood, Matthew already interprets it in the form of presentation rather than by attaching a commentary to it. In any case, whatever the reasons, here we have again the phenomenon encountered in the first example.

Similar examples could easily be multiplied. However, since the intent of our report is not to persuade others of the correctness of this approach but only to judge its permissibility, we shall simply summarize that approach and its understanding of the gospels as history.

By means of the theory of literary dependence, it is thought possible to discover some of the factors influencing the form of the proclamation as this develops between Jesus' lifetime and the actual writing of the gospels. Such factors as the following are usually mentioned: the translation of Jesus' sayings from Aramaic to Greek, the proclamation of the message to non-Jewish audiences requiring changes so that the message could be understood, the needs and situations of the audience for whom the gospel is written, the specific intention of the author which influences his selection and ordering of materials, and the influence of Easter and Pentecost in producing a more complete understanding of the life of Jesus. Thus the gospels are not merely "objective" descriptions of events or verbatim records of Jesus' words. They are proclamation, kerygma, i.e. events and sayings which the Holy Spirit leads the authors to interpret as they bring that message to a variety of persons and audiences.

It is evident that the approach described above produces a different understanding of the way in which the gospels report historical events. Crucial to this approach is the distinction that is made between the actual events in Jesus life and the reporting of these events in the gospels. While emphasizing this distinction between event and report, this approach does not wish to suggest a separation between event and report. The difference between making a *distinction* and making a *separation* between event and report is a very crucial one. Any position which separates or makes a *division* between the report and the event makes it impossible to say anything about the event itself. In fact, such a position allows one to assert that some quite different event lies behind the report or even no event at all. Such *separation* or *division* does not do justice to the historical character of the Bible. The intent of speaking of a

*distinction* between event and report is only to affirm that the Bible presents to us interpreted events, i.e. events placed in relationship to and seen in their significance for the history of redemption. Thus the approach to the gospels described in the preceding paragraphs continues to maintain that the gospels are reporting historical events. In addition, while affirming a *distinction* between event and report, this approach affirms that the parallel reports contained in the Scriptures are binding upon us because they are the inspired Word of God.

It is our opinion that this approach—so long as it functions within the framework of the gospels—is permissible within our confession concerning the authority and reliability (infallibility) of Scripture. For it seeks to understand the kind of reporting the gospels themselves indicate, and it does this by observing the similarities and differences the gospels themselves contain. There is no attempt to impose an arbitrary framework upon the gospels, nor to control the interpretation of the gospels, by means of non-biblical presuppositions. Whether or not everyone is convinced that this new approach is correct, or whether everyone accepts the explanation of particular items, is not the issue. Theologians frequently differ concerning particular theories of explanations. The basic methodology underlying this approach, however, does not infringe on the authority and reliability which the Bible claims for itself.

However, it seems to us that one should not in terms of this approach begin to speak of the historical unreliability of the gospels. Even though we recognize differences in the reporting of the same event and different interpretations placed upon the same event, to label this “historical unreliability” seems to impose standards upon the gospels that are foreign to the intention of their authors. And if—as all agree—the gospels were not written to satisfy the kinds of questions the modern historian asks, why in terms of such questions should they be labeled historically unreliable? Isn’t this analogous to saying that the Bible is scientifically unreliable because its language seems more Ptolemaic than Copernican when it speaks about the movement of the sun? Yet we do not apply that label because we believe that the Bible was not written from the perspective implied in that standard.

In addition, to speak of the gospels as historically unreliable—even if the intent is very limited and in no way questions the message of the gospels—raises the more basic question of what constitutes reliable historical reporting. The fact that earlier events are interpreted in the light of later events, that changes in words and different emphases are required to make the message intelligible to different audiences, and that an event may lead to more than one perspective does not constitute unreliability. Historical reporting in general is always done after the fact and usually interprets earlier events in the light of later events. Historical reporting is always influenced by the perspective of the author and the needs of the audience. Such is the case also in the gospels. The historian cannot in fact always determine the actual sequence of events nor always understand the differing sequences reported in the gospels; but to designate that as “historically unreliable” is misleading and confusing to the church which rightly confesses the trustworthiness of Scripture.

## 2. *The Historical Jesus*

The quest for the historical Jesus has been carried on for almost two centuries. The term "the historical Jesus" usually refers to the Jesus as discovered through historical research. For more than a century it was believed that one could historically reconstruct the picture of Jesus as he actually was. Usually the historian's picture turned out to be in conflict with the picture of Jesus presented in the gospels and confessed in the church, because the historical research was based upon rationalistic or naturalistic presuppositions. Consequently, the various pictures of the historical Jesus closely resembled the kind of Jesus acceptable to the particular historian doing the research.

Today the new quest tends to make more modest claims. The new quest recognizes the possibility that the historical method cannot uncover everything about Jesus, and thus "the historical Jesus" refers no longer to Jesus as he actually was but only to the picture of Jesus that can be reconstructed by means of the historical method. Some Reformed theologians in the Netherlands are also engaged in this quest. They suggest that the appropriate method for uncovering this historical Jesus is that of "pure historical research." Although they declare that the quest cannot achieve the goal of presenting to us Jesus as he actually was, nevertheless this historical quest plays a significant role in their assessment of the historical reliability of the gospels. They claim that the historian discovers the following facts: Jesus was born of a woman, lived in Nazareth, initiated a public ministry in connection with John the Baptist, was crucified by a Roman procurator, was a performer of miracles, lived as a rabbi, spoke as a prophet, and lived the radical life of love. These do not constitute a complete list of facts that can be uncovered by the historian, yet they are a good indication of the kind of historical picture that is reconstructed.

Such facts obviously constitute part of the picture for they are taken from the Bible itself. But why is the historical picture limited to such facts? These theologians seem to give two answers to that question. The first stems from the historical method. The sources used by the historian, i.e. the gospels, are described as tendentious, one-sided documents. The gospels are one-sided because they are written by believers, by those committed to Jesus Christ. Therefore, the historian must be aware of the possibility that the faith-perspective of the author has altered the facts. The result is that in this quest the faith-perspective is neutralized and is allowed no role in reconstructing the historical picture of Jesus.

But is this permissible? Hasn't one then allowed a method to dictate the limits of historical possibility? Why should an historical method be allowed to suggest that what the gospels present and what faith claims concerning the historical Jesus is not to be included in the historically reconstructed picture? If a method sets limits for what Jesus could have been, then it is evident that such a method is rooted in principles contrary to the Scripture's own view of historical reality. Such a method cannot be considered legitimate.

However, the stance of these Reformed theologians on this point is not completely clear. For they also recognize that historical research as a

matter of fact cannot reconstruct the actual Jesus. Thus the historical picture as reconstructed is declared by them to be incomplete. This indicates a refusal on their part to allow the historical method *a priori* to set limits for what Jesus could have been. Nevertheless, the faith-perspective of the authors which is contained in the gospels is still not allowed to function in the historically reconstructed picture of Jesus. Why? This leads to the second answer.

In the new quest as practised by these Reformed theologians much is made of the distinction between the Jesus who was and the Jesus who is, i.e. the Jesus who lived before the resurrection and the Jesus who lives after the resurrection. It is claimed that the gospels—although they preach about the historical Jesus—are actually describing for us the Jesus who is. Therefore, the fact that the historian cannot recover the Jesus who was should be no disappointment for the church because her faith is in the living Lord, the Jesus who is. And the gospels clearly and reliably proclaim to us who he is. It is for this reason that the gospels to a large extent cannot be used by the historian who is seeking only to reconstruct the Jesus who was.

What is meant by this distinction? What about continuity between the Jesus who was and the Jesus who is? How do we know that the concern of the gospel writers is the latter and not the former? Part of the answer given is contained in the emphasis placed upon such texts as Romans 1:4, Acts 2:36, and Philippians 2:9-11. These passages speak of Jesus as having been made Lord and Christ and having been designated Son of God through his resurrection from the dead, and they are then interpreted as implying that Jesus was not known as such prior to the resurrection. Thus wherever such titles are ascribed to the pre-resurrection Jesus, it is claimed that this must be seen as a confession of the post-Easter community interpreting the historical Jesus in the light of what they now know Jesus to be. This is not to be interpreted as a denial that Jesus was already prior to the resurrection virtually what these titles indicate, for this is primarily a question of whether he claimed or was known to be such.

In evaluating the above position, no one would wish to discount the significance of the resurrection and Pentecost for the writing of the gospels. The gospels themselves indicate in places that the meaning of some events in Jesus' life was not known until after the resurrection (e.g. John 2:22; 12:16). It is also not to be denied that the titles ascribed to Jesus gain new dimensions because of his crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension. Certainly the titles of Jesus have a greater glory for us and for the authors at the time the gospels were written than they did prior to the resurrection. Although Peter, for example, confessed Jesus to be the Christ, it is clear from the following episode (Matthew 16:21f.) that Peter did not understand the full implications of his confession. That there is then a fuller revelation of who Jesus is in the resurrection, and that this fullness affects the proclamation of the gospel would be denied by no one.

The theologians we are discussing, however, go beyond this. They suggest that Jesus made no such claims for himself and therefore these

titles were neither claimed by nor applied to him before the resurrection. The Jesus who was, was a non-messianic figure, or, more accurately stated, a messianic figure by implication (e.g. he lived a radical life of love). We judge that this more radical position concerning the messianic self-consciousness of Jesus calls into question the reliability of the gospels. For although one grants that the disciples' ideas and confessions had to be corrected and clarified and that Jesus was at times reluctant to make public claims, nonetheless the gospels themselves indicate that the disciples were following someone who claimed to be, and whom they believed to be, greater than a miracle worker, rabbi, or prophet. In addition, according to the gospels Jesus himself advocates some secrecy about his identity. Consequently to declare that all messianic claims on the part of Jesus, or confessions that he is the Messiah, are post-resurrection creations places in question at this point the character of the gospels as reliable records of events.

In addition, this approach opens the door to *Gemeindetheologie*, the position which affirms that the gospels are to varying degrees the *creation* of the early church. The Dutch theologians involved in the new quest indeed prefer to speak of the recreation or transformation of tradition by the early church rather than the creation of tradition. In fact, they assert that tradition is not created *ex nihilo* by the early church. However, in the case of Jesus' messianic self-consciousness this distinction does not appear to have been maintained. The result is that the historical reliability of the gospels is questioned because a *division* (not just a distinction) is introduced between historical event and the proclamation contained in the gospels. The only point of continuity that remains is in terms of the person of Jesus, i.e. the living Lord is the rabbi from Nazareth. It is further argued that since the person is the same the distinction between pre- and post-resurrection is finally irrelevant, and what really applies only to the post-resurrection situation was in fact projected back into the pre-resurrection period.

Once again, why is there such a radical shift in understanding the historical character of the gospels at the point of Jesus' messianic self-consciousness? We admit that we are not always completely certain precisely what these theologians are saying on this point or why. But our impression is the following: (1) there is the use of an historical method which even they assert cannot uncover the Jesus of history; (2) nevertheless, in the light of the historical picture recreated by that method a radical reinterpretation is given to such texts as Acts 2:36, Romans 1:4; (3) in the light of these considerations form criticism is applied to the tradition contained in the gospels, and the conclusions of form criticism are then claimed as the real reason for the change in understanding the historical nature of the gospels.

The committee is not convinced that the radical shift mentioned above actually flows from the application of form critical technique. Although we cannot enter upon a thorough discussion of form criticism, we would note however that it is important to distinguish between form criticism as a technique and form criticism as a method which often contains silent presuppositions of various kinds. As a technique form criticism analyzes the literary forms contained in the gospels. As a method form criticism

(or at least certain form critics) has questioned the event-character of the gospels. There is a growing consensus among evangelical scholars that form criticism in itself does not call into question the fact that the gospel is presenting historical events. If a form critic does question the event-character of the gospels—as did the radical form critics and to a much *lesser extent* (apparently only at one point, *viz.* Jesus' messianic self-consciousness) the theologians under discussion—he does so because of presuppositions that affect his use of form criticism (in this case the historical method and the particular understanding of Acts 2:36, Romans 1:4). Consequently, from a theological point of view we are not convinced by the case presented. In addition, we believe that any view that allows the actual creation of events for the sake of the message calls into question the reliability of the gospels.

### 3. *The Resurrection of Jesus Christ*

Questions concerning the new theology in the Netherlands have arisen also in connection with the discussion of the fact of the resurrection. This discussion is related to the previous one because both arise from the use of the historical method. Because of the complexity of this discussion and the ease with which misunderstandings can arise, we wish to emphasize that no one associated with the new theology in the Reformed community denies the factuality of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The question under discussion is only what the historian can say concerning the fact of the resurrection as recorded in the gospels.

Those associated with the new theology speak in a rather consistent manner concerning the resurrection. They assert in essence that the historian as historian can say nothing about the resurrection. His method is based upon the principle of analogy and analogous causes and consequently can make no assertions about that which is unique. Therefore, it is claimed that for the historian the resurrection is the least acceptable kind of reality precisely because it is a unique event, and about such events the historian can say nothing. The most that the historian can ascertain is that the disciples believed that Jesus arose. He cannot verify the fact of the resurrection.

Because of an apparent similarity between the new theology in the Reformed community and the views of Rudolf Bultmann, it is necessary to indicate the essential difference. Both agree that the historian can only ascertain that the disciples believed that Jesus arose. However, Bultmann's use of the historical method based on analogy leads him to declare that the resurrection as historical fact did not occur. In the new theology the assertion is only that the historian via the historical method can neither affirm nor deny the resurrection as historical fact. As a Christian he believes it, but as an historian he can make no pronouncement concerning it. This constitutes an important difference between the representatives of the new theology and Rudolf Bultmann.

However, the assertion that as an historian one can say nothing concerning the resurrection as an historical fact raises a fundamental question. Since the historian gets at past events primarily through documents, and since his judgments concerning past events is determined by his assessment of the reliability of the documents, may the *Christian* as his-

torian stand neutrally over against the resurrection as historical fact? Granting that the gospels are not merely objective descriptions of events (as discussed under point 1 of this section), we all agree that the gospels reliable report the resurrection as historical fact. Why then should the *Christian* as historian not pronounce the resurrection to be a fact? If he does not do so because of the historical method, then that method presupposes a view of reality not in harmony with Scripture, and these presuppositions should, therefore, be rejected.

Although the issues surrounding the historical method are extremely complex, and we do not wish to give simplistic answers, nonetheless these issues are especially crucial where they concern the historical Jesus and the events of his life. For by means of the historical method a picture of Jesus is reconstructed which is different from the picture presented by the gospels. Even though that historical picture is then declared inadequate, it still functions as one of the factors in assessing the historical reliability of the gospels. But why should a method which by definition cannot pronounce upon that which is unique be allowed to say anything decisive concerning the life of Jesus? And if because of this historical picture (at least in part) the theory is accepted which allows post-resurrection beliefs and experiences to create events in the life of Jesus, how do we know that the resurrection is a fact? Apparently no longer because of the reliability of the documents as authoritative scripture. Instead it is claimed that we believe the resurrection to be a fact not because Scripture tells us but because the New Testament itself was written because of the resurrection. Obviously the resurrection was decisive, but the argumentation of the new theology indicates that the reliability of the documents has already been undermined by the use of the historical method. In this way, although perhaps unintentionally, the historical moorings of certain events in the life of Jesus and of the resurrection appear to have been loosened.

### C. *The First Chapters of Genesis*

The first chapters of Genesis constitute a third area in which various questions have arisen concerning the interpretations suggested by the new theology developed by some Reformed theologians, especially in the Netherlands. These chapters are of fundamental importance for understanding the entire Scripture for they reveal the foundations for the biblical message. Genesis 1-11 constitutes the prologue, not only to the book of Genesis, but to the entire Pentateuch, as well as to the Old Testament in general, and thus to the New Testament as well. These are chapters which are understandable in faith by every believer, and yet they involve issues of the greatest profundity for the Christian scholar. The perspectives set forth in these chapters are basic for the Christian engaged in the scientific, scholarly disciplines.

It is understandable then that these chapters have been of a special interest to representatives of the new theology. It is a matter of serious concern that some representatives of this new theology in the Reformed community contend that some or all of these chapters do not narrate actual events. With this in mind, we now turn in this section first to the



general character of Genesis 1-11 and then more specifically to Genesis 1 and Genesis 3.

### 1. *Genesis 1-11*

In a very brief space these chapters reveal the main events in the history of God's dealings with the world from the time of its creation to the time of Abraham. In covering this long period of history Genesis 1-11 presents only a few episodes. The main events revealed in these eleven chapters are the following: God's good creation of the world and man in the beginning; our first parents, Adam and Eve, in Paradise; the temptation and fall into sin of our first parents; God's curse and his promise of victory for the "seed of the woman"; the development of the two seeds in Adam's descendants; the corruption of mankind and the saving of Noah and his family from the judgment of the flood; the rebellious apostasy of the race at Babel and the scattering of the peoples. Then Genesis continues with the account of God's new beginning with Abraham in the covenant of grace and carries through this revealed history until the time of Israel's sojourn in Egypt. That constitutes the revealed prologue to God's covenantal dealings with Israel and this prologue is basic to an understanding of the entire Scripture.

#### *Aim of the Author of Genesis 1-11*

What is the aim of the author in these first eleven chapters of Genesis? It is clear that Genesis is an historical book (cf. the ten instances of *toledoth*, "generations of . . ."), and that accordingly the first chapters narrate events that really happened. However, the inspired author is presenting God's revelation as he relates this history. He is not writing history simply for history's sake; nor is he producing a complete and exhaustive history of everything that happened since the beginning. Through the inspired author God is revealing to fallen men that he created the world, that sin originated through Adam's fall, that he made a new beginning with the race at the time of the flood, and that he scattered the peoples at Babel. This account thus prepares the way for understanding God's covenantal dealings with Abraham and the development of Abraham's descendants to form the covenant nation of Israel. Thus the first eleven chapters present what may be summarized in terms of creation, the fall, the flood, and Babel.

The author is selective in setting forth the revelation of God in these eleven chapters. And he describes these important events in varying degrees of detail. The mighty work of creation is described in a single chapter. The account of Adam and Eve in Paradise and the fall is presented in two chapters. The development of the two seeds descended from Adam is given in two chapters. The account of the flood, on the other hand, is described at considerable length, covering no less than four of the eleven chapters. Then again the description of the apostasy at Babel is set forth in a single chapter and certain references are highly and tantalizingly condensed as in Genesis 10:8-12.

The writing of the first eleven chapters of Genesis certainly took place a long time after the actual occurrence of these events. It is fully in harmony with the Reformed understanding of organic inspiration (RES

Acts 1958, pp. 44 and CRC Acts 1961, pp. 256, 286) to recognize that the description of these events in some ways reflects the time in which Moses wrote. For example, we learn from Exodus 6:3 that the specific revelation of the name Jehovah (Hebrew: *Yahweh*) did not occur until the time of the Exodus. Yet in Genesis 2:4 the name *Yahweh* (Lord God) is used in the account of God's relation to man in Paradise, while Genesis 1 used the name *Elohim* (God). Also in Genesis 4:26 we read that in the days of Enoch men began to call upon the name of Jehovah (Lord). In these passages we see that the author, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, used the intimate, covenant name of Jehovah, which was first revealed in his own time, to name God in that earlier history.

In a similar way in the "table of the nations" found in Genesis 10, the names employed are designations in use at the time of Moses. Such use of names is common in history writing. For example, we are accustomed to say that the Dutch founded New York City even though we know that they originally called it New Amsterdam. Such anachronistic use of names is generally recognized. It is certainly possible that, as our knowledge of the ancient world increases through archaeological and other studies, additional instances of this sort may become known. Such usage of names is fully compatible with the organic inspiration of the Bible.

#### *Stylistic Differences and Figurative Expressions*

We must insist, then, that the first eleven chapters of Genesis reveal the major historical events in the history of God's dealings with man and the world prior to the time of Abraham. As the inspired writer presents God's revelation to us, he does not give a full and comprehensive history but he makes a selection in terms of his aim and purpose. He is not writing of these events simply for the sake of giving a factual history or a mere chronicle of events. He presents God's revelation to us. Thus he presents the major events together with the meaning and significance these events have for the biblical message. Now we must observe that within these eleven chapters, which concern events that really happened, the author's style of writing differs somewhat in the description of one event from the style used to describe another event. We must also acknowledge that there are some figurative expressions used in the description of this history.

The careful reader of Genesis 1-11 will observe that there are stylistic differences within these chapters. The style of Genesis 1, for example, is majestic and solemn, and differs from the style of Genesis 2. The style used to describe the rebellion at Babel (Gen. 11:1-10) differs again from that of the account of the flood (Gen. 6-9).

There are, of course, also stylistic differences between the narrative accounts in these chapters and the lists of names or genealogies. The genealogies found in Genesis 1-11 are not exhaustive or complete lists of ancestors. The author has made a selection here also. Furthermore, these lists of names also indicate a certain structure. Thus the descendants of Adam via Cain are traced in seven generations (Gen. 4), while those of Adam via Seth are traced in ten generations. Moreover, there is a certain parallel or contrast in these two lists: Lamech, the seventh from

Adam via Cain is the boastful and arrogant person described in Genesis 4:19 ff., while Enoch, the "seventh from Adam" (Jude 14) via Seth, is one who walked with God and was "taken by God" (Gen. 5:21-24).

Although Genesis is an historical book tracing for the most part "the generations of . . ." (Cf. Gen. 2:4; 5:1, etc. [ten instances]), there are also certain figurative or symbolical references within this historical account. For example, the two trees of the garden are given a figurative or symbolic significance by God in connection with the probationary command: the one tree represents the knowledge of good and evil to be reached by way of obedience; the other represents the life promised by God for Adam's obedience or forfeited by his disobedience. The reference to God's breathing into man the breath of life (Gen. 2:7) is generally understood as an anthropomorphic description since God does not breathe as man does. Again in the account of God's curse upon fallen man, it is generally agreed in Reformed circles that the reference to the "seed of the woman" refers, not to all the physical descendants of Eve, but only to the line of the faithful, the line of believers. The "seed of the serpent," on the other hand, refers not literally to snakes and serpents, but to the unfaithful, unbelieving descendants of Eve. The presence of such figurative descriptions in these historical chapters has been generally recognized in the Reformed community. It should be emphasized, however, that real events and important truths are being described by these figurative expressions.

Recently some proponents of the new theology within the Reformed community have come to regard many more elements in Genesis 1-11 as figurative and symbolical. This has contributed to the unrest and concern of many. Although the above mentioned examples are commonly understood to be figurative expressions, it is unwarranted to simply declare that almost everything in Genesis 1-11 is figurative or symbolical. Any one who claims that other details involved in the biblical description of these great events are figurative expressions will have to present his position by means of careful exegesis and sound biblical exposition. No one may make such claims simply because he thinks that modern science has made it impossible to understand Scripture in the traditional Reformed way.

However, if the church is confronted by sound and careful exegesis, it should follow the Berean attitude of testing whether such "new" interpretations are true to Scripture. Of course, "new insights" which involve confessionally defined matters should be distinguished from those not contained in the confessions. For those interpretations which concern the confession, the church has a prescribed procedure which must be honored by all. Where new interpretations do not concern creedally defined matters, a discussion need not follow the sequence of consistory, classis, and synod. All are, however, bound by Scripture. No one should disturb the church with careless, personal opinions. Nor should anyone submit "new interpretations" unless he has engaged in careful investigation of Scripture. Furthermore, one who submits "new interpretations" should also carefully consider the history of Reformed interpretation of the passages involved. But when someone has carefully studied the Word

and is convinced of the biblical warrant of his interpretation, the church should hear and test and hold to that which is genuinely scriptural. This is certainly the perspective of our confessions also, which regard the creeds themselves and the writings of men as subject to the authoritative Scripture (Belgic Confession, Art. VII).

### *The Confessions on Genesis 1-11*

When the Reformed Confessions speak of the inspiration, infallibility, and authority of the entire Scripture and the necessity of our "believing without any doubt all things contained in them" (Art. V), they of course include Genesis 1-11. However, there are also some specific references in our confessions to certain features of Genesis 1-11.

The Belgic Confession affirms that "the Father by the Word, that is, by his Son, has created of nothing the heaven, the earth, and all creatures, when it seemed good unto him, giving unto every creature its being, shape, form, and several offices to serve its Creator" (Art. XII). More specifically it affirms that "God created man out of the dust of the earth, and made and formed him after his own image and likeness, good, righteous, and holy, capable in all things to will agreeably to the will of God" (Art. XIV). The fall and disobedience of our first parents, Adam and Eve, in Paradise is confessed as an event which occurred in the past while having its dire effect by bringing about the corruption of all of Adam's posterity (Art. XIV, XV; cf. Heidelberg Catechism Q. 6-8). Some of the details of the account of the fall are also referred to in Articles XVII and XXIII. The Canons of Dordt likewise refer to the actual occurrence of creation and the fall (I, 1; III-IV, 1,2).

All of these confessional statements clearly teach the good creation of the world and man in the beginning by God. Likewise they clearly teach an historical fall involving the two progenitors of the human race at the beginning of human history. They trace mankind's present corruption to this event which occurred in Paradise. It is clear from these statements that any denial of creation or of the historicity of the fall as an event at the beginning of human history is in conflict with our confessions. And we believe that these confessions are faithful to Scripture in these affirmations and should continue to be faithfully confessed by us all.

Thus we have seen that it is crucial, both in terms of Scripture and our confessions, to understand the first eleven chapters of Genesis as revealing real events that have actually occurred. Yet some representatives of the new theology in the Reformed community contend that some or all of these chapters do not narrate actual events. It is understandable that these suggestions have disturbed many. The contention that these chapters do not present events that really happened is certainly in conflict with our Reformed Confessions and in conflict with Scripture itself.

If one does not accept the actual occurrence of such events as creation and the fall, as revealed in these chapters of Genesis, he will be compelled to view the main lines of the entire biblical message in a different way. Because this issue is so important, we turn now to give further attention to Genesis 1 and Genesis 3.

## 2. *Genesis 1 and Creation*

Our creeds clearly affirm the biblical teaching of God's creation of all things in the beginning. Since the appearance of the theory of evolution, the church has been challenged as to the legitimacy of her confession of creation. The subject of creation has been on the agenda of the Christian Reformed synods a number of times. The Reformed Ecumenical Synod has also concerned itself with this subject on more than one occasion. Most recently the Christian Reformed Church has considered the question of creation at the Synods of 1966 and 1967. A brief review of these most recent considerations must suffice here.

In 1966 the synod received three overtures which requested a study of the questions relating to creation, evolution, and theistic evolution. In response to these overtures the Synod of 1966 decided to "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 affirmations concerning the origin of the world and of the human race" (Acts 1966, p. 78). When this committee reported to the Synod of 1967, that synod decided to "withhold action on the recommendations of the 'Committee to recommend a Commission and Mandate on Creation and Evolution' and, thereby, not implement the decision of the Synod of 1966" (Acts 1967, p. 76). Two grounds were adduced in support of this decision: "a. There is no specific case before it in which the scriptural and creedal teaching of creation by divine fiat is being challenged and, therefore, synod judges that such a study, as contemplated by the decision of the Synod of 1966 is not necessary at this time. b. This is a study we may confidently trust can and will be carried on by interested and competent and responsible persons in the community of our common faith" (pp. 76-77). It should be observed that the mandate of the committee submitting this report does not require our engaging in this further study. However, our present mandate at least warrants a reminder of the position taken by the Synod of 1967.

It should be noted that while our creeds clearly affirm the creation of all things by God, neither our creeds nor any official synodical decisions have led our churches to an official position, for example, on the length of the days of creation. Within the Reformed churches which subscribe to our three forms of unity, there has long been toleration of certain alternative views of the length of the creation days so long as these positions affirm God's creation and do not conflict with Scripture and confession.

It is important that those who engage in the study of creation and evolution (theistic evolution) fully recognize the authority of Scripture and maintain an authentic faith response to God's revelation. The temptation to succumb to modern science and to allow science to dictate biblical interpretation has been referred to earlier in this report. It is incumbent upon the church and all her members to faithfully confess the cre-

ation of all things by God and authentically maintain this perspective as one engages in scientific studies, also when examining views which challenge this biblical revelation today. Any one engaged in the discussion of these weighty matters should do so with a clear and unambiguous adherence to Scripture as the authoritative Word of God, and in agreement with our Reformed Confessions which are subordinate to that Word.

### 3. *Genesis 3 and Romans 5 on the Fall*

Another area of concern has been the interpretation of Genesis 3. Some Reformed theologians associated with the new theology have argued against the traditional interpretation which affirms the historical reality of the event described in Genesis 3. We shall use this issue to illustrate the methods and principles of interpretation used by some contemporary Reformed theologians. We would remind the church that our task is not to assess the correctness of detailed exegesis, but to comment upon methods and principles employed and to test these in the light of our confession concerning Scripture and its authority. This task assigned to the committee reflects the fact that the church in its assemblies may make judgments on such exegetical matters only in so far as they impinge upon what the church believes to be its clear confession of the truth.

The new interpretation suggests that Genesis 3 should not be viewed as presenting history in any temporal sense. Instead, it is argued that Genesis 3 should be interpreted as a "teaching model," i.e. Genesis 3 teaches the truth concerning the human condition but it should not be interpreted as a description of an event that occurred after creation. Various reasons have been given for this position. One is that science has made it impossible to believe that this is history in any temporal sense. The committee has noted earlier that although scientific findings may occasion a reexamination of a particular interpretation, they may not dictate a new interpretation. Thus, if the new interpretation is to be considered valid, additional reasons must be adduced for the assertion that Genesis 3 is a teaching model. Since Scripture is its own interpreter and since the New Testament in Romans 5 does comment upon Genesis 3, it is essential to consider this material.

Thus the most important additional reason adduced in favor of the new interpretation is the assertion that Paul in Romans is making use of a typical rabbinic method of interpreting Scripture. It is noted that although apart from Genesis 3 the Old Testament hardly ever mentions Adam, the rabbis had developed an extensive theology concerning Adam and Eve. Anyone who reads that theology and the stories associated with it knows that the rabbis were most often not concerned with history but with instruction. They created many stories about Adam and Eve for the sole purpose of instruction. Thus it is argued that Paul, trained in rabbinic theology, uses the story of Adam to illumine the significance of Jesus Christ. It is claimed that like the rabbis, Paul is interested in Genesis 3 more for what it teaches than for what it reports as an account of what actually happened. Finally, it is argued

that the loss of Genesis 3 as an historical account is not important for, after all, Scripture is primarily concerned to teach us about Jesus Christ and not about Adam.

The committee wishes to make several observations about the principles used to support this new interpretation. The claim that Paul at times functions in a rabbinic manner is not to be rejected out of hand. To support that claim appeal has been made to the following: Paul's mention of the rock that followed Israel (I Cor. 10:4), his use of allegory in Galatians 4:24ff., his identification of Moses' opponents as Jannes and Jambres (II Tim. 3:8), and the fact that Paul quotes from the three divisions of the Old Testament—as did the rabbis—to prove a point. If such an interpretation of these items is valid, the suggestion that Paul at times reflects his rabbinic background can be viewed as a legitimate implication of organic inspiration, i.e., that the Holy Spirit uses men as they are with their own personality, education and background.

However, it is significant that in Romans 5 Paul does not borrow a story created by the rabbis but uses only material found in the Old Testament. If he had borrowed a story from rabbinic theology, the suggested reinterpretation would be possible. But precisely here Paul refers only to that which is contained in Genesis. The fact that the rabbis had other stories with no basis in historical fact and which were used only as teaching models, is hardly decisive at this point. For there is no evidence that the rabbis ever questioned the historicity of Genesis 3. Thus an appeal to rabbinic interpretation provides no basis for assuming that Paul is uninterested in the historicity of Genesis 3. Also, in Romans 5 Paul introduces the history of redemption perspective when he speaks of the period from Adam to Moses and of those whose sins were *not* like the transgressions of Adam (Rom. 5:14). Such a perspective is not accounted for by the theory that Paul views Genesis 3 only as a teaching model.

In addition, to suggest that the matter of historicity is really unimportant because the Scripture is primarily about Jesus Christ suggests a rather narrow Christocentric view of Scripture. Obviously the Bible is about Jesus Christ, and we have emphasized that perspective in the discussion of the nature and extent of biblical authority, but that basic perspective does not by itself cancel the significance of other historical issues. The Bible not only affirms the historicity of Jesus Christ but also proclaims Jesus in his relationship to the creation and to the history of redemption. However much one must maintain the centrality of Jesus Christ and the significance of this for a proper understanding of the various parts of Scripture, one may not use that perspective to rule out the significance of other questions—however subordinate they are to Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is central both in the Scriptures and for faith, but one may not conclude that because one accepts the historical Jesus by faith that therefore all other historical questions are biblically unimportant.

## THE CONFESSIONS

In conclusion we return to the confessions because the church's concern in this matter is related to the fact that her confessions have something to say about the teaching of Genesis 3. The confessional items are primarily the following: Lord's Day 3 and 4 of the Heidelberg Catechism which speak of the fall and disobedience of our first parents, Adam and Eve, in Paradise; the subsequent corruption of our own nature because of this willful disobedience; and the temporal and eternal judgment of God upon both original and actual sins. Articles 14 and 15 of the Belgic Confession are a further explication of the same points. In addition, there are passing references to Adam in Articles 17 and 23 of the Belgic Confession, and the discussion of original sin in a historical context in the Canons of Dordt III-IV, Articles 1 and 2.

This confessional issue has been in the forefront of the debate also in the Netherlands. In 1967 the Synod of the Gereformeerde Kerken declared that the earlier decision of the Synod of Assen which required a literal understanding of several details of Genesis 3 was no longer binding. However, the synod also affirmed that what the confessions say concerning the origin of sin and the consequences of the fall is essential to the proclamation of the gospel and has to be maintained. In 1970, in response to the interpretation of Genesis 3 as a "teaching model," the Gereformeerde Kerken declared that the denial of the historicity of the fall at the beginning of human history could not be harmonized with the previous synodical decision. And thus the synod implicitly affirmed that this new view could not be harmonized with the confessions.

Thus the confessional statements mentioned above have been interpreted traditionally, and still today, as teaching an historical fall at the beginning of human history with its disastrous consequences for the history of mankind. It is clear from the statements themselves that the denial of the historicity of the fall of our first parents at the beginning of human history cannot be harmonized with the confessions. This appeal to the confessions is not intended to elevate them above the Scriptures, for we are convinced that the confessional perspective reflects perspectives garnered from Scripture itself. We have in mind not only Romans 5, but also the way in which Genesis 1-11 is tied to and prepares the way for the history of Abraham. Thus our appeal in this matter is basically to the Scriptures themselves, and to the creeds only as our confession which contains this biblical perspective.

## V. PASTORAL ADVICE

We come now to the third part of our report—pastoral advice to the churches. In the preceding study we discussed first the nature and extent of biblical authority in the light of Scripture and the Reformed confessions. We then engaged in a critical evaluation of certain methods of interpreting the Bible as presently employed by some Reformed scholars. Now we turn our attention to the more practical objectives as envisioned in the mandate, namely, "to serve the churches with pastoral advice in these matters."



Pastoral concern for the churches is one of the grounds advanced by synod for undertaking this study. Such concern is wholly in keeping with the nature and task of the church. It is therefore quite appropriate that pastoral advice should constitute the practical outcome of this study report.

Throughout this report we have tried to keep in mind that as servants of the church we are obliged to honor the pastoral concern which lies at the very heart of the church's interest in the question of biblical authority. We have therefore tried to avoid a strictly academic approach to our mandate. Our aim has been to deal with the issues involved, not in a theological way, but in a biblical and confessional way—at the level of the faith-knowledge and faith-life of the churches. We realize, however, that in this respect we have been only partially successful.

Difficulties involved in understanding this report grow to some extent out of the nature of the mandate itself. The mandate opens up a large area of very complex and challenging problems. Involved are views of Scripture as developed by theologians and scientists, which concern problems which seem to be foreign to the faith and life of many believers. Apparently they do not arise directly out of the living concerns of the pulpit and pew. Yet in many cases these critical issues have been injected into the life-stream of the congregations through pastoral booklets addressed to the churches, the so-called "cahiers" published in the Gereformeerde Kerken of the Netherlands. Thus these issues force themselves upon the attention of church members at large and have created a measure of uncertainty and unrest. Most of our people, however, apparently feel that these critical issues are not really their problems, but are problems foisted upon them by others.

Perhaps it should be added, however, that the scholars whose views have been dealt with in this report firmly believe that they are actually responding to issues which are looming ever larger on the horizon of church life, even though many members of the church do not yet sense their urgency. The conviction with which they speak arises from their attempt to gauge the pulsebeat of Christian living today. Their claim to a hearing is based upon their professed attempts to meet the spiritual crises especially of today's Christian youth, whose confidence in the authority of Scripture is being threatened by the eroding influences of modern science. They therefore regard the so-called "new hermeneutics" as a positive contribution to meeting the felt or unfelt, yet very real needs of the church.

Most of the views examined in this report have been propounded by scholars from one of our sister churches, the Gereformeerde Kerken of the Netherlands. Because of the close ties between us these views have found their way into our circles. Moreover, these views are a matter of deep concern within the larger family of Reformed churches which makes up the Reformed Ecumenical Synod. This report therefore looks out beyond the boundaries of our own denomination. Though it is addressed first of all to our churches in North America, it also seeks to keep in mind the larger concerns of our sister churches around the

world and within that international arena it seeks to make a contribution to the faith-knowledge and faith-life of these churches.

In fulfilling our mandate we felt that, if we were to meet these critical issues honestly, it was important to address ourselves to the views of Scripture which gave rise to these problems at the rather learned level at which these problematic views have been articulated. Therefore, in seeking to do justice to the very complex problems involved and in seeking to avoid a superficial and simplistic treatment of them, we found it necessary again and again to engage in rather theoretical discussions. This more challenging material can be of service to the church in giving guidance to its theologians, scientists and other academicians, as well as its ministers, students and other educated people. Thus the report as a whole has a specific pastoral value. In addition ministers could help make the report serviceable to others by translating the more difficult sections into concepts more readily understandable by their people. Now, however, as we seek to distil from the preceding discussions certain practical implications for the life of the church, we are attempting very deliberately to speak the pastoral language of the churches.

Within the Christian Reformed Church we cannot appeal to a strong tradition of pastoral advice coming from our synods to our churches. We are therefore forced to reflect on these questions: What is the nature of pastoral advice? What form should it take? What status should it hold among us? The pastoral advice here submitted reflects our answers to these questions within the scope of the mandate. But clearly one consideration is of fundamental importance. Pastoral advice, as offered and as received, presupposes a spirit of mutual trust and confidence. The benefits of all pastoral advice depend upon a healthy confessional unity among our churches. With it, pastoral advice can give sound spiritual direction to the life of the church. Without it, pastoral advice will assuredly fail to win the hearty response of acceptance which we owe to every proclamation of the church which is anchored in Scripture and the creeds.

In this spirit of pastoral concern we now offer these reflections in the hope that they will serve to confirm the churches in their common commitment to Scripture as the authoritative Word of God. These points of pastoral advice should not be taken as new or additional confessional statements. Rather we urge them upon our churches as reaffirmations of our accepted confessional commitment to the authority of Scripture with a view to averting the crises and divisive tendencies which surround the issue of biblical authority among fellow Christians in other Reformed churches.

At the risk of saying what probably needs no saying, we remind the churches of the crucial importance of holding fast our common confession of biblical authority. We emphasize this point in view of the fact that the historic Christian doctrine of biblical authority is in crisis in our times. This crisis lies especially in the area of hermeneutics, which is concerned with the basic principles and methods of biblical interpretation. The hermeneutical problem is the pivotal point of much contemporary theological controversy. Involved is a right understanding of

Scripture, which is a matter of paramount importance today for the entire Christian church, including those churches which stand within the Reformed tradition.

A continuing concern with biblical inspiration, infallibility, and authority is reflected in the fact that these doctrines have been on the agenda of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod from its beginnings and have been matters of ongoing concern in the Christian Reformed Church as well. The various study reports on these doctrines during recent years reflect earnest efforts aimed at coming to a better understanding of Scripture. Relying upon the promised leading of the Holy Spirit we hope that this report on biblical authority, building upon the foundations laid in these previous reports, will contribute to a deeper and fuller understanding of the content and purpose of Scripture as the saving revelation of God in Jesus Christ. To this end we submit this report to the churches as a summons to communal reflection upon the authority of Scripture as our rule for faith and life. But a word of caution is in order: we must guard against so exhausting our energies in talking about the Bible that we fail to get on with our prophetic calling as churches to proclaim its message and to put that message into practice as God's people living in his world today.

Against the background of these introductory comments we now submit to synod the following confessional preamble, followed by seven points of pastoral advice, together with a brief elaboration of each point, requesting synod to adopt these seven points and recommend them to the churches as pastoral guidelines.

\* \* \* \*

As a preamble to the following seven points of pastoral advice synod calls the attention of the churches to these relevant statements from one of our creeds on the authority of Scripture:

"We confess that this Word of God was not sent nor delivered by the will of men, but that men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit . . . Therefore we call such writings holy and divine Scriptures . . . We believe that the Holy Scriptures are contained in two books, namely, the Old and the New Testaments, which are canonical, against which nothing can be alleged . . . We receive all these books, and these only, as holy and canonical, for the regulation, foundation, and confirmation of our faith; believing without any doubt all things contained in them, not so much because the church receives and approves them as such, but more especially because the Holy Spirit witnesses in our hearts that they are from God, and also because they carry the evidence thereof in themselves . . . We believe that those Holy Scriptures fully contain the will of God, and that whatsoever man ought to believe unto salvation is sufficiently taught therein. For since the whole manner of worship which God requires of us is written in them at large, it is unlawful for anyone, though an apostle, to teach otherwise than we are taught in the Holy Scriptures . . . It does thereby evidently appear that the doctrine thereof is most perfect and complete in all respects . . . Therefore we reject with all our hearts whatsoever

does not agree with this infallible rule." (Belgic Confession, Articles III-VII)

1. *Synod calls the churches to a wholehearted recognition that Scripture addresses us with full divine authority as the saving revelation of God in Jesus Christ and that this authority applies to Scripture in its total extent and in all its parts.*

All Scripture speaks with the authority of "Thus saith the Lord." For what Scripture says, God says. All Scripture is "God-breathed", and therein lies its authority. Being the Word of God written, it "cannot be broken". These are claims which Scripture makes for itself, and it presses these claims upon us all as our common confession of faith.

From these awesome claims it is clear that a mystery surrounds Scripture which we can never fathom. Since biblical revelation comes to us with the full authority of God himself, its authority can never be adequately defined and explained, but only humbly confessed. Thus when theological questions arise concerning biblical authority, even then we are obliged to state and vindicate our position, in the face of alternative views, within the framework of a biblically Reformed confessional theology. In all of its utterances the church is called to respond to biblical authority in the spirit of confession.

All Scripture speaks with the authority of its divine author. Its authority is divine in origin and nature. Scripture is therefore normative for faith and life. It comes from God and speaks of God as it reveals the mighty acts of God unto salvation in his words and works. This history of redemption includes acts of judgment and reconciliation. Viewed in its extent, the whole Bible is authoritative. Viewed as to its nature, biblical authority is divine authority, qualified, but not limited, by its being redemptive revelation. The divine, plenary authority of Scripture is pervasively revealed in its totally redemptive, saving message. Scripture's message is, therefore, not partly redemptive and partly non-redemptive. All Scripture as Word of God is redemptive in nature. It is addressed to us as fallen men to redirect our lives in faith to God our Creator and Redeemer, and thus to restore us to our God-given place and task in creation. Thus we confess that biblical authority involves both the authority of the divine author and the content and purpose of his authoritative message. This confession holds true for Scripture pervasively, in the total extent of biblical revelation and throughout all its parts, though these parts are not to be seen in their isolation but in their revelational wholeness within the overall Christocentric perspective of the Bible.

Accordingly, the divine authority of Scripture can be faithfully understood only by listening attentively to its redemptive message. In bowing to the authority of Scripture as Word of God we must open our minds concretely to what God says, to whom he originally spoke, the historical-redemptive context in which he spoke time and again, the cultural conditions under which he spoke, and thus to discern what God is saying to us in the Scriptures today.

God reveals himself with full divine authority in the world of his making as well as in Scripture. There we meet him as Creator. Because

of sin, however, our eyes were blinded, our ears deafened, our hearts hardened to this revelation. So God now reveals himself anew in Scripture to us as sinners and for our salvation. Both in creation and in Scripture, and supremely in Christ, God has spoken with full divine authority. The divine authority of Scripture, in distinction from creation revelation, is characterized by its redemptive message. Scripture speaks with full divine authority in the language of redemption. For the divine authority of Scripture is deeply embedded in the unfolding revelation of the history of redemption, the plan of salvation, as centered in Jesus Christ, leading the way for the coming Kingdom of God.

Thus we must think of the authority of the Bible's divine author and the authority of its redemptive message as going hand in hand. They are like two sides of a single coin.

This perspective on the nature and extent of biblical authority is not a new confessional stance. It is securely anchored in the Reformed confessions as they have shaped our Reformed heritage in biblical interpretation. Therefore, neither this point of pastoral advice nor any of the others are to be construed as new confessional statements. Rather, all these points of pastoral advice are intended as reinforcement and elaboration of our accepted confessional commitment to the full divine authority of Scripture as pervasively revealed in its redemptive message.

*2. Synod calls the churches to maintain the clear witness of the creeds to the authority of Scripture as rooted in the historical reality of the events recorded in Scripture.*

We are called to be both a confessional and a confessing church. If we are serious about this, we may not take our confessional heritage as Reformed churches lightly. In the face of increasingly vocal anti-confessional tendencies in recent years, even within the Reformed community, we should resolve to uphold the witness of our confessions. Questions concerning biblical authority as we face them today are doubtless more complex than the form in which the Reformed churches confronted them at the time our creeds were written. But let us not underestimate the relevance of our Reformed creeds. They still offer a sound biblical perspective for approaching the central issues of biblical authority in our times.

At several crucial turning points in biblical revelation the reality of God's covenantal partnership with man in actual events is being called into question today. Some scholars replace the traditional historical-redemptive interpretation of Scripture by a method of interpretation which reduces some crucial biblical episodes to teaching models. Though they argue that biblical authority *as such* is not being challenged, but only the *nature* of biblical authority, it is nevertheless clear that their view of the authority of such biblical passages is no longer rooted in the historical reality of actual events. In the face of such challenges the church in its teaching and preaching must make clear that its message is securely anchored in real events involving real persons, places, and times—unless Scripture itself leads us to a nonliteral interpretation.

We should therefore follow the lead of our confessions in their meaningful testimonies to the historical reality of the events recorded in

biblical revelation—including the creation of man and the world; the fall of our first parents Adam and Eve in Paradise, and the consequences of their sin in human history; God's judgment upon sin; and God's saving work in the birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

3. *Synod, while confessing that authority of the biblical message is rooted in the historical reality of the events therein recorded, urges the churches to recognize that these events are presented and interpreted in terms of their revelational meaning.*

Although we must maintain that the biblical message is rooted in the historical reality of the events recorded in Scripture, we must also recognize that these historical narratives are not purely objective, factual accounts. They are not mere chronicles. Scripture interprets as it narrates. It is prophetic history with a redemptive focus and purpose. In its witness to events it also proclaims the meaning of these events. Recognizing this leads us to a clearer understanding of what kind of book that Bible is.

The historical setting and cultural context of biblical revelation are therefore important for a right understanding of biblical authority within the framework of an organic view of inspiration, and also for interpreting Scripture in keeping with its own claim to full authority. We must therefore seek to discover how a given episode is woven into the total fabric of biblical revelation.

It is possible in certain instances to distinguish, partially at least, between an event and the way that event is recorded in Scripture. However this distinction should never be used to divorce the meaning of an event from the event itself which undergirds and shapes its meaning. We must take seriously both the message of the biblical text as it lies before us and the reality of the events to which Scripture bears witness, without playing one off against the other. Thus the distinction between event and record in biblical interpretation should not be used to discredit the historical reliability of biblical revelation. Throughout Scripture biblical authority is bound up inseparably with the historical reliability of the biblical witness to events which really happened. With this confession the authority of Scripture stands or falls in the confession and life of the church.

4. *Synod, acknowledging that Scripture is self-authenticating, reminds the churches that the authority of Scripture is not dependent upon the findings of science; while scientific findings can serve as occasions for a better understanding of Scripture, nevertheless the church may appeal to the authority of Scripture alone as the basis for its faith and life, and accordingly must seek to develop a Christian community within which all scholarly work is carried on in faithfulness to the authoritative Scriptures.*

The interrelationships between biblical interpretation and scientific findings is a source of recurring tension within the Christian community at large and also within the Reformed churches. This area of conflict also bears upon the question of biblical authority.

We must recognize that it does not lie within the mandate nor the competence of the church to take positions or make pronouncements on specifically scientific issues. But we must also recognize that the proclamation of the gospel entrusted to the church does address itself with the full authority of the Bible itself to the entire range of our life-relationships, including our involvements in the scientific enterprise. The proclamation of the gospel must therefore open up before us the total biblical perspective within which we must live our lives and do our work. Hence in following through on its proclamation of the gospel the church must encourage its members to pursue their scientific work in loyalty to the authoritative Scriptures and in harmony with the confessions, and assure itself of a similar commitment on the part of scholars working within the church's sphere of responsibility.

This view of the task of the church offers real possibilities for arriving at a Christian perspective on the relationship between biblical authority and scientific findings. For by proclaiming Jesus Christ as the key to God's creation revelation and the heart of God's inscripturated revelation the church can point the way to a clear recognition that there are no real contradictions between these two ways in which God reveals himself to us. In both creation and Scripture God addresses us with full authority. The conflicts that sometimes arise are due to discrepancies in our responses to these two modes of revelation. As Reformed Christians we must take both revelations seriously. Taking Scripture seriously leads to recognizing science as a legitimate expression of the cultural mandate. Therefore we must seek to profit from and make thankful use of the findings of science as seen in the light of Scripture. Motivated by these convictions we often discover that the results of scientific investigation become the occasion for reviewing and sometimes, upon further biblical reflection, even revising certain standing interpretations of the Bible. When in faithful obedience to God's full-orbed revelation we are led to a re-evaluation of certain biblical data, we should not resist such insights as lead us to a clearer understanding of both Scripture and creation in their revelational unity.

The church may not, however, allow its message to be made dependent upon the scientific enterprise, nor allow scientific findings to dictate its interpretation of the Bible, nor allow the claims of science to call into question its confession of biblical authority, nor allow any science, including theology, to determine what is believable and what is not believable in the Bible. For such concessions to science would mean reversing the right order of Christian thinking. Scripture itself is the lamp to our feet and the light upon our path as we walk through the various fields of scientific inquiry.

Basically Scripture is its own interpreter. Neither scientific knowledge nor theological expertise may function as prerequisites for a right understanding of Scripture. In varying degrees both can serve the church in deepening and enriching its understanding of God's revelation both in Scripture and in creation, when pursued within the framework of a Christian confessional perspective. Accordingly we urge our scholars to act, speak, and write in such a way as to demonstrate that their scholar-

ship is being carried on in faithfulness to the authority of Scripture and in loyalty to our confessions and thus merit the confidence of our people.

Under the enlightening power of the Holy Spirit the Bible is an open Book, which in its central and comprehensive message is readily accessible and unmistakably clear to the believing heart and mind. The biblical faith and obedience of God's people may not be made dependent upon theologians or other scientists or the faulty assumption that a hearty confession of biblical authority and a right understanding of the biblical message awaits their authoritative word.

Indispensable for understanding the central and comprehensive message of Scripture is a Spirit-led faith. With this in mind our pulpits must proclaim the full-orbed message of Scripture with a ring of authority which echoes the authority of Scripture itself. All those who have ears to hear must be able to discern clearly what the Spirit is saying to the churches and what that redeeming, liberating, life-giving Word means for living the full life of Christian discipleship in God's world today.

*5. Synod encourages the churches to see to it that biblical studies are carried on in a careful and disciplined way, submissively rethinking the thoughts of Scripture itself; and accordingly warns against the use of any method of biblical interpretation which excludes or calls into question either the event-character or the revelational meaning of biblical history, thus compromising the full authority of Scripture as the Word of God.*

Since Scripture as the Word of God is an historical revelation, it calls for methods of interpreting its redemptive message which do justice to its deeply historical dimension. Hence, in the Reformed tradition we have often spoken of the historical-grammatical-theological method of interpretation. Nowadays, in addition to the adjective "historical," the adjective "critical" is commonly used to describe methods of biblical interpretation. We should recognize, however, that the validity, acceptability, and usability of this concept "critical" depends upon how this concept is defined and how it actually functions in biblical interpretation. Biblical scholarship can be carried on *critically*, if we make clear that "critical" does not imply a refusal to submit our thinking believingly to the authority of Scripture or a refusal to respond wholeheartedly to the illuminating power of the Holy Spirit who gave us the Word. Biblical studies can be carried on *critically* if we understand "critical" to mean a careful, disciplined, analytical rethinking of the thoughts of Scripture itself.

Thus understood, historical-critical studies, in harmony with the doctrine of organic inspiration, have contributed to a richer appreciation of the real human and historical dimension of Scripture as God's Word to man. Such scholarly approaches to Scripture have highlighted in exciting ways a better understanding of the historical setting and cultural context of the biblical message.

However, the historical-critical method as employed in contemporary theology often betrays fundamental religious presuppositions which com-



promise a wholehearted confession of the full authority of Scripture. In some cases this method is employed on the silent assumption that the Bible is purely a product of human history. In other cases this unbiblical bias is explicitly present as a working principle. Whenever this method of interpretation is thus used to reduce the Word of God to the words of men, the results are devastating for the life of the church. The Bible is then robbed of its authority for Christian living. It then serves only as an historical document for scholars and experts, a handbook for theologians and historians in the pursuit of their scientific studies. A form of historical theology then replaces proclamation; the pulpit loses its prophetic voice; and for the people of God the Bible as Word of God becomes a closed book. At best the biblical message can then be recovered only as an after-thought, once the historical-critical method has run its full course. For this method of biblical interpretation is deliberately blind to the revelational content and purpose of Scripture.

As presently employed by some contemporary Reformed scholars, this method does not necessarily involve a rejection of the revelational content and purpose of Scripture. For they hold that for them the historical-critical method serves only a limited function. There is more to the biblical message than can be uncovered by this method. Accordingly they do not apply this method in the radical, thoroughgoing way described above. As Reformed scholars they recognize the revelational as well as the historical dimension in Scripture. Distinguishing between these two dimensions, they clearly make room in their theology for the revelational dimension, though the relationship between the historical and revelational is often highly ambiguous.

In so far as these Reformed scholars make use of the historical-critical method, they set the revelational dimension outside their purview. For such exclusion is taken to be a built-in limitation of this method. By definition this method cannot pronounce upon the revelational dimension of such central redemptive events as the birth, death, and resurrection of Christ. Working with the historical-critical method in biblical studies therefore means that the Christian historian *as historian* cannot pronounce upon those uniquely redemptive events which constitute the very heart of Scripture, nor can he deal with the revelational dimension of these events. He must by definition limit himself to that which can be proven historically, for example, by the law of cause-and-effect or the principle of analogy—whatever additional revelational meaning he as a believing scholar recognizes in the biblical record.

In the measure that this method is consistently applied it involves basic presuppositions which render theology extremely dubious as a faith-task within the Christian community. A genuinely confessional theology then becomes a highly questionable undertaking. For, though limited in application, such use of the historical-critical method excludes in practice what the Christian in principle confesses, namely, that Scripture reports reliably the mighty acts of God in history. It therefore does injustice to Scripture's claim to be fully and pervasively the Word of God and involves a serious reduction of the Reformed confessional approach to biblical authority and interpretation.

The churches should therefore guard against the use of any method of biblical interpretation which by definition cannot or in practice does not pronounce upon the unique event-character of biblical revelation or upon the revelational character of Scripture which constitutes the very heart of its message. Our methods of interpreting Scripture must be true to Scripture's own view of reality and expressive of our Reformed confession concerning biblical revelation. Scripture itself is the norm for our theological and other scientific enterprises, and thus also the norm for our principles and methods of biblical interpretation. Faithful biblical interpretation must begin with the believing confession that God's Word has seized control of our hearts and minds, so that we then willingly lead every thought captive in obedience to Christ the Lord. Scripture itself must first interpret for us the meaning of our lives as the spiritual starting point for our interpretation of the biblical message for today.

*6. Synod reminds the churches of our brotherly obligation to respect such freedom of biblical interpretation as falls clearly within the bounds of our creedal forms of unity, while recognizing, of course, that in all things we are bound by the Word of God.*

While maintaining that our creeds witness authoritatively to the central truths of Scripture, we must recognize that our creeds also countenance a certain freedom of exegesis and allow for differences of insight on some specific matters of biblical interpretation. We should therefore abide by the spirit of our creeds in not requiring of ourselves or others more than our creeds themselves require of us. In matters on which the creeds speak we must honor their authority. Where the creeds allow for a certain freedom of interpretation, there we must exercise Christian toleration. In all things, however, we are bound by the Word of God.

Yet the confessions remain forms of unity for the faith and life of the church. As forms of unity they are designed to promote a common witness to our biblical faith and to preserve the unity of our common commitment to the authority of Scripture by delineating the fundamental perspective within which freedom of exegesis is to be exercised and differences of insight evaluated and, hopefully, resolved.

As long as our diversities of interpretation fall clearly within the bounds of our basic and comprehensive confession of biblical authority and within the witness of our creeds, such differences are to be countenanced, though with the hope in time, by mutual trust and ongoing diligent reflection on the meaning of God's Word, we may arrive at greater unity in our response to the biblical message.

If therefore among Christians who share the same biblical faith, differences prevail on certain points of biblical interpretation, and if appeal to Scripture itself leaves these issues unresolved, then appeal to the authority of the creeds is the path to travel in delineating the biblical-confessional arena within which differing parties are to seek a settlement. In all questions of biblical interpretation, whether they concern matters clearly confessed in the creeds or not, the church must always demonstrate the Berean spirit of testing whether these interpretations are true to the Scriptures.

*7. Synod reminds the churches that the authority of Scripture lays its comprehensive claim upon the total life of the church, so that biblical authority is not only to be believed and confessed as an article of faith, but also to be consistently applied and practiced in the life and ministry of the church.*

Our common confession of biblical authority has profound and sweeping implications for the preaching and teaching ministry of the church. Since Scripture is the standard of authority for the life of the church, as well as for life as a whole, its norms must give meaning and direction to all the ministries of the church. Though we may vigorously affirm the authority of Scripture, that affirmation rests in judgment upon us whenever our preaching or teaching lacks the authoritative ring of the biblical message. It is not enough to openly profess our allegiance to the authority of Scripture. That authority must also actually function as an operative principle in the life of the church.

By the authority of Scripture we must test even our most cherished traditions and practices. By that authority we are called to work together for the ongoing renewal of the church in keeping with the Reformational principle, "The church reformed must always be reforming." By that authority our creeds exercise their authority in the life of the church. By that authority we may be called again to shape new creeds.

Experience teaches us that it is possible to honor the authority of Scripture in word, and yet betray it in deed. Sometimes this happens through misplaced emphases. For example, if in preaching and teaching we develop biblical themes atomistically, that is, by cutting them loose from their historical-redemptive rootage in Scripture or by unfolding them in isolation from the focus of Scripture as the saving revelation of God in Jesus Christ, then our confession of biblical authority amounts to little more than mere lip service. Then the voice of the church loses that clear ring of biblical authority, "Thus saith the Lord!"

Such denial in practice of what we claim in principle also happens when we fail to expound the Christ-centered revelation of the Old Testament, either by neglect, thus reducing the Old Testament to a closed book, or by distortions which eclipse the redemptive perspective which binds the Old Testament as promise to the New Testament as fulfillment.

Furthermore, it is also inconsistent with our confession of biblical authority to adopt dualistic forms of interpretation which undercut the integrally unified, organically whole nature of biblical revelation—as, for example, when we subject our exegesis to such faulty dichotomies as formal versus material aspects in Scripture, doctrinal facts versus moral values, the human factor versus the divine factor, history versus proclamation. Such dualisms often imply that some elements in Scripture are authoritative, while others are not; or that some carry more authority than others. Such patterns of thinking fail to do justice to the comprehensive nature of biblical authority. For the full authority which Scripture claims for itself radically excludes every intimation of a canon within the canon of Scripture.

The church must also keep its windows open to God's world by addressing the redeeming message of God's authoritative Word to every sphere of life and to every human situation. For God's Word has cosmic dimensions. Only by honoring this comprehensive concept of biblical authority can the church lead the community of believers to a growing Christian maturity in its witness to a secular society, and thus live up to its God-given mission in the world.

## VI. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SYNODICAL ACTION

Your committee respectfully submits the following recommendations:

A. That synod recommend the preceding study report (Sections I-IV) to our churches for the purpose of giving direction in our communal discussions concerning the nature and extent of biblical authority.

B. That synod adopt the following seven points relating to the nature and extent of biblical authority as pastoral advice to the churches, in the light of our common commitment to this confessional preamble:

"We confess that this Word of God was not sent nor delivered by the will of men, but that men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit . . . Therefore we call such writings holy and divine Scriptures . . . We believe that the Holy Scriptures are contained in two books, namely, the Old and the New Testaments, which are canonical, against which nothing can be alleged . . . We receive all these books, and these only, as holy and canonical, for the regulation, foundation, and confirmation of our faith; believing without any doubt all things contained in them, not so much because the church receives and approves them as such, but more especially because the Holy Spirit witnesses in our hearts that they are from God, and also because they carry the evidence thereof in themselves . . . We believe that those Holy Scriptures fully contain the will of God, and that whatever man ought to believe unto salvation is sufficiently taught therein. For since the whole manner of worship which God requires of us is written in them at large, it is unlawful for anyone, though an apostle, to teach otherwise than we are taught in Holy Scriptures . . . It does thereby evidently appear that the doctrine thereof is most perfect and complete in all respects . . . Therefore we reject with all our hearts whatsoever does not agree with this infallible rule." (Belgic Confession, Articles III-VII)

1. Synod calls the churches to a wholehearted recognition that Scripture addresses us with full divine authority as the saving revelation of God in Jesus Christ and that this authority applies to Scripture in its total extent and in all its parts.

2. Synod calls the churches to maintain the clear witness of the creeds to the authority of Scripture as rooted in the historical reality of the events recorded in Scripture.

3. Synod, while confessing that the authority of the biblical message is rooted in the historical reality of the events therein recorded, urges the churches to recognize that these events are presented and interpreted in terms of their revelational meaning.

4. Synod, acknowledging that Scripture is self-authenticating, reminds the churches that the authority of Scripture is not dependent upon the findings of science; while scientific findings can serve as occasions for a better understanding of Scripture, nevertheless the church may appeal to the authority of Scripture alone as the basis for its faith and life, and accordingly must seek to develop a Christian community within which all scholarly work is carried on in faithfulness to the authoritative Scriptures.

5. Synod encourages the churches to see to it that biblical studies are carried on in a careful and disciplined way, submissively rethinking the thoughts of Scripture itself; and accordingly warns against the use of any method of biblical interpretation which excludes or calls into question either the event-character or the revelational meaning of biblical history, thus compromising the full authority of Scripture as the Word of God.

6. Synod reminds the churches of our brotherly obligation to respect such freedom of biblical interpretation as falls clearly within the bounds of our creedal forms of unity, while recognizing, of course, that in all things we are bound by the Word of God.

7. Synod reminds the churches that the authority of Scripture lays its comprehensive claim upon the total life of the church, so that biblical authority is not only to be believed and confessed as an article of faith, but also to be consistently applied and practiced in the life and ministry of the church.

C. That synod approve in substance the introduction to and elaboration of the seven points of pastoral advice as set forth in Part V of this report as the explanatory context for understanding this pastoral advice to the churches.

D. That synod submit the entire report (Sections I—V) to the Reformed Ecumenical Synod as a contribution to the broader ecumenical discussion of the nature and extent of biblical authority.

E. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to Dr. G. Spykman and Dr. D. Holwerda as spokesmen for the committee.

F. That synod declare the committee's mandate fulfilled and therefore now discharge the committee.

Respectfully submitted,

The Committee on Biblical Authority

A. Bandstra, Chairman

D. Holwerda

F. Klooster

J. Vos

M. Woudstra

G. Spykman, Reporter

## REPORT 45

### LODGE AND CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

#### A. Majority Report

DEAR BROTHERS:

#### I. HISTORY

The Christian Reformed Church has been confronted with the lodge question since its establishment. Lodge membership was a matter which could not be ignored in America in the middle of the 19th century. The lodge had both its proponents and opponents. There had been a great deal of agitation against the Masonic movement during the second quarter of that century. To see this movement in proper perspective calls for a look at its origin. The lodge has its roots in 18th century deism—having originated in Great Britain. There is general agreement among Masonic members and authorities that speculative Freemasonry, as it is with us today, does not go beyond the year 1717 when the first Grand Lodge of England was established in London. Within ten years Masonic lodges had been established in the colonies in North America, where at present the Masonic orders number well over four million members.

Even before the Christian Reformed Church came into being, mention was made by the Dutch immigrants of the toleration of Freemasons as members in good standing in the Reformed Church in America. In fact, this was one of the compelling reasons that led to the organization of the Christian Reformed Church in 1857 by those who were critical of the union which took place in 1850 between the independent Dutch immigrant congregations and the Reformed Church in America.

The Church Order of the Christian Reformed Church, as revised and approved by the Synod of 1914, along with synodical decisions up to and including those of the Synod of 1926, edited by Prof. W. Heyns in *Kerkenorde der Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerk*, records the following decision:

“At the consistorial examination of those who wish to be accepted as members and to be admitted to the Lord’s Supper they shall always be asked whether they belong to any society which is bound by oath or solemn promise.” (Classical Assembly, Feb. 1867, Art. 15)

A synodical decision of 1881 states:

“Members of secret societies may not be members of the church. If it should become known that a member of the church is likewise a member of a secret society, he should be dealt with ecclesiastically.” (General Regulations of the Holland Christian Reformed Church in America, 1881, Art. 55)

In 1900 a committee of synod presented an extensive report (written in the Dutch language) on the lodge question. This is found translated in the Acts of Synod of 1958, on pages 416-422, under the following headings:

A. *Can a trustworthy judgment be passed on the 'lodge' by those who are not members?*

The question is answered in the affirmative with the statements that authoritative source materials from lodge officials are available, as well reliable testimony from those who have broken with the lodge, providing sufficient evidence on which valid judgments can be based. This is still true today, since an abundance of material is available. Among the sources of supply are the National Christian Association, 850 West Madison Street, Chicago, Illinois, 60607; and the Commission on Fraternal Organizations, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, KFUE Building, St. Louis, Missouri, 63105.

B. *What is a Secret Society*

The following definition is given:

"A secret society is such an organization which requires of every one who becomes a member unconditional concealment of all that pertains to the lodge, without officially informing the candidate of the contents of what must remain secret; and which at the same time obligates its members to unrestricted, or at least to insufficiently restricted, assistance and obedience."

This definition does not sufficiently indicate the anti-Christian nature of the lodge. It fails to refer to the prayers, rituals, symbols, titles, and claims of spiritual advancement and eternal reward.

C. *Criticism*

Under this heading a critical analysis is made of the wrong practices and principles of the lodge, including:

1. The abuse of the oath, committing one to concealment of as yet unrevealed instructions.
2. An unrestricted promise of mutual aid, including concealment of wrongdoing.
3. Involvement in a brotherhood with unbelievers and ungodly persons.
4. Association with unbelieving persons and indulging with them in ceremonies and rituals which are unworthy of a Christian.
5. The religion of the lodge is a denial of the only way of salvation.
6. An unconditional promise of obedience to the laws, rules and edicts of the lodge before having been acquainted with them. Mention is made of the use of religious titles, symbols and terminology.
7. Miscellaneous objections, such as improper use of money, waste of time, restricted "philanthropy," and conflicts with the observance of the sabbath.

D. *Must the church discipline its members and, if they persist, excommunicate them, if they are at the same time members of a secret society?*

This question presupposes pastoral efforts to bring members of the church who are involved in Freemasonry to repentance and to persuade them to break with it. Only when these efforts have failed is excommunication called for. The motivation for such measures is that a very serious offense is given to the church and that this should be dealt with under a consistent policy by all the churches.

E. *Through what precautionary measures can this evil (namely of Secret Societies) be presented in the churches?*

The following pitfalls that must be guarded against are pointed out:

1. Low standards of membership.
2. Conformity with the world.
3. An improper view of the relationship of law and gospel by neglect of the law.
4. Open communion.
5. Universalistic view of religion.

The report of 1900 retains its validity today and its questions and answers are still relevant. The criticisms of, and comments on, the lodge apply generally also in our present situation. The main objection to the lodge is stated above in section C 5: "The so-called religion of the lodge is a denial of the only way of salvation." The pagan character of the religion of the lodge remains the crucial element in our formulation of policy.

## II. MANDATE

Our present mandate, given by the Synod of 1970 is:

"That synod appoint a committee for the purpose of formulating a current statement of the position of the Christian Reformed Church in respect to lodge membership, covering both the reasons for this position and the method of its application in the life of the church and giving special emphasis to the exclusive claims of Christ upon the total life of a believer.

"Such a statement shall take into consideration:

- a. corporate responsibility
  - b. contemporary conditions
  - c. the need of a clear public witness re lodge membership and
  - d. the problems incurred in pastoral relationships."
- (Acts of Synod, 1970, p. 104).

We interpret this mandate to be an instruction to validate the historic position of the Christian Reformed Church and to examine the reasons for its policy of not permitting those affiliated with lodges to full membership in the church.

## III. ANALYSIS

The position of the Christian Reformed Church is that Christ is not only the head of the church but also that his kingship extends to every



area of life. The reason why lodge membership is incompatible with church membership is that the lodge proclaims and practices another gospel, which not only ignores but also denies the Christ. Salvation is obtained and achieved by following the ideals and standards and rituals of the lodge. The Masonic teachings, although excluding and denying Christ, assure members of secret societies of a place in the Grand Lodge above. A Masonic *Quarterly Bulletin*, April 1922, contains the following poem:

The last grand summons has sounded,  
 Our brothers have made reply  
 And gone to answer the Master  
 In that great Lodge on High.  
 Their lives, a pattern perfect,  
 Whereby to shape our own,  
 Will be their pass to enter  
 Before the great white throne.

The lodge is religious. J. S. M. Ward, a recognized Masonic authority, writes in his book, *Freemasonry and the Ancient gods*, (1921) the following:

"Only one type of man is barred from our lodges, and that is the avowed atheist, for, since Freemasonry consists of the essentials of religion, though untrammelled by dogma, he who denies any kind of God cannot be part of this brotherhood." (Chapter V, "The Ancient Wisdom and Modern Masonry," p. 341.)

By joining or belonging to the lodge one expresses agreement with or acquiescence in its principles and practices. This constitutes sinful complicity with the false religion of the lodge and compromises the confession of Christ which one is required to make in the Christian Reformed Church. Christ is the corner stone of the church but he is the rock of offense and the stone of stumbling for the lodge. Faith in Christ as Savior and Redeemer would be regarded as divisive and in conflict with the universalistic religion of Freemasonry. The name of Christ is omitted from Bible texts used in Masonic rituals, as well as from their prayers. (E.g., in their burial ritual, I Cor. 15:55-57 is quoted; but the quotation is concluded with the word "victory," thus deleting the words "through our Lord Jesus Christ.")

Masonic lexicons and handbooks do not list or include either the name "Jesus" or "Christ." A Masonic opinion concerning the Christ is expressed in *A Concise History of Freemasonry (including Knight Templary)* (1964) by Calvin I. Kephart :

"Jesus' father was a youth named Joseph (not he who married Mary, but he of Arimathea), the later eminent counselor (Mark 15:43; Luke 23:50), a descendant of King David (Luke 3:23 ff.), whose father Heli (Eli, Elias, Elijah; Matthew 27:46-50), was a member of the Sanhedrin, the high court (Luke 2:46), which met at the temple; and his mother was Mary, a handmaid of the temple. Soon after conception, Mary was married to Joseph of different lineage . . ." (Pages 109, 110)

The lodge uses the Bible as a symbol, not as divine revelation. This is clearly and incontestably indicated by the following:

"The Masonic Brotherhood leaves the Bible, as the gospel, to theology, to the church, and, as a historical document, to the historian. The use to which it puts it has only a symbolical and ritual purpose, specifically concerned with its forms of initiation." (Quoted on p. 283 in *Our Separated Brethren the Freemasons* (1964) by Alec Mellor, from a French source, *Introduction Au Volume De La Loi Sacree.*)

No wonder that evangelical denominations such as The Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod, the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, and several others have expressed themselves against Freemasonry. The Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod, has a permanent Commission on Fraternal Organizations. Their position is the following:

"It is, and shall be, the practice of the congregations of synod not to administer holy communion to members of such lodges, nor to admit such persons to communicant membership, since holy communion expresses an exclusive spiritual relationship of the communicant to his Lord and to his brethren. (Matt. 10:32; I Cor. 10:16, 17 and I Cor. 11:25)."

Masonic infiltration into, and entrenchment in, American and Canadian liberal denominations may well serve as a warning that the Lord may take away the lampstand from the church.

In the Netherlands, Freemasonry has not posed a great problem to the Reformed Churches. An article in the *Christelijke Encyclopedie* estimates the number of Masons at 4000. The author of this article explains the term Freemasonry as unrestricted freedom of opinion. This term, however, first served to distinguish Freemasonry as speculative and religious from the craft of masonry from which it derives many of its symbols.

Dr. Abraham Kuyper held the conviction that it is impossible for a Mason to belong to the church of Jesus Christ. In *De Heraut* of Oct. 30, 1892, he wrote:

"When it is asked if a person can be at the same time a true confessor of Christ and a conscious adherent to the principle of Freemasonry, then it has to answered without hesitation that this is impossible."

It was his opinion that "Freemasons who are unacquainted with the true character of the lodge have never been confronted with the confession of a recognized wrong principle and consequently have never fought a battle of conscience between the lodge and the church. They did not know what they were doing and therefore must not be condemned out of hand." Ignorance, then, is the attenuating circumstance. We may draw the conclusion that those who knowingly adhere to or join the lodge would be subject to discipline. This would be in harmony with Dr. Kuyper's consistent insistence on purity of doctrine, strict use of the sacraments, diligent application of discipline, and the solemn duty to keep anti-Christian elements out of the church.

Not all lodge members can be held equally responsible. There is a difference between active participation in, assent to, or acquiescence in the religion of the lodge. Yet lodge affiliation is a sinful affiliation, whether one is aware of this or not. A church member who joins the lodge for better business opportunities or other reasons and knows what he is doing is much more guilty than a member of the lodge who seeks a saving knowledge of Christ in the church, but does not realize the implications of his lodge membership. However, if the church accepts him as a member in good standing while he retains his lodge affiliation, the church itself becomes guilty by condoning this sinful affiliation (II Cor. 6:14). The argument that this would make all affiliations outside the church impossible fails to consider the specific religious nature of the lodge which denies Christ. A Christian must be a salting salt in a business organization or any organization for educational, political, social, or economic purposes that permits witness for Christ. If this possibility is explicitly prohibited by an oath-bound conspiracy of silence, not only regarding Masonic secrets outside the lodge, but also Christian witness within, then membership constitutes disloyalty to the Lord. The Masonic oath violates the freedom of conscience.

#### IV. PASTORAL CONCERNS

Although the church of Jesus Christ is fundamentally opposed to the false religion of Freemasonry, with its related orders and derived secret societies, nevertheless the church must open her door to all who sincerely seek to serve Christ as Savior and Lord. It is the command and duty of the church to bring others to the Lord, out of the darkness of sin into his marvelous light. The church has no secrets but gladly shares her faith and living hope with all those who repent of their sin and confess Christ as Savior and Lord, as the Son of God who came into the world to deliver us from evil.

When Christ calls us to follow him, he makes a total demand. No one can serve two masters. It is not possible to have fellowship with Christ and at the same time be affiliated with a secret society that denies him. Therefore those who have belonged to lodges and have been members of secret, oath-bound societies, before they are accepted into full communion by the church, must give evidence before the consistory that they have severed all relationships with such lodges or societies by:

- a. a solemn promise not to participate in their meetings;
- b. a clear renunciation of their oath, ritual and religion;
- c. a definite promise to cease payments and contributions to them.

Pastoral care and guidance in preparing lodge members for membership in the church should be characterized by loving compassion, patience, and understanding. The fact that Christ requires a total commitment has to be faced openly and honestly well before the acceptance into membership or the examination for confession of faith, but should not be made an immediate barrier when first contact is made. To realize the necessity of making a choice between the secret society and the church of Christ may be difficult for those who are new in the faith.

It may mean the giving up of profitable business relationships and possible subjection to hostility from previous lodge acquaintances. Sufficient time should be allowed for new converts to grow in the faith and to adjust to changes caused by their adherence to this faith. This will prevent disappointments and regrets due to unforeseen problems, and help to arrive at a true and sincere commitment to the service of the Lord.

The church is responsible for all the sheep entrusted to her care by Christ, the Good Shepherd. She must seek to take into her fold all those who desire a living relationship with the Lord and his people. Every possible effort must be made, within the boundaries of the faith, to receive those who sincerely accept Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord, and earnestly desire to live in conformity with their confession and commitment to Christ. No occasion may be given to the little ones in the faith to stumble, neither may offense be given to the church. Admitting members with lodge affiliations would weaken the church and disable her in helping these members to come to a complete commitment to Christ.

Respectfully submitted,

Sidney Bangma  
Elmer Heerema  
John Koopmans, Secretary  
Ralph Wildschut

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## LODGE AND CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

### B. Minority Report

#### I. MANDATE

The Synod of 1970 appointed the undersigned committee in response to an overture from Classis Lake Erie and various other communications related to this overture. The following decision is found in the 1970 *Acts*, p. 104:

That synod appoint a committee for the purpose of formulating a current statement of the position of the Christian Reformed Church in respect to lodge membership, covering both the reasons for this position and the method of its application in the life of the church, and giving special emphasis to the exclusive claims of Christ upon the total life of a believer. Such a statement shall take into consideration:

- a) corporate responsibility
- b) contemporary conditions
- c) the need of a clear public witness re lodge membership and
- d) the problems incurred in pastoral relationships.

Grounds:

- a. The statement adopted in 1900 is historically conditioned and not entirely adequate to serve our needs today.

- b. An effective, contemporary statement which points out the teaching and practices of the lodge in the light of the Christian faith and which shows the implications of membership in the lodge would be a valuable asset in our evangelism effort.

—Adopted

## II. HISTORY

The use of the term "current statement" in the above mandate reflects the fact that the denomination has had previous statements of position on this subject. Indeed, the Christian Reformed denomination has had a history of opposition to lodge membership which is as old as the denomination itself. When the denomination came into existence in 1857 one of the charges leveled against the Dutch Reformed Church of that day was the tolerance of lodge membership. (Cf. *The Christian Reformed Church*, J. Kromminga, p. 32.)

Subsequent to 1857 there were a number of decisions in which a negative position was taken in relationship to lodge membership, decisions which prepared the way for a fairly lengthy statement in 1900. J. L. Schaver in his *Polity of the Churches*, Vol. II, p. 177 gives the following concise summary:

History as to the church's position on Secret Societies — Already in 1867 position was taken against membership in secret, oath-bound societies when it was declared that Free Masons had to quit the lodge or be excommunicated (Minutes Feb. 20, 1867, Art. 15). Soon thereafter the same position was taken with respect to secret societies in general (Minutes June 10, 1868, Art. 17; Acts 1873, Art. 24; General Rules of 1881, Art. 55). Later there is specific mention made of the following lodges, membership whereof is considered incompatible with membership in the church: Order of the Maccabees, Odd Fellows, Modern Woodmen, and the Grange (Acts 1896, pp. 36, 37; Acts 1898, pp. 65, 67; Acts 1908, p. 42). A valuable report on Secret Societies is to be found in the Acts of 1900, pp. 96-101, which discusses whether non-members are able to give a reliable judgment concerning a secret society, what a secret society is, criticism at length, whether members thereof may remain in the church, and how lodgism creeps into a church.

Between 1900 and 1958 the report of 1900 was available only in the Dutch language. In 1957 Classis Sioux Center overtured synod "to reaffirm our historic position on lodgism as adopted by the Synod of the year 1900, and also asked that synod provide for the translation, publication, and distribution of the report of 1900 in pamphlet form. The Synod of 1957 decided to have the 1900 report translated into English and modern Dutch and to have these published in pamphlet form, but it judged that "it is not necessary to reaffirm the historic position on lodgism at this time" because there was no evidence that the stand was being challenged either in the ecclesiastical channels or in practice.

The English translation of the 1900 statement was prepared and presented to the 1958 Synod for approval. However, it appears that

after seeing the English translation, the 1958 Synod reversed the previous synod's position and decided to make no provision for publishing that English translation other than its inclusion in the 1958 Acts of Synod. (See decision, Acts 1958, p. 67.)

That translation of the 1900 report takes up six and one half pages in the 1958 Acts (See Acts, 1958, pp. 416-422). The report opens with a consideration of the question of whether enough accurate information on secret societies is available to non-members so that trustworthy judgments can be made, and it answers in the affirmative. It avoids naming the organizations classed as secret societies, but it gives a broad definition of the characteristics by which a secret society can be recognized. It defines a secret society as:

“ . . . such an organization which requires of everyone who becomes a member unconditional concealment of all that pertains to the lodge, without officially informing the candidate of the contents of what must remain a secret; and which at the same time obligates its members to unrestricted, or at least to an insufficiently restricted, assistance and obedience.”

The 1900 report then goes on to list six major charges against secret societies. These six major charges may be summarized as follows (1) The oath required is sinful because it commits one to the concealment of evil as well as being a misuse of oath-taking. (2) The unrestricted promise of mutual aid is dangerous and sinful, since it paralyzes the right to oppose evil in a fellow lodge member. (3) The lodge involves one in brotherhood with ungodly people. Because the lodges are sinful in principle, they attract all kinds of profane persons, drunkards, unbelievers, atheists, Jews, heathen, Socialists, etc., and a Christian cannot enter into a brotherhood with such people. (4) The lodge engages in ceremonies, including initiation rites, and in carousals, which are unworthy or indecent. (5) The religion of the lodge is a denial of the only way of salvation. There are religious exercises, and a general Fatherhood of God is acknowledged, but the name of Christ may not be used and salvation in this religion is based on faithful membership in the lodge. The religion of the lodge is a secret return to the idolatry of the heathen mystery religions. (6) The unconditional promise of obedience required by the lodge is in conflict with and appropriates an honor due to Christ. No one can swear to be faithful to the lodge and at the same time remain faithful to the King of Kings.

On the basis of these charges the report raises the question of what the church must do about those who hold simultaneous membership in church and lodge. Its answer: discipline them, and if they persist, excommunicate. Membership in the lodge is judged to be not only a sin, but a public sin; not just a momentary sin, but a constant living in sin, and therefore a gross sin. Since public, gross, sins, are basis for excommunication in the case of persistence, the church must excommunicate those who persist in this sin.

In 1969 Classis Lake Erie approached the synod with an overture questioning the adequacy of the 1900 position on lodge membership. Their overture did not urge the condoning of lodge membership but

suggested that the existing rule did not do justice to the complexity of the problem and also severely curtailed evangelistic communications with lodge members. The overture asked that synod restudy the possibility of simultaneous church and lodge membership. (Acts, 1969, p. 505)

The 1969 Synod referred the overture back to Classis Lake Erie with the ground that the requested study could be undertaken on the classical level (Acts 1969, p. 74, 75).

Classis Lake Erie did undertake the proposed study and presented the fruit of that study to the 1970 Synod in the form of Overture 13 (Acts 1970, pp. 530-534). This 1970 overture enlarged on their problem with the 1900 position. Classis Lake Erie granted that the religion of the lodge is in conflict with Christian faith, but questioned whether all lodge members are really committed to that religion, and whether the church should exclude from its membership those who are committed to Christ but have the "inconsistency" or "weakness" of retaining a formal membership in the lodge. The conclusion apparently advanced in the body of the overture, although not directly stated, is that lodge members should be admitted to membership in the church if it can be established that they are truly committed to Christ and not committed to the lodge religion. Since only the local consistory could judge the commitment of the individual, Classis Lake Erie requested that "the matter of simultaneous membership in secret societies and the Christian Reformed Church be left to the local consistories."

It appears that the Synod of 1970 may have partially misunderstood the intent of the Lake Erie overture, for synod rejected the request that the matter be left to the local consistories on the grounds that "a. Classis Lake Erie recognizes that the Christian religion and the religion of the lodge are incompatible" and "b. Even though the admission of members into the church is a concern of each local consistory, yet there are certain matters on which the churches must agree to a uniform policy."

The synod appears to have been answering a different question than the one raised by Lake Erie. The synod's answer indicates that the synod may have seen the request as a desire to open the door to any and all lodge members solely at the discretion of the local consistory.

Two consistories in Classis Lake Erie appealed Classis Lake Erie's request, and these appeals bring some clarification to the issue. (See appeals 2 & 3, Acts 1970, pp. 556-563). Both appeals object to an assumption found in Classis Lake Erie's overture. This is the assumption that it is possible to be a committed Christian and yet retain some kind of membership in a lodge. These appeals, unlike Lake Erie's overture, regard retention of even a formal relationship to the lodge as a denial of Christ and a continual living in sin. As they see it, those living in this sin must repent by severing all relationships with the lodge before they can be received into membership. If such a person is not ready to express repentance in this form, then the writers of these appeals are prepared to judge that he is not committed to Christ and should not be admitted to the membership of the church.

The 1970 Synod did not resolve the question raised by Lake Erie and underscored by the two appeals. By the wording of the mandate given the present study committee, it referred the question to this committee.

### III. ANALYSIS OF MANDATE

At first approach our committee thought that our task might be the fairly simple one of rewriting the 1900 statement in more adequate form. We thought that our task would be one of reaffirming the strong thing about the 1900 report (its recognition that lodge religion and Christian faith are in irreconcilable conflict) while remedying its weakness (its tendency in some places to heap up extravagant and prejudiced charges which serve only to damage your cause when you are working with a lodge member).

However, a closer look at our mandate (stated at the beginning of this report) reveals that our task is not that simple. We are required not only to formulate "a contemporary statement of the position of the Christian Reformed Church in respect to lodge membership," but we are also required to cover "both the reasons for this position and the method of its application in the life of the church . . ."

As the committee reads our mandate, we are called upon to restate the conflict between Christian faith and lodge religion, and to propose guidelines for the way in which the church should deal with the practical situations in which the conflict comes to expression.

### IV. THE DIFFICULT AREA

The difficult area of our assignment is that area of "the method of its application in the life of the church." It is apparent that within our denomination this is the area where the disagreements, such as they are, lie. This is the area to which the overture of Classis Lake Erie was addressed, as well as both appeals against the overture. All were in agreement that lodge religion conflicts with Christian faith, and that lodge members should be called upon to dissolve such membership. The differences were in the area of how in practice we go on from there.

Differences in the area of how to apply our position in practice go back a long way in our history. These differences have even reached across the Atlantic Ocean. In the Dutch paper *De Haraut*, in the issue of Oct. 30, 1892, Dr. Abraham Kuyper wrote his views on Freemasonry. He strongly affirmed that Freemasonry in principle is contrary to the Christian religion and that it is impossible for a person to be at one and the same time a true confessor of Christ and an informed adherent of the principles of Freemasonry. But he observed that lodges often do not set their principles in the foreground and that there are many Freemasons who have never consciously accepted these false principles, and he urged an educational rather than disciplinary approach to the problem.

However, in the December 1892 and subsequent issues of *De Wachter*, various writers registered strong objections to Dr. A. Kuyper's position, stressing the anti-Christian character of lodge religion and the need for a disciplinary approach.



These differences in practical application are still with us. In so far as there are differences among the members of the present study committee, it is again solely in this area.

There will be more, later, on the differences of application within the present study committee. However, first we proceed to those matters on which we are in full agreement. That agreement includes the following statement on the conflict between the religion of the lodge and the Christian faith.

## V. TWO RELIGIONS IN CONFLICT

### A. *The Most Basic Difficulty*

There are many things related to the fraternal organizations which Christians have found objectionable. Among them are their secret character, the content of the oaths required, the unrestricted promise of mutual aid, the crude initiation ceremonies, the unconditional pledge of obedience to the edicts of the lodge, and the barring of negroes and those who are physically deformed from membership.

In each of these areas the fraternal organizations in general do give the sensitive Christian conscience some reason for concern. However, no one of these matters nor even all of them together sum up the principle difficulty which the Christian faith must have with the fraternal organizations. The most basic and most serious difficulty is with the religion held and practiced by these organizations.

### B. *The Fraternal Organizations*

By the fraternal organizations we mean Freemasonry and the many secret orders patterned after it. Among them are The Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks, The Loyal Order of Moose, The Fraternal Order of Eagles, The Independent Order of Odd Fellows, The Woodmen of the World, The Improved Order of Red Men, The Knights of Pythias, and others less well known. All of the above have in various ways imitated the oaths, the secrets, the rituals, and the terms of membership of the Free Masons. There are some significant differences between these organizations in the above matters. However, there is a common set of religious assumptions and principles which runs as a thread of agreement through all of these organizations. The problem is that these assumptions and principles are in serious and irreconcilable conflict with biblical teachings and Christian faith.

### C. *A Religious Position*

The fact that the Fraternal Organizations hold to and practice a religion should not be overlooked. Not only can this be inferred from the worship, the ceremonies, and the religious symbols, but many Masonic authors themselves identify the religious character of the lodge. Note that the following statements come not from critics of the lodge, but from authorities within the Masonic order.

T. S. Webb in his *Masonic Monitor* (p. 284) declares: "The meeting of a Masonic Lodge is strictly a religious ceremony. The religious tenets of Masonry are few, simple, but fundamental. No lodge or Masonic assembly can be regularly opened or closed without prayer."

A. G. Mackey, high Masonic official and author of many works on Masonry, has written in *The Mystic Tie* (p. 32), "Freemasonry is emphatically a religious institution; it teaches the existence of God. It points to the celestial canopy above where is the Eternal Lodge and where he presides. It instructs us in the way to reach the portals of that distant temple." Elsewhere he says: "The truth is that Masonry is undoubtedly a religious institution, its religion being that of universal kind in which all men agree." (*Textbook of Masonic Jurisdiction*, p. 95)

J. S. M. Ward, writer of several Masonic books, writes: "I consider Freemasonry is a sufficiently organized school of mysticism to be entitled to be called a religion." Later he says "I boldly aver that Freemasonry is a religion, yet in no way conflicts with any other religion, unless that religion holds that no one outside its portals can be saved." (*Freemasonry: Its Aims and Ideals*, pp. 185, 187)

#### D. Basic Concepts in Conflict

Once we recognize that Freemasonry and other fraternal organizations which follow it have a religion, it becomes necessary for a Christian to examine and evaluate that religion before accepting it as compatible with Christian faith. But a comparison of the teaching of the lodge and that of the Bible on the very basic questions of 1) the nature of God, 2) the person of Christ, 3) the way of salvation, and 4) the authority of the Bible quickly reveals that there are deep and serious conflicts between lodge religion and Christian faith.

##### 1. The Nature of God

There is a common theology of God found among the fraternal organizations. However, it is not the concept of God presented in the Scriptures, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who became intimately involved in the lives of men through his covenants, who spoke through the prophets and apostles and above all became incarnate in his Son Jesus Christ. The lodge concept of God is not the Triune God of the Scriptures with all three persons involved in the creation, the caring for, and the redemption of man. Instead, in the teachings of Freemasonry and the lodges that follow it there emerges a concept of God that is basically that of Deism. There is a Great Architect of the Universe or an Infinite Intelligence, but this is not a God who cares about or becomes involved in our lives as does the covenant-making God of the Scriptures. Freemasonry maintains that all religions worship the same God, but under different names, and their God-concept is the result of an attempt to find a common religious base acceptable to all the pagan religions of the world, such as that of the Hindu, the Buddhist, the Moslem, and others. Such a God-concept cannot be acceptable to the biblical Christian.

##### 2. The Person of Christ

The difference sharpens further when one proceeds to the question: "What think ye of Christ?" In the religion of the fraternal organizations Jesus Christ is not seen as God incarnate, in whom alone men can have eternal life. While he may be given some kind of recognition, he

is not presented as the one through whom all things were made and in whom all things continue to subsist. His claim of being the one who has been given all authority in heaven and on earth and before whom all men will someday appear to be judged, is by-passed. And the biblical claim that his is the only name under heaven whereby men may be saved is clearly denied. In the prayers of the fraternal organizations often the name of Christ may not be used. Instead of giving Christ the place proclaimed by the Scriptures, the lodges assign him a place designed to avoid any conflict with the beliefs of the pagan religions. But no biblical Christian can accept such a treatment of his Lord.

### 3. The Way of Salvation

The differences continue to sharpen as one compares teachings on the way of salvation. The fraternal organizations have a rather clearly worked out concept of salvation. However, it is not the biblical teaching of salvation through the shed blood and victorious resurrection of Christ. It is not the biblical message of atonement, redemption, and reconciliation. The lodges will know nothing of the scriptural teaching that the righteousness of Christ is freely imputed to the believer by grace alone. Instead, the lodge's way of salvation is that of work righteousness. It is through holding membership in the lodge, following the instructions of the lodge, and through lodge morality that one merits and obtains eternal rewards. Within this framework there is the bold claim of many ways to heaven, many different routes which can be taken to reach the eternal city. But the Bible clearly rejects this view of the way of salvation. It teaches only one way, one name under heaven whereby men can be saved, and it rejects salvation by work-righteousness.

### 4. The Authority of the Bible

Many of the contrasts between lodge religion and Christian faith referred to so far stem from seeking answers at a different source. The source for the historic Christian faith has been "sola Scriptura." The Bible is our source book for knowledge on the concepts of God, Christ, salvation, and the rest of our faith and practice as well. The fraternal organizations, by contrast, recognize many bibles. The writings of the other religions of the world are placed on an equal footing with the Bible of the Christian faith. As a result, lodge religion is a blend of concepts from all the religions of the world. However, on the very basic matters of God, Christ, and salvation, the conflicts between the Bible and the source books of the pagan religions are simply not reconcilable. In these key areas lodge religion has had to choose whether to follow the Bible or these other sources. And it has chosen to follow these other sources instead of the Bible.

### *E. Beliefs Expressed in Practices*

The practical impact of what has been stated above should not be missed. The beliefs of the lodge on the questions of the nature of God, the person of Christ, the way of salvation, and the authority of the Bible, are not positions merely held in the abstract. They are brought

into expression and practice in religious acts including worship, prayers, the use of religious symbols, ceremonial rituals, and in the well-known burial services of the lodge. Their concept of work-righteousness also underlies a system of charities and benevolences which are praiseworthy apart from that religious foundation, but do not reflect this un-biblical religious motivation.

#### *F. The Heart of the Problem*

The heart of the problem is simply that the religion of the lodge and the Christian faith are *two religions in conflict*, two faiths that are in diametric opposition in very basic matters. The differences are so basic that one simply cannot live by both of these faith stances at the same time. One must choose, and indeed he will choose and live by one or the other even if he tries to live by both.

It is important that the person who desires to be committed to Christ recognize that in personal faith and practice he does choose between these two religions. He must not be misled into thinking that the lodge is merely a social organization with some harmless religious window-dressing. The religion of the lodge is a full-blown religious position, and a Christian can neither commit himself to the teachings of the lodge nor participate in its worship or rituals and ceremonies without denying his Lord. A sensitive Christian must also face the further question of whether he can in good-conscience render support of any kind to an organization which embraces a religion so at odds with faith in his Lord.

### VI. APPLICATION IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

#### *A. A Divided Report*

We now face the difficult question of how the church's view of lodge membership is to be put into practice. As observed earlier, this is the only area in which disagreements have arisen among members of this committee. Even though we have heartily agreed upon the matters presented up to this point, our disagreements in application make it necessary to present a divided report from this point on.

The reader of the two positions taken will best judge the difference between them by comparing the actual proposals. However, we believe that it is important that the church recognize the hinge on which the difference turns, so that whatever position the church takes can be a well-informed choice.

#### *B. The Key Issue*

The key issue, as the undersigned see it, is the matter of how the church is to judge the credibility of a profession of faith in Christ. It is not merely with the lodge member that the church faces this question. The question is faced every time any profession of faith is heard.

It is sometimes contended that the church has no business judging the credibility of a profession of faith, but should simply accept those who profess Christ and leave the question of credibility to God who alone knows the heart. No one on either side of this committee sub-

scribes to that position as an answer to this problem. As we see it, while the church cannot finally judge the heart, the church has responsibility to see that the faith being professed is a faith in Christ and not merely some vague religiosity. On that level the church must judge and in practice does judge the credibility of the profession of everyone who makes profession of faith.

The key issue is—by what standard shall we judge the credibility of the profession of faith of one who has had an affiliation with the lodge?

### C. *The Source of Membership Standards*

Here the two sides of the committee begin to diverge. The majority report is very concerned with setting standards that will produce certain desired results, such as seeing to it that lodge members do not get in and get control of the church, or seeing to it that people actually do make a complete break with the lodge, since we all desire this.

The undersigned believe that neither we as a committee, nor the church, has any right to set standards at all, or to ask what rules we think will have the most desirable results in the long run. It is not our right to set membership standards, as though the church were our club. A lodge may set its own membership standards, but the church may not. Christ has bought the church with his shed blood, and it is his. He sets the membership standards and our task is only to faithfully apply them.

As we see it, the only valid question is: What standard has Christ set for membership in his church?

### D. *Christ's Standard for Membership*

The requirement which Christ has set for membership in his church is a living faith in him and a sincere commitment to him and his kingdom. If the church is truly his, then we must admit into membership in the church all those who by faith and commitment belong to him, and we must refuse membership to those who do not so respond to him. If we are to honor Christ as the head of the church, this must be our point of departure in dealing with lodge members.

### E. *Exploring the Applicant's Commitment*

Whenever an applicant for church membership appears, the church must focus squarely on that question of faith in Christ and commitment to him and his kingdom. If that applicant has held, or still holds, a membership in a lodge, the church has deep reason for concern about the clarity and sincerity of his commitment to Christ. Since lodge religion is in clear conflict with Christian faith, he must be confronted with certain unavoidable questions, such as the following:

Is he aware of the concepts of God, of Christ, of salvation, and of the Scriptures which are not only held by the lodge but practiced in its rituals? Has he been committed to those teachings either directly, personal conviction, or indirectly by participation in their religious rituals? Is he now committed to them either by assent to the teachings or by continuing participation in the rituals? If he now confesses that he is committed to Christ, is that commitment one which clearly holds to the

biblical way of salvation? Does he renounce the religion of the lodge and solemnly affirm that he will practice that religion no further by participation in lodge rituals and ceremonies?

#### F. *Recognizing Commitment*

If the church focuses in this fashion on the question of faith and commitment, it will be able to conclude whether an individual is committed to Christ or to the religion of the lodge. If the individual is unable to choose between the religion of the lodge and the Christian faith after this kind of exploration, he is not ready for membership in the church of Jesus Christ. However, if he clearly chooses commitment to Christ, renouncing the religion of the lodge and any further participation in the religious acts and rituals which express it, he should be recognized as belonging to Christ and should be welcomed into the fellowship of the body of Christ.

#### G. *A Difference Between the Commitment of Membership and Complete Sanctification*

The question nevertheless present itself—should he not sever *all* relationships with the lodge before being received into membership? Should he not officially demit from the lodge? Does not the retention of *any* relationship to the lodge involve some encouragement to a false religious position and at least some inconsistency with Christian faith?

The answer, we believe, is that it would be better for him and more in keeping with a sanctified Christian life if he were to sever all relationships and give no encouragement or what might be construed as support to the lodge. We believe that he ought to come to see this of himself and do it willingly. We believe that in most cases when a Christian reaches a mature Christian sensitivity he will see and choose this action of his own accord.

However, the question we are facing here is not: What is the best advice you can give a lodge member, or what is the most fully sensitive and sanctified Christian stance. The question is: How are you to judge the credibility of a profession of faith. And it must be remembered that the requirement of membership is not a fully sensitive and fully sanctified Christian life. The requirement of membership is faith in Christ and commitment to his kingdom. And we simply have no right to enlarge that requirement to include all that may belong in the fully sanctified Christian life.

Before we admit to membership in the church we do, of course, have a right and duty to see that commitment to Christ is not being *compromised* on the religious level by beliefs, religious rituals, or worship that is in conflict with the Christian commitment expressed. We also have a duty to see that this commitment is not being *denied* on the practical level by way of gross public sin. However, beyond that point we are dealing with the area of sanctification and Christian maturity. And in matters of sanctification and Christian maturity it is simply not the duty, or the right, of the church to set complete sanctification in any specific matter as an absolute condition of church membership.

### H. *Objections to the Above Position*

Aware that various objections have been raised to the above position, we believe it may be helpful to focus more attention on some of them. Those we will discuss are the following: 1) The objection that membership of *any* kind in a lodge necessarily commits one to a false religion. 2) The objection that lodge membership is always a continual living in a gross public sin. 3) The objection that membership of any kind, by corporate responsibility, makes one accountable for all the actions of the organization. 4) The objection that other conservative churches desirous of being faithful to the Scriptures absolutely exclude lodge members.

Objection 1. That membership of any kind necessarily commits one to a false religion.

The undersigned are aware that there have been those who have held that the problem is *never* in the area of sanctification. We are aware that some have held that no matter what a person's professed commitment may be, his retention of *any* relationship of *any* kind to the lodge necessarily invalidates his profession of faith in Christ. We believe that such a judgment, although it has been made freely and frequently within our denomination, is both uncharitable and insupportable.

Because the above judgment has been made so freely, it is important that we examine its assumption. It *declares* that the retention of any kind of membership in the lodge commits one to its false religious teaching and practice. But this declaration rests on the assumption that membership in a lodge involves a kind of "profession of faith" in the teachings of the organization, a "profession of faith" that somewhat parallels that made by a member of the church. It then reasons that the person who makes profession of faith in Christ while still holding even a formal membership in the lodge, possibly for insurance coverage, is maintaining two conflicting professions of faith. But this assumption is not warranted by the facts.

The fact is that there is nothing in typical lodge membership that is really parallel to our profession of faith. There is no pre-membership doctrinal instruction and nowhere does a lodge member solemnly declare that he believes the doctrines held by the lodge. Many lodge members have never become aware of what the teachings of the lodge actually are, not to mention officially committing themselves to those teachings. Initiation into the lodge does not include any profession of belief in lodge teaching.

But what about the oaths? Are these not solemn professions of faith? A careful examination of them reveals that actually they are not. They are essentially pledges to maintain the secrecy of the lodge and to be loyal to fellow members. These oaths are highly offensive to a sensitive Christian conscience not only because of the kind of secrecy demanded and the violent threats included, but also because of the false religious context. We believe that no sensitive Christian who is aware of what is happening can have anything more to do with these or any other of the religious rituals of the lodge. Nevertheless, the point must be recognized that the

average lodge member has not, either by the oaths or in any other way, officially committed himself to the doctrines of the lodge in the way in which a church member commits himself to the teaching of the church.

Were lodge membership to involve such a profession of faith, then the judgment referred to above (that any membership in the lodge commits one to its false religion) would be valid. However, in view of the nature of lodge membership, this judgment may not be indiscriminately made.

Objection 2: That lodge membership is always a continual living in a gross public sin.

We are aware that the statement of 1900 has a brief applicatory section, and that in that applicatory section it declares that church members who join a lodge must be disciplined and must be excommunicated if they persist, because lodge membership is a continual living in a gross public sin.

The undersigned feel that this judgment may very possibly be a valid judgment—if carefully kept in the context in which it was made. It is important to remember that in 1900 the church was not deeply aware of the evangelistic dimension of the lodge problem. It was an immigrant church conducting its worship services in a foreign language and was not very frequently faced with the problem of a convert who had an earlier relationship with the lodge. It is important to remember that the 1900 statement is primarily concerned with the internal discipline of the church. It is concerned with the church member who joins the lodge and enters into its oaths, rituals and other religious practices. As we see it, on that level they were basically right. If a church member joins the lodge this is likely to be a gross public sin.

However, the judgment of continual living in a gross public sin has often been reapplied—without synodical sanction—to the case of a person who became a lodge member in ignorance and then subsequently through home mission outreach is converted and seeks membership in the church. It has been reasoned that if lodge membership is a continual living in a gross public sin, then a lodge member cannot be received into membership in the church until he repents of that gross public sin by severing all relationships with the lodge.

The trouble with this reasoning is that it fails to look deeply enough into the nature of a gross sin and applies the charge of a gross sin where the charge does not fit. What makes a sin a gross sin must be seen more clearly. Grossness of sin depends rather directly on the level of one's participation and on the level of one's knowledge and sensitivity to what he is doing. Sins committed in ignorance are not to be placed on the same level as those deliberately committed with full knowledge. (Cf. Psalm 19:12, 13.)

When one views the case of a member of the Christian Reformed Church who has good reason to know what he is doing, but fully enters into the oaths and rituals of the lodge anyway, one may very well be compelled to conclude that this action is a continual living in a gross public sin. We say "may be compelled" because there are different levels of awareness on this matter within the various churches and even within the Christian Reformed Church. For all of that, the judgment may be



generally valid when applied to a member of our Christian Reformed Churches who joins a lodge and *fully participates* in its religious practices. However, the judgment is simply not valid when applied to a person who has become a lodge member in ignorance and later seeks membership in the church. It particularly should not be applied to such a person if he renounces the religion of the lodge and ceases all participation in the religious activities of the lodge. Whatever inconsistency one finds in such a person if he continues to hold a formal lodge membership should not be judged as a gross sin. To apply such a judgment to him is simply to misunderstand what gross sins are all about.

Objection 3. That membership of any kind, by corporate responsibility, makes one accountable for all the actions of the organization.

This third objection contends that one cannot at the same time be a Christian and a lodge member, no matter what the nature of that lodge membership, because (it is alleged) by remaining a member even in the most limited sense, one becomes corporately responsible for whatever the organization does. The statement of the Synod of 1945 on corporate responsibility (Acts 1945, p. 103-104) has been referred to in support of this position.

It is important to observe that the 1945 statement on Corporate responsibility distinguishes between different levels of involvement in organizations having sinful practices. The 1945 statement warns that "active participation in the sinful practices of an organization to which one belongs not only renders one guilty before God but may even make one an object of ecclesiastical discipline." Notice that ecclesiastical discipline is mentioned in connection with "active participation in the sinful practices." The statement then goes on to deal with lesser levels of participation, and warns that there is possibly some responsibility for the lesser contributions which one makes on these lower levels of involvement. However, this is without any further mention of ecclesiastical discipline. In connection with these lower levels of involvement in organizations with sinful activities, the discipline of the Word is mentioned, and it is declared that these principles regarding corporate responsibility "should be faithfully expounded from the pulpit, in personal visits, and family visits, and in the religious press. The question of their application to concretely existing local, state, or national conditions is a matter for the individual consistory and classis, and especially for the conscience of each person who becomes involved in it" (emphasis ours).

We submit that the position being defended in this report—that the individual must renounce the religion of the lodge and cease all participation in its religious acts and rituals before his profession of faith is accepted as credible, but that complete sanctification in this matter cannot be demanded as a condition of membership—this position is in basic harmony with the 1945 statement on corporate responsibility.

The 1945 statement recognizes that "active participation in sinful practices" may be a matter for ecclesiastical discipline and possible exclusion from membership. It also recognizes that a formal or inactive

membership carries some level of responsibility, but holds that this is not to be simply equated with "active participation." And it holds that anything less than "active participation in sinful practices" should be dealt with by an educational approach and by appeals to the conscience of the individual rather than by ecclesiastical discipline.

If the 1945 corporate responsibility statement is applied to the lodge membership question, its implication should be clear. Participation in the directly sinful practices of the lodge may be dealt with by ecclesiastical discipline. But lesser levels of involvement in which participation is at most implicit and subtle, should be dealt with by an educational approach and appeals to the conscience of the individual. It is then wholly in accord with the 1945 position to admit to membership only those who confess Christ and renounce all active participation in the beliefs and religious practices of the lodge. But beyond that the church should not use disciplinary measures. By educational and pastoral methods it should continue to hold before the conscience of the individual the question of whether he, bought with the blood of Christ, is willing to give even the slightest encouragement to an organization which holds and practices a false religion. But this is in the area of the sanctifying of the conscience and cannot be made a condition of membership. Making it a condition of membership would be to contradict the 1945 statement on corporate responsibility.

**Objection 4:** That other conservative churches desirous of being faithful to the Scriptures absolutely exclude lodge members.

It is sometimes contended that other conservative churches desirous of being faithful to the Scriptures, such as the Missouri Synod Lutheran Church and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, consistently exclude those who have been lodge members until all relationship with the lodge is severed. The implication, of course, is that if we are faithful to the Scriptures we will do the same.

The fact is that neither of the above churches practices such a position. Both have strong statements in opposition to the religion of the lodge. Within both churches there is firm recognition that one cannot be committed to both Christ and the religion of the lodge. Both try to separate the prospective member from all affiliation with the lodge before the person is received into membership. But neither excludes lodge members by an absolute legal rule, and both do in fact sometimes admit those who are, as yet, members of the lodge.

In the Missouri Synod Lutheran Church, the synod has officially recognized the need for exceptions to the practice of excluding lodge members from church membership. In 1956 the Forty-third Regular Convention of the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod, stated this exception as follows:

"But there are cases in which good Christian people, either before or after making a formal church affiliation, have joined a lodge. Such exceptional cases, however, are normally limited to those instances in which the individual involved has renounced, to his pastor

and/or the church council, the unChristian teachings of the lodge of which he is a member . . . .

Finally, the pastor should put forth continuous effort to bring the individual to an early decision in this matter so that he may be fully won for Christ and become or remain a communicant member of the congregation as the case may be . . . ." (as quoted in the Lutheran Round Table Pamphlet No. 5, entitled *A Christian View of Freemasonry*.)

Our point is not to suggest that the practice of the Missouri Synod Lutheran Church or the Orthodox Presbyterian Church should be our guide. Our point is simply to make clear that while these churches agree with us fully in seeing the un-Christian teaching of the lodge, their desire to be biblical has not brought them to a simple legal policy of exclusion.

## VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. It is recommended that as a denomination we stand firm in maintaining that there is an irreconcilable conflict between biblical Christianity and the religious teachings and rituals of Freemasonry and other similar lodges, and that Section V, of the above report, entitled "Two Religions in Conflict" be adopted as our statement of that conflict.

B. It is recommended that synod reaffirm the substance of the judgment made in 1900 by declaring that church members who join a lodge should be subjected to firm ecclesiastical discipline and excommunication unless there is sincere repentance.

*Ground:* For a member of the Christian Reformed Church, who should be aware of the implications of his action, this is likely to be a gross public sin and must be dealt with accordingly.

C. It is recommended that synod approve the following guidelines for the churches in their dealings with those who have been lodge members prior to their applications for membership in the Christian Reformed Church.

1. As with all matters of membership, in dealing with a lodge member the church must keep firmly in mind the fact that it is Christ who sets membership standards for the church, and that it is our task not to set standards but to apply his standards.

2. As with all matters of membership, in dealing with a lodge member the church must carefully explore his faith and commitment with him, and must admit to membership in the church of Christ only those whose faith and commitment give evidence that they truly belong to him.

3. Lodge religion, as such, is in direct conflict with Christian faith, so that a person can be truly committed to one or the other, but not to both. The person who is actually committed to the false religion of the lodge does not belong to Christ, and unless a genuine conversion takes place, has no place in that church which is the body of Christ.

4. Those who have been members of the lodge may be received into membership in the church only when they renounce and cease active

participation in those aspects of the lodge which clearly contradict Christian profession. This means that the lodge member must renounce any commitment to the false religion of the lodge and must cease practicing it through the worship or rituals of the lodge before he can be received into membership in the church.

5. When a lodge member commits himself to Christ, seeks membership in the church, and renounces any commitment to the religion of the lodge or any participation in its worship or rituals, then the church must further seek the maturing of his Christian conscience with the goal that he willingly sever all relations with the lodge and cease to give encouragement or support of any kind to an organization so involved in a false religion. However, this maturing of the conscience must be seen as a dimension of sanctification rather than a condition of membership in the church, and should be sought by pastoral and educational approaches rather than by disciplinary exclusion.

Respectfully submitted,

Raymond Opperwall  
Robert Prins  
John Last

## REPORT 46

## TRANSLATION OF HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

DEAR BROTHERS:

In 1968 Synod appointed this committee to prepare a new translation of the Heidelberg Catechism. Since that time we have made slow but steady progress. This year's report is the result of twenty weekly meetings, each two and a half to three hours long.

In 1970 we were able to submit a translation of QA 1-25. With it we submitted a copy of the *Principles of Translation* which the committee adopted. Synod expressed its favorable reaction toward both.

Last year we came to synod with our translation of QA 26-50. Now we submit our translation of another twenty-four questions and answers. For the benefit of synod and the churches our translation of all seventy-four questions and answers is printed in the agenda.

The number of communications we have thus far received from churches and individuals regarding our work has been small. We kindly request synod to urge the churches to study our translation and to make trial use of it. Reactions from such studies and experiments will help us when we eventually review our provisional translation.

Between the deadline for submitting material for the printed agenda and the meeting of synod we will continue our translating work. We will give to synod the results of these continued translation efforts in a supplementary report.

Wishing synod God's blessing on all its varied labors.

Respectfully yours,

Fred H. Klooster, Chairman  
Sierd Woudstra, Secretary  
Clarence Boersma  
Edward J. Masselink  
Richard F. Wevers  
Stanley M. Wiersma

## New Translation of the Heidelberg Catechism

## LORD'S DAY 1

1 Q. WHAT IS YOUR ONLY COMFORT

A. That I am not my own,  
but belong—

body and soul,  
 in life and in death—  
 to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ.  
 He has fully satisfied for all my sins with his precious blood,  
 and has set me free from the tyranny of the devil.  
 He also watches over me in such a way  
 that not a hair can fall from my head  
 without the will of my Father in heaven:  
 in fact, all things must work together for my salvation.  
 Because I belong to Christ,  
 the Holy Spirit assures me of eternal life  
 and makes me whole-heartedly willing and ready  
 from now on to live for him.

2 Q. WHAT MUST YOU KNOW  
 TO LIVE AND DIE IN THE JOY OF THIS COMFORT?

- A. Three things:  
 First, how great my sin and misery are.  
 Second, how I am set free from all my sins and misery.  
 Third, how I am to thank God for such deliverance.

**PART I. MAN'S MISERY**  
**LORD'S DAY 2**

3 Q. HOW DO YOU COME TO KNOW YOUR MISERY?

- A. The Law of God tells me.

4 Q. WHAT DOES GOD'S LAW REQUIRE OF US?

- A. Christ teaches us this in summary in Matt. 22:

“You shall love the Lord your God  
 with all your heart,  
 and with all your soul,  
 and with all your mind.

This is the great and first commandment.

And a second is like it,  
 You shall love your neighbor  
 as yourself.

On these two commandments depend  
 all the law and the prophets.” (RSV)

5 Q. CAN YOU LIVE UP TO ALL THIS PERFECTLY?

- A. No.  
 I have a natural tendency  
 to hate God and my neighbor.

**LORD'S DAY 3**

6 Q. HAS GOD THEN CREATED MAN SO WICKED AND  
 PERVERSE?

- A. No.  
 God created man good and in his own image—  
 that is, in true righteousness and holiness,

so that he might  
truly know his Creator,  
love him with all his heart,  
and live with him in eternal happiness  
for his praise and glory.

**7 Q. WHERE DOES THIS DEPRAVED NATURE OF MAN  
COME FROM?**

A. From the fall and disobedience of our first parents,  
Adam and Eve, in Paradise.  
This fall has so poisoned our nature  
that we all are conceived and born with the taint of sin.

**8 Q. BUT ARE WE SO DEPRAVED—  
TOTALLY UNABLE TO DO ANY GOOD  
AND DISPOSED TOWARD ALL EVIL?**

A. Yes,  
unless we are born again, by the Holy Spirit.

**LORD'S DAY 4**

**9 Q. BUT DOESN'T GOD DO MAN AN INJUSTICE  
BY REQUIRING IN HIS LAW  
WHAT MAN IS UNABLE TO DO?**

A. No,  
for God created man with the ability to keep the law.  
Man, however, tempted by the devil,  
in reckless disobedience,  
deprived himself and his descendants of these gifts.

**10 Q. WILL GOD PERMIT SUCH DISOBEDIENCE AND  
REBELLION TO GO UNPUNISHED?**

A. Certainly not.  
He is terribly angry  
about the sin with which we are born,  
and about the sins which we personally commit.  
He is a just judge and as such  
will punish them both now and in eternity,  
as he has declared:  
"A curse upon any man who does not fulfil this law  
by doing all that it prescribes." (NEB)

**11 Q. BUT ISN'T GOD ALSO MERCIFUL?**

A. God is certainly merciful,  
but he is also just.  
His justice demands  
that sins committed against his supreme majesty  
be punished with the supreme penalty—  
eternal punishment of body and soul.

## PART II. MAN'S DELIVERANCE

## LORD'S DAY 5

- 12 Q. ACCORDING TO GOD'S RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT,  
WE DESERVE PUNISHMENT,  
BOTH IN THIS WORLD AND FOREVER AFTER:  
HOW CAN WE THEN ESCAPE THIS PUNISHMENT  
AND RETURN TO GOD'S FAVOR?
- A. God requires that his justice be satisfied.  
Therefore the claims of his justice  
must be paid in full,  
either by ourselves or by another.
- 13 Q. CAN WE PAY THIS DEBT OURSELVES?
- A. Certainly not.  
Actually, we increase our guilt every day.
- 14 Q. CAN ANOTHER CREATURE—ANY AT ALL—  
PAY THIS DEBT FOR US?
- A. No.  
To begin with,  
God will not punish another creature for man's guilt.  
Besides,  
no mere creature can sustain the weight  
of God's eternal wrath against sin  
and so release others from it.
- 15 Q. WHAT KIND OF MEDIATOR AND DELIVERER, THEN,  
SHOULD WE LOOK FOR?
- A. He must be truly human and truly righteous,  
yet more powerful than all creatures,  
that is, he must also be true God.

## LORD'S DAY 6

- 16 Q. WHY MUST HE BE TRULY HUMAN  
AND TRULY RIGHTEOUS?
- A. God's justice demands it:  
man has sinned,  
man must pay for his sin,  
but a sinner can not pay for others.
- 17 Q. WHY MUST HE ALSO BE TRUE GOD?
- A. So that,  
by the power of his deity,  
he might sustain the weight of God's wrath in his humanity  
and regain for us  
and restore to us  
righteousness and life.
- 18 Q. AND WHO IS THIS MEDIATOR  
WHO IS TRUE GOD,  
YET TRULY HUMAN AND TRULY RIGHTEOUS?



- A. Our Lord Jesus Christ,  
 who was given to us  
 to set us completely free  
 and to make us righteous before God.
- 19 Q. HOW DO YOU COME TO KNOW THIS?
- A. The holy Gospel tells me.  
 God himself began to reveal the Gospel already in Paradise;  
 later, he proclaimed it  
 by the holy patriarchs and prophets,  
 and portrayed it  
 by the sacrifices and other ceremonies of the law;  
 finally, he fulfilled it  
 through his own dear Son.

#### LORD'S DAY 7

- 20 Q. ARE ALL MEN, THEN,  
 SAVED THROUGH CHRIST  
 AS THEY ALL WERE LOST THROUGH ADAM?
- A. No.  
 Only those are saved  
 who by true faith  
 are grafted into him  
 and accept all his benefits.
- 21 Q. WHAT IS TRUE FAITH?
- A. True faith—  
 created in me by the Holy Spirit through the Gospel—  
 is not only a knowledge and conviction  
 that everything that God reveals in his Word is true,  
 but also a deep-rooted assurance  
 that, not only others, but I too,  
 have had my sins forgiven,  
 have been made forever right with God,  
 and have been granted salvation.  
 These are gifts of sheer grace  
 earned for us by Christ.
- 22 Q. WHAT THEN MUST A CHRISTIAN BELIEVE?
- A. Everything God promises us in the Gospel.  
 That Gospel is summarized for us  
 in the articles of our Christian faith—  
 a faith beyond doubt,  
 and confessed throughout the world.
- 23 Q. WHAT ARE THESE ARTICLES?
- A. I believe in God the Father, Almighty  
 Maker of heaven and earth.  
 And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord etc.

#### LORD'S DAY 8

- 24 Q. HOW ARE THESE ARTICLES DIVIDED?

- A. Into three parts:  
 God the Father and our creation;  
 God the Son and our deliverance;  
 God the Holy Spirit and our sanctification.
- 25 Q. SINCE THERE IS BUT ONE GOD,  
 WHY DO YOU SPEAK OF THREE:  
 FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT?
- A. Because in his Word  
 God has revealed  
 that these three distinct Persons  
 are one, true, eternal God.

#### LORD'S DAY 9

- 26 Q. WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE WHEN YOU SAY:  
*I BELIEVE IN GOD THE FATHER ALMIGHTY,  
 MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH?*
- A. I believe:  
 That the eternal Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
 who out of nothing created heaven and earth  
 and everything in them,  
 who also upholds and rules them by his eternal  
 counsel and providence,  
 is my God and Father for the sake of Christ his Son.  
 I trust him so much  
 that I do not doubt that he will provide everything I need  
 for body and soul,  
 and that whatever adversity he sends me in this sad world  
 he will turn to my good.  
 He is able to do this because he is almighty God;  
 He desires to do this because he is a faithful Father.

#### LORD'S DAY 10

- 27 Q. WHAT DO YOU UNDERSTAND  
 BY THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD?
- A. Providence is  
 the almighty and very present power of God  
 by which he upholds as with his hand  
 heaven  
 and earth  
 and all creatures  
 and so rules them that  
 leaf and blade,  
 rain and drought,  
 fruitful and lean years,  
 food and drink,  
 health and sickness,  
 prosperity and poverty—  
 in a word: everything—

comes not by chance,  
but from the hand of our Father.

28 Q. WHAT BENEFIT COMES FROM THE KNOWLEDGE OF  
THE CREATION AND PROVIDENCE OF GOD?

- A. We may be patient when things go against us,  
thankful when things go well,  
and for the future we may have  
good confidence in our faithful God and Father  
that nothing shall separate us from his love:  
because all creatures are so completely in his hand  
that without his will they can do absolutely nothing.

LORD'S DAY 11

29 Q. WHY IS GOD THE SON CALLED *JESUS*,  
MEANING *SAVIOR*?

- A. Because he saves us from our sins.  
Salvation cannot be found in any one else:  
it is futile to look for any salvation elsewhere.

30 Q. DO THOSE WHO LOOK FOR THEIR SALVATION  
AND SECURITY  
IN SAINTS, IN THEMSELVES, OR ELSEWHERE,  
REALLY BELIEVE IN THE ONLY SAVIOR JESUS?

- A. No.  
Although in word they boast of being his,  
in deed they deny the only Savior and Deliverer, Jesus.  
For either:  
Jesus is not a perfect Savior,  
or  
those who in true faith accept this Savior  
must, having him, have all they need for salvation.

LORD'S DAY 12

31 Q. WHY IS HE CALLED CHRIST,  
MEANING *THE ANOINTED ONE*?

- A. Because he has been ordained by God the Father  
and has been anointed with the Holy Spirit  
to be  
our chief prophet and teacher  
who perfectly reveals to us  
the secret counsel and will of God for our redemption:  
our only high priest  
who has redeemed us by the one sacrifice of himself,  
and who continually pleads our cause with the Father;  
and our eternal king  
who governs us by his Word and Spirit,  
and who guards and upholds us in the freedom he has  
won for us.

32 Q. BUT WHY ARE YOU CALLED A *CHRISTIAN*?

- A. Because by faith I am a member of Christ  
and therefore I share in his anointing,  
in order that I may  
confess his name,  
present myself to him as a living sacrifice of thanks,  
in this life with a free conscience strive against sin and the  
devil  
and hereafter in eternity reign with him over all creation.

## LORD'S DAY 13

33 Q. WHY IS HE CALLED GOD'S *ONLY BEGOTTEN SON*,  
WHEN WE ALSO ARE GOD'S CHILDREN?

- A. Because Christ alone is the eternal, natural Son of God;  
we, however, are adopted children of God—adopted by grace  
through Christ.

34 Q. WHY DO YOU CALL HIM *OUR LORD*?

- A. Because  
—not with gold or silver,  
but with his precious blood—  
he has set us free  
from sin and from all the power of the devil,  
and bought us  
both body and soul,  
to be his very own.

## LORD'S DAY 14

35 Q. WHAT DOES IT MEAN THAT  
*HE WAS CONCEIVED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT,*  
*BORN OF THE VIRGIN MARY?*

- A. That the eternal Son of God,  
who is and remains  
true and eternal God,  
took to himself  
through the working of the Holy Spirit  
from the flesh and blood of the virgin Mary  
a truly human nature  
in order that he might be the true seed of David  
in all things except for sin  
like us his brothers.

36 Q. HOW DOES THE HOLY CONCEPTION  
AND BIRTH OF CHRIST BENEFIT YOU?

- A. He is our mediator,  
and with his innocence and perfect holiness,  
he covers the sin with which I was born,  
so that God sees it no more.

## LORD'S DAY 15

37 Q. WHAT DO YOU UNDERSTAND BY THE WORD *SUFFERED*?

- A. That during his whole life on earth; but especially at the end, Christ sustained in body and soul the wrath of God against the sin of the whole human race. This he did in order that —with his suffering as the only atoning sacrifice— he might set us free, body and soul, from everlasting condemnation, and gain for us God's favor, righteousness, and eternal life.

## 38 Q. WHY DID HE SUFFER UNDER PONTIUS PILATE AS JUDGE?

- A. So that he, being innocent, might be condemned under an earthly judge, and thus deliver us from the severe judgment of God that was to fall on us.

## 39 Q. IS IT SIGNIFICANT THAT HE WAS CRUCIFIED INSTEAD OF BEING PUT TO DEATH SOME OTHER WAY?

- A. Yes, for by his death I am certain that he shouldered the curse which lay upon me, since death by crucifixion was accursed by God.

## LORD'S DAY 16

## 40 Q. WHY DID CHRIST HAVE TO GO SO FAR AS TO DIE?

- A. Because the justice and truth of God demand it: only the death of the Son of God could pay for our sin.

41 Q. WHY WAS HE *BURIED*?

- A. His burial testifies that he really died.

## 42 Q. SINCE CHRIST HAS DIED FOR US, WHY MUST WE STILL DIE?

- A. Our death does not pay the debt of our sins; death rather puts an end to our sinning and is our entrance into eternal life.

## 43 Q. WHAT FURTHER ADVANTAGE TO US IS THE SACRIFICE AND DEATH OF CHRIST ON THE CROSS?

- A. Through Christ's death

our old selves are crucified, put to death, and buried with him,  
 so that the evil passions of the flesh  
 may no longer rule us,  
 but that instead we may dedicate ourselves  
 as an offering of gratitude to him.

44 Q. WHY DOES THE CREED ADD:  
*HE DESCENDED INTO HELL?*

- A. To assure me in times of spiritual crisis  
 that Christ my Lord,  
 by means of his unspeakable anguish, pain, and terror,  
 which he suffered on the cross and in his earlier life,  
 has delivered me from the anguish and pain of hell.

**LORD'S DAY 17**

45 Q. HOW DOES THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST  
 BENEFIT US?

- A. First, by his resurrection he has overcome death,  
 so that he might make us share in the righteousness  
 which he won for us by his death.  
 Second, by his power we also are already now resurrected to a  
 new life.  
 Third, the resurrection of Christ is a guarantee of our glorious  
 resurrection.

**LORD'S DAY 18**

46 Q. HOW DO YOU INTERPRET  
*HE ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN?*

- A. That, while his disciples watched,  
 Christ was lifted up from the earth into heaven  
 and will be there for our good  
 until he comes again to judge the living and the dead.

47 Q. BUT ISN'T CHRIST WITH US UNTIL THE END OF  
 THE WORLD AS HE PROMISED US?

- A. Christ is true man and true God:  
 in his human nature Christ is not now on earth;  
 but in his divinity, majesty, grace, and Spirit  
 he is not absent from us for a moment.

48 Q. IF HIS HUMANITY IS NOT PRESENT WHEREVER HIS  
 DIVINITY IS, ARE NOT THEN THE TWO NATURES  
 OF CHRIST SEPARATED FROM EACH OTHER?

- A. Certainly not.  
 For since the divinity  
 is not limited  
 and is present everywhere,  
 it is evident that Christ's divinity  
 is surely beyond the bounds of the humanity he has taken on,  
 but at the same time his divinity is in and remains  
 personally united to his humanity.

49 Q. HOW DOES THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST INTO HEAVEN BENEFIT US?

- A. First, he pleads our cause  
in heaven  
in the presence of his Father.  
Second, we have our own flesh in heaven—  
a guarantee that Christ our head  
will take us, his members,  
to himself in heaven.  
Third, he sends his Spirit down to us  
as the assurance of more to come.  
By the Spirit's power we make the goal of our lives—  
not the things of earth—  
but the things which are above  
where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

LORD'S DAY 19

50 Q. WHY THE NEXT WORDS:  
AND SITTETH AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD?

- A. Christ ascended to heaven  
that he might there manifest himself  
as head of his Christian church:  
through Christ as head of the church  
the Father rules all things.

51 Q. HOW DOES THIS GLORY OF CHRIST OUR HEAD BENEFIT US?

- A. First, through his Holy Spirit  
he pours out his gifts from heaven  
upon us his members.  
Second, by his power  
he defends us and keeps us safe  
from all enemies.

52 Q. HOW DOES CHRIST'S RETURN  
*TO JUDGE THE LIVING AND THE DEAD*  
COMFORT YOU?

- A. In all my distress and persecution  
I turn my eyes to the heavens and  
confidently await as judge the very One  
who has already stood trial in my place before God  
and so has removed the whole curse from me.  
All his enemies and mine  
he will condemn to everlasting punishment;  
but me and all his chosen ones  
he will take along with him to the joy and glory of heaven.

*The Holy Spirit*

53 Q. WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE  
CONCERNING *THE HOLY SPIRIT*?

- A. First, he, as well as the Father and the Son,

is eternal God.

Second, he has been given to me personally,  
so that, by true faith,  
he makes me share in Christ and all his blessings,  
comforts me, and  
remains with me forever.

54 Q. WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE  
CONCERNING THE *HOLY, CATHOLIC*  
*CHRISTIAN CHURCH*?

- A. The Son of God, through his Spirit and Word,  
out of the entire human race,  
from the beginning of the world to its end,  
gathers, protects, and preserves for himself  
a community  
chosen for eternal life and  
united in true faith.

Of this community I am and always will be  
a living member.

55 Q. WHAT DO YOU UNDERSTAND BY  
*THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS*?

- A. First,  
that the Lord Christ  
as well as his treasures and gifts,  
is shared in common  
by believers—one and all—  
as members of this community.

Second,  
that each member should consider it his duty  
to use his gifts  
readily and cheerfully  
for the service and enrichment  
of the other members.

56 Q. WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE  
CONCERNING *THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS*?

- A. I believe that God  
because of Christ's atonement  
will not hold against me  
any of my sins  
nor my sinful nature  
which I need to struggle against all my life.

Rather,  
in his grace  
God grants me the righteousness of Christ  
to free me forever from judgment.

57 Q. HOW DOES *THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY*  
COMFORT YOU?

- A. Not only my soul  
will be taken immediately after this life





- 62 Q. WHY CANNOT OUR GOOD WORKS  
MAKE US RIGHT WITH GOD,  
OR AT LEAST HELP?
- A. Because the righteousness  
which can pass God's scrutiny  
must be entirely perfect  
and must in every way measure up to God's law.  
Even the very best we do in this life  
is imperfect  
and stained with sin.
- 63 Q. HOW CAN YOU SAY  
THAT OUR GOOD WORKS EARN NOTHING  
WHEN GOD PROMISES TO REWARD THEM  
IN THIS LIFE AND THE NEXT?
- A. The reward is not earned:  
it is a gift of grace.
- 64 Q. BUT DOESN'T THIS TEACHING  
MAKE PEOPLE INDIFFERENT AND WICKED?
- A. No, those grafted into Christ by true faith  
will produce fruits of gratitude:  
it is impossible for them not to!

*The Sacraments*

- 65 Q. YOU CONFESS THAT BY FAITH ALONE  
YOU SHARE IN CHRIST AND IN ALL HIS BENEFITS:  
WHERE DOES THAT FAITH COME FROM?
- A. From the Holy Spirit—  
he produces it in our hearts by the preaching of the holy  
gospel  
he confirms it through our use of the holy sacraments.
- 66 Q. WHAT ARE SACRAMENTS?
- A. Sacraments are holy signs and seals we can see.  
God instituted them so that by their use  
he might make us understand more clearly  
what he promises us in the gospel,  
and might put his seal upon that promise.  
And this is God's gospel promise:  
to forgive our sins and give us eternal life  
by grace alone  
for the sake of the one sacrifice of Christ  
finished on the cross.
- 67 Q. ARE BOTH THE WORD AND THE SACRAMENTS THEN  
INTENDED TO FOCUS OUR FAITH  
UPON THE SACRIFICE OF JESUS ON THE CROSS  
AS THE ONLY GROUND OF OUR SALVATION?
- A. Right!  
In the gospel the Holy Spirit teaches us

and through the holy sacraments he assures us  
that our entire salvation  
rests on Christ's sacrifice for us on the cross.

68 Q. HOW MANY SACRAMENTS  
DID CHRIST INSTITUTE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT?

A. Two: Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

*Baptism*

69 Q. HOW DOES HOLY BAPTISM  
REMINDE YOU AND ASSURE YOU  
THAT THE ONE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST ON THE  
CROSS IS FOR YOU PERSONALLY?

A. In this way:  
Christ instituted this outward washing  
and with it gave the promise that  
as surely as water washes away the dirt of the body,  
so certainly his blood and his Spirit  
wash away the impurity of my soul, namely, all my sins.

70 Q. WHAT DOES IT MEAN  
TO BE WASHED WITH CHRIST'S BLOOD AND SPIRIT?

A. To be washed with Christ's blood means  
that God, by grace, forgives my sins  
because of the blood of Christ  
poured out for me in his sacrifice on the cross.  
To be washed with Christ's Spirit means  
that the Holy Spirit renews me  
and sets me apart to be a member of Christ  
so that more and more I become dead to sin  
and increasingly live a holy and blameless life.

71 Q. WHERE DOES CHRIST PROMISE  
THAT WE ARE WASHED WITH HIS BLOOD AND  
SPIRIT AS SURELY AS WE ARE WASHED  
WITH THE WATER OF BAPTISM?

A. In the institution of baptism where he says:  
Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing  
them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the  
Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28:19)  
He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he  
who does not believe will be condemned. (Mark 16:16)

72 Q. DOES THIS OUTWARD WASHING WITH WATER  
ITSELF WASH AWAY SINS?

A. No, only Jesus' blood and the Holy Spirit  
cleans us from all sins.  
This promise is repeated when Scripture calls baptism  
the washing of regeneration (Titus 3:5)  
and the washing away of sins. (Acts 22:16)

73 Q. WHY THEN DOES THE HOLY SPIRIT CALL BAPTISM  
“THE WASHING OF REGENERATION” AND  
“THE WASHING AWAY OF SINS?”

A. God has good reason for these words.  
He not only wants to teach us that  
the blood and Spirit of Christ wash away our sins  
just as water washes away dirt from our bodies:  
but more important:  
he wants to assure us, by this divine pledge and sign,  
that the washing away of our sins spiritually  
is as real as physical washing with water.

74 Q. SHOULD INFANTS, TOO, BE BAPTIZED?

A. Yes.  
Infants as well as adults  
are in God's covenant and are his people.  
They no less than adults are promised  
the forgiveness of sin through Christ's blood and  
the Holy Spirit who produces faith.  
Therefore, by baptism, the mark of the covenant,  
infants should be received into the Christian church and  
should be distinguished from the children of unbelievers.  
This was done in the Old Testament by circumcision  
which was replaced in the New Testament by baptism.

## REPORT 47

## CONTACT WITH THE CANADIAN REFORMED CHURCHES

DEAR BROTHERS:

The report of this committee will be brief. The reason is that we have little to report on. The last meeting with the deputies of the Canadian Reformed Churches took place on April 12, 1970. Thus we have had no meetings to report on for the Synods of 1971 and 1972. The prime reason, as we see it, lies in the peculiar stage of our discussions.

The main item for discussion left on the agenda is the correspondence which the Christian Reformed Church carries on with the Gereformeerde Kerken (Synodical). The deputies for the Canadian Reformed Churches have in unambiguous terms expressed their deep concern about that sister-relationship. This correspondence, however, is not in the province of our committee for recommendation or action. As a result the Canadian Reformed Committee has felt that little can be achieved by further meetings until our synod and its Inter-Church Relations Committee have come to a definite decision on whether or not to change the sister-relationship with the Gereformeerde Kerken (Synodical). To quote from one of their communications, "As far as we can see, another meeting depends on the progress which your Inter-Church Relations Committee has made and on the decision which Synod of 1971 will make on the matter of correspondence . . . . However, if nothing can be reported about the results of the Inter-Church Relations Committee, we wonder whether a meeting of our two committees makes sense under the given circumstances" (Letter dated Dec. 1, 1970). And in reply to our request of March 20, 1971, for another meeting they state that, while they are not unwilling to meet, "there are—at least to our knowledge—no *new* points for discussion, and all we can do for the moment is, wait for our synods and their decisions" (Letter dated April 21, 1971, emphasis theirs).

We regret that, no doubt mainly for the above-mentioned reason, we have not been able to meet with the Canadian Reformed Committee during the last two years, and that no further progress can be reported. Having analyzed the present stage of the discussion, we conclude that our committee should be discontinued. We feel, however, that it should be done in such a way that synod thereby keeps the door open for further discussion.

*Recommendations*

Accordingly we recommend

1. That synod discontinue the Committee for Contact with the Canadian Reformed Churches.

*Ground:* The main item remaining on our agenda is the correspondence with the Gereformeerde Kerken (Synodical). Of prime interest to the Canadian Reformed Churches is the question whether the Christian Reformed Church will break off that correspondence. Our denomination's present relationship with Gereformeerde Kerken is the province of synod and its Inter-Church Relations Committee, and our committee is not involved in determining that relationship.

2. That, in the event that one of our future synods changes the present relationship with the Gereformeerde Kerken, synod officially advise the Canadian Reformed Churches of such action and extend an invitation to them to initiate further discussion on this matter.

Respectfully submitted

P. M. Jonker, chairman  
D. Farenhorst  
G. J. Hoytema  
J. B. Vos, reporter

## REPORT 48

## IMPROVEMENT OF METHOD OF CALLING MINISTERS

DEAR BROTHERS:

## I. INTRODUCTION

In 1970 Classis California South overtured synod to appoint a committee to study ways and means for improving the method of calling ministers (Acts 1970, pp. 106, 107). Synod approved this request and appointed a committee "to study ways and means for improving the method of calling ministers."

*Grounds:*

"1. Several previous overtures to synod with suggestions for improvement indicate a persistent need for such a study.

"2. The growth and geographical spread of our church, diversity of talents and ministerial tasks, and variety of situations indicate a need for such a study.

"3. Though the present system of calling is in harmony with the Church Order, the church can benefit greatly by a study reflecting the biblical principles and rules of Church Order on this matter as applied to our changing times" (Article 154, Acts 1970).

The Committee, as it began its work, felt that it would be of great benefit to know what the sentiments of the churches and ministers were on this issue. Therefore a questionnaire was sent to all churches, and to the ministers of our denomination who are in active service. 472 consistories and 482 ministers answered these questionnaires, and many of the responses included valuable comments and suggestions. Announcements were also placed in the church papers inviting suggestions from other individuals. Many letters were received expressing keen interest in our study, and some parties even sent us the materials and the results of their own studies on the subject.

This large response indicates that there is an urgent desire to improve our method of calling, and that there is a widespread dissatisfaction, not about the principles underlying our method of calling, but about the method itself, as well as several practices prevalent in connection with it.

In answer to the remarks of some regarding this questionnaire, it should be clearly understood that it has never been the intention of your committee to use the outcome of the responses as a kind of popularity vote. The opinions expressed in the questionnaires were carefully considered, but were not decisive for study.

Results of the questionnaire sent to the ministers and the consistories of the Christian Reformed Church by "*The Committee to Improve the Method of Calling Ministers*":

**MINISTERS**

(482 replies)

**CONSISTORIES**

(472 replies)

(answers in percentages)

	MINISTERS			CONSISTORIES		
	Yes	No	No Opinion	Yes	No	No Opinion
1. Our present method of calling is basically correct:	70.6	23.2	6.2	64	15.8	20.2
2. This method of calling is working satisfactorily at present:	20.5	71.2	8.3	27.3	28	44.7
3. Our present system provides adequately for the calling of team ministry and specialized ministry:	19.1	58.6	22.3	23	42.3	34.7
4. A clearing house of information about ministers should be established by synod:	73.2	19.9	6.9	85.1	5.5	9.4
5. A clearing house of information about churches should be established by synod:	69.4	21.4	9.2	80.4	7	12.6
6. Ministers should be permitted to indicate their desire for a call:	84.2	9.2	6.6	92.7	2.5	4.8
7. Ministers should be permitted to indicate their interest in a call to a specific church:	64.8	26.7	8.5	76.6	10.9	12.5
8. Vacant churches should be permitted to advertise for ministers:	63.2	25.7	11.1	66.6	15.9	17.5
9. A minister should serve a congregation at least three years before he is eligible for a call:	54.5	38.4	7.1	75.2	8.8	16
10. The listing of calls and declines in the church papers should be discontinued:	44.4	44.4	11.2	29.5	27.8	42.7
11. The time to consider a call should be reduced to two weeks:	27.5	64.6	8.9	47	21.4	31.6
12. A method should be devised by which the relationship between congregation and pastor can be terminated without reflecting unfavorably on either party:	76.9	12.3	11.8	73.9	13.7	12.4
13. Calls should be given for a specific length of time, after which the minister must be called again by the congregation, or recommended to the churches for a call:	15.4	66.4	18.2	21.7	31.7	46.6
14. A method should be devised by which congregations could exchange pastors:	39.8	37.5	22.7	22.4	33.7	43.9
15. A synodical committee should be established to advise vacant churches about available ministers:	56.2	34.1	9.7	79.4	7.6	13



Some of the more apparent conclusions of this questionnaire are:

1. Most consistories and ministers believe the present method of calling to be basically correct, and yet they are of the opinion that our method is not functioning well in our present situation. There is a pressing need for improvement in our way of calling. It is in this context that we have to make the important distinction between the work of God and the work of man in the calling of a minister. Basic to our method is the conviction that the Lord through his Spirit calls men to the ministry in general and also to the pastorate in a specific church, and that in so doing he uses men, including consistories and congregations, in carrying out his will. Our committee has been warned that we should not neglect this divine factor, nor try to manipulate the Holy Spirit by introducing new techniques which would not allow for promptings by the Spirit of God. We have taken this warning to heart, and reaffirm that we do honor the divine factor in the work of calling. We trust the guidance of the Holy Spirit in this matter. However, we also recognize that the Spirit sees fit to direct men by the means which are at their disposal. Scripture does not allow the church to act blindly or by guesswork. In our report, we direct attention to the human element, in which certain improvements can be made.

2. The majority of consistories and ministers desire more openness in calling by allowing both congregations and ministers to make public their needs and desires in this matter.

3. An improvement in the method of calling is also needed in light of recent developments in which many more men enter into different types of ministries besides the parish pastorate. Item 3 underscores this need.

4. It is evident that some type of central office established by synod is desired as a service to the churches and ministers under the present circumstances.

5. Item 12 indicates that if a central information service would be made available to ministers and churches, it would be easier to effect changes in location, because this committee could be alerted by the ministers as to their need for a change of pastorate.

## II. BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES

Scripture does not present us with many and minute details for the calling of a minister. Nor does it give us a well worked-out method or program for the same. Evidently the Lord allows his church a great deal of latitude in this matter, being mindful of changing circumstances and conditions. Basic to the regulations which govern the calling of ministers is a recognition of the kingship of Christ in his church. Paul writes to the Ephesians "and he gave some to be apostles, and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers . . ." (Ephesians 4:11). As the one to whom all authority has been given in heaven and on earth, Christ commissions his apostles, "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" (Matthew 28:19, 20).

At the same time, Christ entrusts the development of his church to those whom he has sent forth, giving guidance through the inspired Word concerning the requirements for officebearers and the standards which must be followed. These are described in passages such as I Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 1:5-9. Many other references are found in the New Testament concerning the qualifications and tasks of officebearers, but these are not necessary to note for our present purpose.

Concerning the calling or appointment of officebearers, not as much material is available. At least two references are found which indicate that such men were appointed to office. "And when they had appointed for them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they had believed" (Acts 14:23). "For this cause I left thee in Crete that thou shouldest set in order the things that were wanting, and appoint elders in every city, as I gave thee charge" (Titus 1:5). Although this might suggest that this appointment is made by a single person, it is apparent from Acts 1:15-26 and Acts 6:1-5 that the members of the congregation were also involved in the selection of such individuals.

Acts 6:1-6 is very important in the matter of the selection of officebearers. When the apostles were overburdened by the work in the Jerusalem Church, "the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not fit that we should forsake the Word of God, and serve tables. Look ye out therefore, brethren, from among you seven men of good report, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will continue steadfastly in prayer, and in the ministry of the Word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus a proselyte of Antioch; whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands upon them."

Note that these deacons were not selected directly by the apostles. The congregation was instructed to search out men with proper qualifications. After these men had been chosen by the members of the church, they were "appointed" by the apostles to their task. The verb used to describe this action of the apostles in Acts 6:3 is the same one used by Paul in defining the work of Titus as he "appoints" elders in every city in Crete (Cf Titus 1:5). It is important to note that there is responsible cooperation on the part of the congregation in the selection of these officebearers.

Involved in this responsible cooperation of the congregation is the matter of the method by which the Holy Spirit guides the church in such a selection. The decision is accompanied by prayer, and is made on the basis of a recognition of proper qualifications on the part of the "candidates" for office. This choice was made after qualified men had been sought, indicating that the choice involved an intelligent selection on the part of the congregation.

Concern has been expressed that changes in the method by which our ministers are called by the church may in some measure take away from the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the process of calling. It is feared that

it may degenerate into a "business transaction" between church and minister. This concern is surely not without ground. If the church does not continue to seek earnestly for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and does not recognize that the Lord is maintaining his control over the affairs of his church, bidding one to go and another to come, we will indeed succumb to this danger. However, there is a danger also in the other direction, that we abdicate our responsibilities as intelligent members of the church, and fail to make use of the means which are available to us in making wise decisions when calling ministers. The Holy Spirit guides the people of God in such fashion that he makes use of their faculties as image bearers of God. From the sixteenth chapter of Acts something of this method can be seen.

Paul was on his second missionary journey. Timothy was with him. They had passed through Syria and Cilicia, and had come to Derbe and Lystra. From there they wanted to go into Asia, but they could not do so. We read, "And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia" (Acts 16:6). Note the last part of that sentence. They were forbidden by the Holy Spirit. There was direct divine guidance.

However, we shall miss the value of this entirely if we think only about this guidance of the Spirit. We must notice also how the Spirit guided. This is not difficult to do. Paul was prevented from going into Asia by the action of the Holy Spirit. He therefore went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia. That was the beginning of the work in Galatia. However, in Galatians 4:13 Paul says, "You know it was because of a bodily ailment that I preached the gospel to you at first."

Paul states that because of an infirmity of the flesh he came first to Galatia. Luke states that it was under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. From this it is very plain that Paul did not necessarily hear an audible voice forbidding him. That was not the method of Divine guidance. The local and incidental fact was some bodily ailment which made it impossible for him to travel through Asia. Possibly it was the climate that hindered him, but the result was that he preached in Galatia.

The Holy Spirit worked in Paul's life through the circumstances and events of life. This fact helps us to understand divine guidance today also in the matter of calling a minister. Human means are used by the Holy Spirit.

The same truth is set forth in the verses which follow: "And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedonia was standing, beseeching him, and saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us." (Acts 16:9). Whatever the full implications of that vision may be, it points to divine guidance. But the next step was to be sure what that vision meant. "And when he had seen the vision, straightway we sought to go forth into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel unto them" (Acts 16:10). The word rendered "concluding" is a picturesque one. It literally means "laying things together." They set various facts side by side and so came to understand what the vision meant. They responded by using their good common sense.

The Scriptures surely emphasize divine guidance. This is fundamental. It must be prominent in the calling of a minister. Yet God wants us to

use all the human means at our disposal. We must work in an orderly and sensible way.

The purpose of this report is to suggest ways and means that are most suitable under present conditions for the calling of a minister.

### III. REFORMED HISTORY AND TRADITIONS

An historical study of calling of ministers as practiced by the Reformed churches reveals adherence to two general principles:

1. The initiative in choosing or nominating a minister for a local congregation is taken by the consistory, or council.

2. The approval or consent ("approbation," in the language of the Church Order) of the members of the local church is required.

The peculiar problem relating to the calling of ministers during the Reformation era was that of enforcing a proper ecclesiastical evaluation of the qualifications and fitness of those who wished to act as ministers. During this time there were many ex-priests and ex-monks, as well as Anabaptists who had renounced their former views, who travelled from one place to another and offered their services as preachers without ecclesiastical calling. The synod of the churches of Flanders in 1563 ruled that no one should be admitted to the ministry without legitimate calling. In 1568 the Convention of Wesel decided that election (choosing), approbation, and examination should be the requisites of a legitimate calling. In 1571 the Synod of Emden said that those without proper qualifications must stop preaching under pain of being placed under church discipline as schismatic persons. The Synod of Middleburg in 1581 formulated a rule requiring that no one enter upon the ministry without a proper calling.

The principles of church government as developed under the influence of Calvin and other reformers were finally given a definitive formulation in the Church Order of Dordt (1618-19). Articles 3 and 4 of this Church Order pertain particularly to the calling of ministers. Article 3 provides that no one shall enter upon the ministry of the Word and sacraments without having been lawfully called. Article 4 states what is to constitute a lawful calling and adopts the requirements established by the Convention of Wesel. They are elected by the consistory with the advice of classis or of the counselor appointed by classis, examination as to doctrine and life conducted by the classis, approbation by the members of the congregation, and ordination in the presence of the congregation. These are essentially the cardinal principles in the tradition of the Reformed Churches relating to the calling of ministers.

At its inception in 1857 the Christian Reformed Church adopted the Church Order of Dort, including Articles 3 and 4. This Church Order continued to be the governing body of ecclesiastical law of the denomination until 1965, when it was replaced by the so-called new Church Order.

The new Church Order, in somewhat different form, retains the key components of calling, namely examination, election (nominating), approbation (consent or approval), and ordination. Article 4, relating to the calling of officers in the church, provides that as a general rule the con-

sistory shall present to the congregation a nomination of at least twice the number to be elected. In the case of calling to the office of minister this rule would presumably require a duo or trio, at least in normal circumstances. Article 4 also states that the consistory may give the congregation opportunity to make suggestions as to persons to consider for a call. Article 4 thus provides for election and approbation. Article 9 states that in nominating and calling a minister the consistory must seek the approval of the counselor who acts for classis.

If attention is shifted from theory and rules as incorporated in the Church Orders to actual methods followed by Reformed churches in calling ministers, we find a variety of practices in use from time to time. In the earliest days of the Reformation, the most common procedure was for the consistory to select the minister to be called, to announce his name to the congregation, and give members an opportunity to present objections to the calling of the person chosen by the consistory. If no legitimate objections were received, the man chosen was called.

The practice best known today is that of the consistory selecting the names of two, three, or even four ministers to place before the congregation. From this duo, trio, or quartet the congregation by vote selects the man to be called. In some cases a simple majority vote is required, while in other instances a two-thirds vote is necessary. Other churches simply call the person who has the plurality of votes cast.

A variation of this method is that by which the consistory presents a trio or duo to the congregation of which the person with the highest vote will be called, but in the event of a decline, the second highest will receive the call, and so on until either a minister is obtained or the list is exhausted.

Some Reformed churches have used the so-called method of "candidating." Pursuant to this practice, a minister indicates his interest in receiving a call to a certain church, preaches for it, and then the church decides whether or not he will receive the call.

A system of trial sermons has also been employed. This involves an invitation to a minister to preach for a congregation for one or more Sundays. The issuance of a call to the minister then depends upon a favorable vote of a majority of the membership of the congregation.

A further method used, especially in the Netherlands, is for the consistory to appoint a committee which prepares a list of prospective nominees. Members of this committee visit the church of the minister being considered and hear him preach. The committee reports its impressions and recommendations to the consistory. The consistory then follows the regulations relating to calling in use in the particular church.

Practices at present being followed include a consistory interviewing a minister before he is called, or after he is called but before he accepts the call; giving members of the congregation an opportunity of meeting the minister before he decides upon the call; a consistory soliciting suggestions from members of the congregation as to ministers to consider calling; and consistories advertising in the church periodicals for applications from interested ministers.

The history of the Reformed tradition does not point to a single, stereotyped method of calling decreed either by Scripture or the church.

Rather than uniformity of method, the history of the Reformed churches reflects diversity. A wide latitude in method is no doubt also desirable.

#### IV. METHODS IN RELATED CHURCHES

##### A. *United Presbyterian Church*

The church has a Department of Ministerial Relations that assists a calling church in choosing a pastor. Elaborate forms are provided by this department, which, if filled in completely will give information in great detail about a church as well as the minister. These forms are kept on file at the D.M.R. headquarters in Columbus, Ohio.

Each Presbytery has a Committee of Ministerial Relations which also gets copies of the completed forms and works with the calling church in nominating a pastor. The calling church elects a Pastor Nominating Committee. This committee or the session must complete the Church Information Form and forward copies to the proper committees. The one responsibility of this committee, in cooperation with the C.M.R., is to nominate a candidate to be pastor of the church.

The purpose of the Church Information Form is (1) to provide a process by which it is possible to identify particular skills, abilities, training, experience which the new pastor should have, (2) to provide the Department of Ministerial Relations with essential information concerning the congregation's needs so that appropriate candidates can be suggested for consideration, (3) to provide candidates with sufficient information concerning the church so that they can determine whether or not they desire serious consideration.

The minister's information form is used by the nominating committee of calling churches and is used by the C.M.R. for suggesting possible candidates. Members of the nominating committee will also visit other churches to hear ministers preach and sometimes request taped sermons. Dossiers will be obtained on all likely candidates. The committee receives names of candidates from various sources such as members of the church, friends, and the Department of Ministerial Relations. Any candidate desiring to be considered may request that his dossier be sent to the committee. After a list of possible candidates has been made, interviews are held with them to determine their availability and interest.

When the committee has gathered all the information and compared the dossiers with the needs of the church and has evaluated their preaching, they choose the one whom they will suggest the congregation call. Only one name is presented to the congregation and a simply yes or no vote is asked. The number of affirmative and negative votes is announced and this must also be recorded on the call. If there is a substantial minority vote, the moderator might suggest that they proceed no further. If, however, the majority insists on its right, the vote stands.

##### B. *Reformed Church in America*

The "Handbook for Calling a Minister" outlines a system of calling which is quite similar to that of the United Presbyterian Church except for details. The Office of Human Resources was established in 1969 to give guidance to churches in calling a minister. This office provides profile forms for churches and ministers.

When a vacancy occurs in a church, classis appoints one of its ministers as supervisor. This supervisor must attend all formal meetings of the consistory. The consistory appoints a self-study and pastoral search committee. This committee is to include all elements of the congregation: youth, women, long time members, comparative newcomers, and leaders. This committee must complete the Church Profile Form. To aid it in this, an interview with the departing pastor is recommended in order to profit from his experience and insights.

A church may extend a provisional call to a seminarian after February 1 of his senior year. This call, when authorized by the Ministerial Relations Committee and accepted by the student, is binding to the consistory as well as the student. The official call, however, must wait until the student has completed his seminary work and satisfactorily passed his licensure examination.

### C. *Gereformeerde Kerken in the Netherlands*

The practice of calling a minister in our Reformed sister churches of the Netherlands is basically the same as in our churches, and founded on Reformed principles and traditions.

Because of the many vacancies existing in these churches, one of the administrators of the Theological Seminary at Kampen took the initiative of organizing a "Nationwide Committee for the Work of Calling" (Landelijk Comité Beroepingswerk). Its task is to give any possible information to churches and ministers to facilitate the work of calling. This committee has now approached the synod with the request that the synod will establish a similar committee with official ecclesiastical status.

From an informational booklet issued by this committee it appears that it is rendering a real service to the churches and the ministers. 95% of the vacant churches, 100% of the candidates and over 50% of the ministers have been in contact with this committee in one way or another. The establishment of this committee has proven to be a marked improvement in the method of calling ministers in the Gereformeerde Kerken.

(The materials, profile forms, questionnaires, etc. from these churches which we have gathered in the course of our study will be placed in the hands of the Stated Clerk.)

## V. EVALUATION

When making an attempt to describe the situation within our denomination concerning the work of calling ministers, we wish to observe that it is our conviction, together with the large majority of consistories and ministers, that our present method of calling is basically correct. We have no argument with the Church Order in this respect, nor do we feel the need to make any changes or amendments in the rules of the Church Order covering the calling of ministers.

At the same time, it is apparent from the answers to the questionnaires that the majority of our ministers and consistories are convinced that our present method of calling is not working well today.

The first factor which has brought this about is the fact that our denomination has grown considerably during the last quarter of a century.

There was a time when most of our consistories knew a majority of the ministers and their qualities and the ministers knew the churches. With the growth of the church, it has become impossible to be acquainted with most of our ministers and churches. The result is a lack of information, which often results in the wrong kind of information being given. Rumors concerning churches and ministers are often considered too seriously and play a significant role in the work of calling.

Since firsthand information is often very limited, many churches are inclined to use the announcement column in the church papers as a substitute source of information, on the supposition that another church must have reliable information on the one whom they have called, and therefore it is safe to call certain men. As a result, some ministers are burdened with call upon call simply because their names are in the news, while a large number of available and effective ministers receive hardly any calls. This has surely been detrimental to the whole denomination. Vacant churches have remained vacant for a prolonged period because they often paid more attention to the "popular" men than they did to searching for the "right" man for their local needs. The few ministers who have had to consider an undue number of calls have had to live with all the tensions and unrest connected with this in their personal life and the relationship to their own congregation. But the greatest burden has been placed upon those ministers who failed to receive this kind of publicity and as a result were unable to change pastorates when a change would have been beneficial both to themselves and the congregation which they served. It would seem to your committee that it would be preferable to discontinue the practice of listing calls and declines in our church papers.

Another factor which is an influence in the problem of calling is a form of mysticism which demands that ministers be completely passive in waiting for a call. There appear to be many who have drawn this incorrect conclusion from the fact that the Holy Spirit guides in the work of calling. The inference is drawn that ministers should refrain from showing interest in certain calls, because this would constitute tampering with the work of the Holy Spirit. We firmly believe, however, that the guidance of the Spirit does not exclude, but rather includes the active cooperation not only of calling churches, but also of ministers desiring a call. In the section "Biblical Principles" we have made reference to the nature of the Spirit's guidance, and the correlation between divine guidance and human effort.

There are undoubtedly more reasons for the difficulties which we face, but the factors mentioned do indicate that there exists among us a certain rigidity in the work of calling which is not derived from Scripture nor demanded by the Church Order. We have put ourselves into a straitjacket of unwritten laws and customs which has made the work of calling a burden and often unpleasant task for both churches and ministers. It is the conviction of your committee that by this inflexibility induced by unwritten codes and traditions we are hampering the Holy Spirit in his divine guidance.

We are convinced that through a more open system with a greater measure of flexibility we will be able to improve our method of calling.



In such a system the churches would be able to follow their own methods in gathering information about ministers. It would be considered normal for vacant churches to solicit applications from ministers (as some of our churches are doing at present). Ministers would be able to indicate their interest in obtaining a call through correspondence, personal contacts, or through a central committee without being stigmatized. This would be especially helpful in situations where there may be a strained relationship between pastor and congregation, which at present usually must be solved by severance of ties through the action of classis. Only too often this results in the pastor losing his ministerial office since no other church is willing to call him. These situations could be prevented by making it a normal and accepted practice for ministers to indicate their desire for a call. In our complex society it is very possible that a minister who does not fit in a particular kind of church might perform very effectively in a different situation.

Very important to the improvement of our present method is the establishment of a synodically appointed committee which would have all necessary information about vacant churches and about ministers who might be considered for a call. It is significant that over 70% of the ministers and over 80% of the consistories indicated through the questionnaire that they are in favor of such a committee. In keeping with our Reformed church policy such a committee would have to have a clearly defined mandate, which would limit its functions so that it could serve only in advisory capacity, that it must refrain from giving unsolicited advice, and that it would have no authority over either churches or ministers. Both ministers and churches should be encouraged by synod to avail themselves of the services of this committee on a voluntary basis.

This committee should prepare and distribute questionnaires for churches and ministers to obtain all necessary information. This method is being followed by other denominations with the Presbyterian form of church government and the service rendered appears to be very valuable. For the sake of economy and efficiency, this committee should be small.

We suggest that synod appoint a "Ministerial Information Service" consisting of six persons, including both ministers and laymen. This committee should have available to it the facilities of the office of the Stated Clerk, and should serve the churches and ministers in the matter of calling. The establishment and the description of the task of this committee by the synod should not be construed as the final form and mandate of the committee.

Several years may be needed in order to test methods of operation to make this service most effective for the churches.

It is in light of these considerations that your committee submits the following recommendations.

## VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. That synod establish a **MINISTERIAL INFORMATION SERVICE**, a committee consisting of six members, including both ministers and laymen, which has available to it the facilities of the office of the Stated Clerk, and mandate this committee to provide information to the

churches concerning ministers available for a call, serving both ministers and vacant churches in the matter of calling.

*Grounds:*

1. A large majority of the consistories have indicated their desire for such a service to be provided.

2. This method is being used effectively in other denominations similar to ours in church policy.

3. Such a service can be very helpful in assisting both churches and ministers in making meaningful contacts with each other when vacancies occur and ministers desire a change of pastorate.

4. Through this service, boards and committees can be alerted to men who desire specialized ministries.

B. That synod declare it a proper practice for ministers to indicate their desire for a call in general or for a call to a specific church.

*Grounds:*

1. This practice is consistent with the work of the Holy Spirit in the process of calling, in that it recognizes both the divine and human factors involved in the process of calling.

2. This method is followed with profit in several related churches which follow Reformed Church Policy.

3. The flexibility which is desirable within our system would be increased.

C. That synod declare that it is acceptable procedure for vacant churches to advertise for available ministers.

*Grounds:*

1. While not traditional in our churches, this practice is already being followed by certain consistories.

2. Adoption of the MINISTERIAL INFORMATION SERVICE concept suggests the appropriateness of this procedure as a method whereby greater openness and flexibility can be provided within our system.

D. That synod instruct the Board of Publications to publish only the acceptances of calls in the church papers.

*Grounds:*

1. The publication of calls and or declines serves no real purpose in our system of calling.

2. The present practice of publishing calls and declines encourages churches to select the names of those who are currently popular, rather than the names which are the result of adequate consideration by the local consistory.

E. That synod grant the privilege of the floor to the chairman and the secretary of the committee when this report is being considered.

Respectfully submitted,

Louis J. Dykstra, Chairman  
Anthony De Jager, Secretary  
Alan D. Pauw  
Carl VanderBrug  
William Van Peurseem

**REPORT 49****CLASSICAL EXAMINATION REVISION REQUEST**

DEAR BROTHERS:

**I. INTRODUCTION**

In 1970 Classis British Columbia overtured synod to re-emphasize the purpose and nature of the classical examination, and to revise the examination schedule accordingly. (Acts of Synod 1970, Overture 14, p. 534-536). Synod decided to refer this overture to a synodical study committee (Acts 1970, p. 60 and 134).

The following year Classis Hudson approached synod with the request to give consideration to a proposal for some alterations in the examination of ministerial candidates by classis prior to admission to the ministry of the Christian Reformed Church (Acts 1971, p. 626-629). This overture was also referred by synod to the study committee (Acts 1971, p. 125). Our committee considered it as its mandate to demonstrate the importance of the classical examination, to come to synod with certain recommendations which put due emphasis on the purpose and nature of the examination, and to devise an improved examination schedule.

Feeling that it would be beneficial to hear the opinions of synodical examiners and young ministers in this matter, we solicited reactions from a number of examiners as well as from several who have recently submitted to the classical examination. The answers we received were very valuable and helpful in reaching our conclusions and recommendations.

**II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

A study of the history of classical examinations of candidates for the sacred ministry in the Christian Reformed Church reveals an abundance of material. Reports, recommendation and decisions on the matter are found in the Acts of Synod 1920, 1939, 1946, 1947, 1957, 1959, 1960, 1961, 1968, 1970 and 1971. For our purpose it is neither necessary nor practical to enter into this in a detailed manner.

It does show that the Christian Reformed Church has given much attention to the importance, the nature and the best method of this examination. There has been little disagreement on the nature of the examination for ordination. It has also frequently been pointed out that the examining body is the consistory assisted by the classis.

Consistory and classis must earnestly and prayerfully decide whether the candidate shall be admitted to the ministry (cf. Acts of Synod 1939, suppl. XV, p. 250). The Synod of 1961, which adopted the present regulations for the examination of candidates, decided to emphasize the importance of the examination for ordination by the classis in which the calling church is located after a candidate has accepted a call. It

pointed out that this examination is an integral part of the lawful calling as outlined in article 4 of the Church Order (Acts 1961, art. 83, p. 127).

The Acts of Synod 1946 state on p. 222: "These examinations are to be ecclesiastical in character rather than academic, and should always be conducted with a view to the duties of the ministry."

A report in 1939 points out that the classical examination is of a decisive nature. The examining body is the calling consistory assisted by the classis. The synodical and classical examinations should differ both in approach and content. The classis is to determine whether the candidate also has the ability to apply his knowledge to the ministerial office. (Art. 91, p. 250-252.)

In a translation of the Acts of Synod of 1920—art. 36, we read: "It is imperative that the classis, before it approves the ordination of a candidate, be assured of two things which did not become apparent at the time of the school examination, and only partially so when the curatorium granted preaching license and candidacy for the ministry, namely whether the candidate is qualified practically as well as intellectually to serve in the ministry" (Cf Acts of Synod 1961, p. 129). All this does not imply that the method of classical examination does not need improvement. The very fact that so many synods have made changes in subjects and methods points in the opposite direction. In all the many decisions we find mostly remarks on the method of conducting the examination and no more. Besides, the lists of assigned subjects for the examination vary from time to time without any definite reasons.

The many assigned subjects tend to make the examination last too long. It also tends to become either too academic or too much like a glorified confession-class. Often it lacks relevance. This calls for improvement, re-arrangement and re-adjustment.

### III. OBSERVATIONS

Overture 14, Synod of 1970, seeks a revision of the examination schedule, and requests synod to re-emphasize the purpose and nature of the classical examination. Your committee is in complete agreement with the intent of this overture, since we are convinced that the examination requires revisions which will make its purpose and nature more clearcut as a part of the total program leading to ordination. We agree more closely with the observations contained in Overture 10, Synod of 1971, however, since this overture addresses itself to the heart of the problem, and defines the limitations and defects of our present method. We submit the following observations for the consideration of the synod:

1. The classical examination, as presently constituted, is too long. This observation was made by a large number of the Synodical Examiners who answered a questionnaire sent out by our committee. It is rather commonly agreed that the ability and character of the candidate becomes apparent within the first half hour of the examination. The many hours now spent by classis could more profitably be spent on other matters which need the attention of this body. A lengthy examination is not a guarantee of a thorough evaluation of the candidate's fitness.

2. The classical examination places an undue emphasis upon academic knowledge. That the candidate must be qualified academically is self-evident, but the details which are now asked in the examination are largely repetitious of that which has been required of him in previous examinations, and they tend to obscure that which is the real purpose of the examination at this point. Classis ought to be concerned with the candidate's biblical-theological judgment, competence and soundness, as well as his relationship to God, his commitment to the ministry, his understanding of the meaning and relevance of the ministry for our times and his loyalty to the church.

The candidate has been under careful scrutiny for several years by the Board of Trustees, the faculty of Calvin Seminary, and the churches in which he has ministered during his two years of preaching as well as his summer assignments. As noted in the overture of Classis Hudson, he has been through many mills, and therefore the present style of examination is unnecessary.

3. It is an accepted custom for the candidate to move his family into the parsonage shortly after he has accepted a call, often a month before the classis convenes which will judge his fitness for the gospel ministry. From a practical point of view this method is advantageous for the candidate, but it may, and often does, create a real problem for the members of classis. To reject a candidate who has already been serving the church which called him for some time, and who is already established in the mind of the members of the congregation as well as in his own mind, as the pastor of that church, is extremely difficult, in fact, almost impossible. This is one of the major reasons why members of the classis are inclined to consider the whole classical examination as a mere formality. Your committee feels that it would be far better if synod would recommend to the churches that a candidate should not serve the church to which he has been called, or move into its parsonage, until after the classis has had the opportunity to render its judgment, and ordination is permitted to take place.

4. It should be made perfectly clear to the candidate, as well as to the churches, that the call which has been issued to him is a provisional one. At present the call letter which is used is the same one which is used for one who is already ordained. While it may be understood that this call does not really become effective until after the candidate has successfully sustained the examination by classis, this ought to be stipulated in the Letter of Call.

5. The examination by classis is conducted on behalf of the church which has called the candidate. In the early history of the Reformed churches this examination was actually conducted by the local consistory with the aid of neighboring churches. When classis has decided that the local congregation may proceed to his ordination, the consistory may then announce the time of the ordination to the congregation. The present custom of having the date for ordination publicly announced, often set so close to the meeting of classis that no public announcement to the church could possibly be made between the meeting of classis and the actual ordination, severely prejudices the outcome of the ex-

amination, and makes it almost superfluous. Consistory, as the body primarily involved in the ordination, should have the opportunity after the meeting of classis to confirm the provisional call which had been extended to the candidate, and then should announce to the congregation at a worship service that ordination will take place at a future date.

6. In line with the fact that the local church is primarily involved in the matter of ordination, we also feel that it is in this church that the sermon of the candidate should be preached. The present method of having the candidate preach a fragment of a sermon under circumstances and conditions which in no way compares to worship hardly forms a basis on which to judge competence in this very important area. Classis should have representatives present at this service, and should also have copies of the sermon available to all members of its body.

7. It is the judgment of our committee that the classical examination should cover three areas:

a. The ability of the candidate to present an acceptable sermon, and conduct a worship service in an edifying manner.

b. An inquiry into the candidate's relationship to God, his commitment to the ministry, his understanding of the meaning and relevance of the ministry of our times, and his loyalty to the church.

c. An examination of the candidate's biblical and theological judgment, competence and soundness.

To cover these areas, four examiners would be needed. Two men would function as sermon critics, and two men would conduct the actual examination on behalf of classis. This method would be highly advantageous to classis, in that the men most qualified to examine in these fields could be used, rather than using as many as fourteen different examiners under the present method. Classis ought also to consider using the same examiners on a regular basis rather than rotating these assignments as is usually done today. Certain men have particular gifts in this field which could then be used to the greatest advantage to make the examination as fair and meaningful as possible.

8. The method of "polling the churches," as is presently done in many classes, should be discontinued in favor of open questioning after each section of the examination, so that all are satisfied that each section of the examination has been successfully sustained before proceeding to the next section. Often questions arise concerning a certain tenet of the candidate after the delegates from a church have had the opportunity to make inquiry, and their opportunity to question him further is lost.

Our committee judges that the examination could be conducted in about a two hour period which would enable the churches to vote intelligently on the ability of the candidate, and would better serve the interests of classis than the method as presently followed. We therefore recommend that synod adopt the schedule of classical examination for students as presented in the following section of our report.

## IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. that synod decide that the Letter of Call to a candidate must indicate the conditional nature of this call.

*Grounds:*

a. The calling church cannot issue an unconditional call to a candidate before the classical examination has been sustained.

b. This conditional character of the Call Letter underscores the decisive nature of the classical examination.

2. that synod recommend that no candidate move into the parsonage of the calling church before he has sustained the classical examination.

*Ground:* This practice tends to prejudice the outcome of the examination.

3. that synod decide that the date of ordination should be officially announced only after the candidate has passed the examination.

*Ground:* Announcing the date of ordination before the classical examination tends to prejudice the outcome of this examination.

4. that synod decide that the candidate should preach his trial sermon in an official worship service on the Sunday preceding the meeting of classis, in the presence of classical representatives, and preferably in the church which has called him.

*Grounds:*

a. The sermon is such an important part of the examination that it warrants the delivery in a regular worship service.

b. It is impossible for anyone to really preach and proclaim the Word of God in a deliberative meeting such as classis.

5. that synod decide that a copy of the candidate's sermon be sent to the synodical examiners and to all delegates to classis.

*Ground:* This will be conducive to a thorough examination of the contents of the sermon by all who are called to pass judgment at classis.

6. that synod decide that four classical delegates should be appointed as the official examiners, two of whom to function as sermon critics and to be present at the worship service in which the trial sermon is being preached, and two of whom to conduct the actual examination at the time classis meets.

*Grounds:*

a. A better rapport with the candidate will be established with a smaller number of examiners.

b. The small number of examiners enables the classis to select the most qualified men for this task.

7. that synod adopt the following schedule of classical examination:

A) INTRODUCTION: Introduction of the candidate by the classical examiner.

B) EXAMINATION: 1) a) Inquiry into the candidate's relationship to God and his commitment to the ministry, his understanding of the meaning and relevance of the ministry for our times, and his loyalty to the church (no time limit).

b) Opportunity for synodical examiners and delegates to ask questions, followed by a motion to continue the examination.

2) a) Evaluation in the presence of the candidate of the written sermon and of his manner of conducting a worship service.

b) Opportunity for questions with respect to the sermon and its delivery, followed by a motion to continue the examination with the concurrence of the synodical examiners.

3) a) Examination of the candidate's biblical and theological judgment, competence and soundness for a period of 30-45 minutes.

b) Opportunity for supplementary questions without any time limit.

C) DECISION: 1) a) Motion concerning the admission of the candidate to the ministry, and consideration of it.

b) The written advice of the synodical examiners.

c) Prayer for the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

d) Balloting on the motion.

*Grounds:*

a. This schedule brings out the real character of the classical examination emphasizing the candidate's personal commitment, his biblical and theological judgment and soundness, and his suitability for the ministry.

b. This proposed type of examination is flexible and requires only as much time as is necessary for a proper evaluation.

Your committee respectfully requests that the chairman and the secretary of the committee be granted the privilege of the floor when this report is being considered by synod.

Respectfully submitted,

Louis J. Dykstra, Chairman  
Anthony De Jager, Secretary  
Alan D. Pauw  
Carl VanderBrug  
William Van Peurseem



# OVERTURES

## Overture 1 — Revision of Church Visiting Guide

Classis Hamilton overtures synod to change Question 18 of the Guide for Conducting Church Visiting (under "Questions Regarding the Whole Consistory") to read as follows: "Does the consistory show concern regarding the doctrine and conduct of those seeking admission into the church from denominations other than the Christian Reformed Church or its sister churches."

*Grounds:*

1. The way the question reads now leads to misunderstanding and is open to ambiguous interpretation.
2. The new reading would be in line with Art. 59 of the Church Order.

Humbly submitted,  
 John Kerssies  
 Alt. Stated Clerk  
 of Classis Hamilton

## Overture 2 — Disapprove Race Committee Action

Classis Holland overtures Synod of 1972 to disapprove the use of synodical quotas by the Synodical Committee on Race Relations to support the lawsuit of the black parents seeking enrollment in the Timothy Christian School in Cicero against the Timothy School Board, especially because of the fact that punitive damages were included in the lawsuit.

*Grounds:*

1. Such action is contrary to the teaching of Scripture in I Corinthians 6:1-8.
2. It is not to the best spiritual interests of all of the churches at large nor to the local situation to pursue such legal action.
3. Such action is contrary to the mandate of synod which requires that the Race Relations Committee provide a "ministry to the church in areas of racial understanding" (Acts of Synod, 1971, Art. 142, I, C, 3, b, — page 114). Their action, as reported in news media in November, 1971, appears to us to create a ministry of disharmony rather than a spirit of harmony and unity.

Walter Hofman, S.C.

## Overture 3 — Amendment of Church Order Article 42a

Classis Chatham overtures synod to change Art. 42a of the Church Order as follows:

The classis shall appoint at least one committee composed of two of the more experienced and competent office-bearers, two ministers, or one minister and one elder, to visit all its churches once a year.

*Grounds:*

1. The more experienced and competent ministers in our classis are overburdened with work.

2. Elders with much experience and competence are available in several classes.

Humbly submitted,

G. J. Heersink, S.C.

(Note: In substance this overture was considered by the Synod of 1971 and defeated. See Acts of Synod, 1971, pages 163, 164, 630, 631. Wm. P. Brink, S.C.)

### Overture 4—Church Help Application Form and Rules

Classis Central California overtures the synod of the Christian Reformed Church to instruct the Church Help Fund, Inc. to remove from its Application Form question 4 to be answered by the classis. Question 4 is, "Is classis willing to assume the repayment of this loan if the church cannot?" Also, Classis Central California requests synod to instruct the Church Help Fund, Inc. to remove from obligation those classes that have answered this question in the affirmative.

*Grounds:*

1. There has been no clear authorization by synod to include this question in the application form. The authorization to do so is drawn from Article XII of the *By-Laws* which state, "Should the committee deem it necessary or desirable, additional security may be required as a condition to the granting of a loan."

2. Classes are often bound to answer this question in the affirmative if a loan is to be received by one of their churches. Requests have been denied because the question was left blank.

3. Many classes are not in a position to give an honest affirmative answer to this question. They may answer it because of the urgent need for a loan by one of their churches.

4. This practice discriminates against small classes with several weak and needy churches that need help from the Church Help Fund, Inc. The responsibility involved should be accepted by the denomination as a whole.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacob Hekman, S.C.

### Overture 5—Amendment of Church Order Article 96

Classis Toronto overtures synod to change Article 96 of the Church Order by substituting the words "AND ANY REVISION THEREOF SHALL BE MADE BY SYNOD" with a new paragraph, reading as follows:

"Any proposed alteration in the Church Order shall first be *provisionally* adopted by a synod, shall then be brought to the attention of the churches for possible reaction, and shall finally be adopted by the next synod."

*Grounds:*

1. The Church Order is of a fundamental nature for the organizational structure of the church, and as such demands this cautious treatment.

2. It is unwarranted that due to certain prevailing sentiments at a given synod, changes are made that have not received full attention of the churches.

3. Since the decision on the final formulation of the revised text has been adopted only after extensive consideration by the churches in the course of several years (1963-1965) it is not consistent to have changes made by merely one synod.

Respectfully submitted,

Classis Toronto

L. W. Van Dellen, S.C.

## Overture 6 — Re Ecclesiastical Control of Calvin College

Classis Pacific Northwest overtures the Synod of 1972 to appoint a study committee to consider the feasibility of:

A. Separating Calvin Seminary from Calvin College

*Grounds:*

1. The present situation of several Christian colleges sponsored primarily by Christian Reformed people, with one college church operated and the others not, demands this study.

2. The Christian Reformed Church should exercise administrative control and provide financial support for Calvin Seminary.

B. A modified administrative structure and method of financial support for Calvin College, Dordt College, Trinity Christian College, and the Institute for the Advancement of Christian Studies at Toronto. The committee shall especially consider these two matters:

1. A church-society liaison structure in which the church will, without holding administrative control, deliberately and meaningfully influence the religious character of the institution and promote a spiritual atmosphere at each institution.

*Grounds:*

a. This type of structure could become effective by synodical and regional representatives on the society boards who are responsible to the church and vice versa.

b. This structure would keep the church faithful to its qualifying declarations as expressed by Synod of 1957. (Acts, Art. 99, p. 49.)

c. This structure would properly implement the synodical affirmation stated on pages 45 and 46 of the 1957 Acts of Synod.

d. This structure would decrease the ecclesiastical control of Calvin College and increase the ecclesiastical influence upon the other colleges.

e. This structure would help the church to exercise its biblical responsibility for the spiritual nurture of the youth in the realm of higher education and would demonstrate the concern of the church for the broader aspects of the kingdom. (Acts of Synod, 1957, pages 45, 46.)

2. A denominational fund supported by quota and administered through our denominational offices, pro-rated to each college conforming to the structure above according to the number of Christian Reformed students attending.

*Grounds:*

a. This would conform with the qualifying declarations of Synod 1957. (Acts, Art. 99, p. 49.)

b. This would improve the implementation of the basic intent of the variable quota system established by Synod of 1962. (Acts, Art. 97, p. 54.)

c. This would take away the criticism which arises from a current misunderstanding of the variable quota system and would assure equity in the distribution of denominational funds.

d. This would provide for societal and regional response to the financial needs, since less than 25 per cent of the operational costs are met by quotas.

C. Classis Pacific Northwest requests synod that the study committee on this matter report to the Synod of 1973.

*Grounds:*

1. This study deals only with the question of feasibility; not with the implementation of a detailed plan.

2. This study is preliminary and does not require the two years of time normally granted to study committees.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jack Stulp, S.C.

## Overture 7 — "The New Hermeneutic"

Classis Pacific Northwest respectfully presents the following overture for the consideration and adoption of synod:

### *Background:*

This overture arises out of the report on the Nature and Extent of Biblical Authority. The report discusses methods of Bible interpretation, in which our main concern is "the new hermeneutic." The new hermeneutic is a departure from the former conception of the science of biblical interpretation in that it has a new understanding of language, claiming that all language involves interpretation already. This means that not only does the language of the Bible need interpretation, but the language in which the Bible has come to us is itself already an initial interpretation of the subject. (Cf. Robinson and Cobb, "The New Hermeneutic" in *New Frontiers in Theology, II*, New York, Harper and Row, 1964). So the task of the new hermeneutic is to pass judgment on the authority of what is reported and on the rightness of the views expressed. This means the authority is no longer in the text of Scripture, but in the interpreter himself. Since Kuitert holds this view, it is consistent for him to say, for example: "Genesis 1 is a story borrowed from the Babylonian myths. God's creation never began 'good' from the beginning. Genesis 3 is probably not a record of the facts." (Reported in *Nederlands Dagblad*). With this explanatory background, we overture the synod as follows:

I. That in the current discussion concerning the nature and extent of biblical authority, synod judge that the position adopted by the Christian Reformed Church in 1961 precludes the validity of "the new hermeneutic."

### *Grounds:*

1. Previously, in 1959, synod declared, "It is inconsonant with the creeds to declare or suggest that there is an area of Scripture in which it is allowable to posit the possibility of actual historical inaccuracies. (Cf. Article V, *Belgic Confession*, believing without doubt all things contained therein)." (Acts, 1959, p. 68.)

2. The position taken by the Christian Reformed Church in 1959 and 1961 was taken in analogous circumstances and applies today. The same types of distinctions were in the foreground then, namely the message and intent or purpose of Scripture was contrasted with those things said to be on the "periphery" of that message. Today we read of "redemptive events" and these are contrasted with the events which do not fit under that description. Into this contrast is introduced the matter of historical reliability. Though the committee asserts in its preface to the report that these distinctions are not intended, they are nevertheless the products of the new hermeneutic consistently used. (See the statement by Prof. Koole in the *Gereformeerde Weekblad*, "The Bible is an ancient Oriental description of history which one would not expect to be absolutely correct." Consider the implications: "One should not expect . . .")

3. The pronouncements of the proponents of the new hermeneutic make it clear that to introduce the distinctions regarding historical events which are "redemptive" and those historical events which are not redemptive, lead to a *de facto* negation of Scripture's confessed reliability. (One example: "No historical Adam and Eve, no paradise-situation as historical beginning, death functioning in the midst of life." This quotation is from Dr. H. Kuitert, as cited in Overture 5 in *Agenda and Acts* of 1969, and is but part of the great amount of documentary evidence which can be used to show that the historical reliability of Scripture is denied by these men.)

4. Synod in 1961 received its study committee Report on Infallibility and Inspiration in the Light of Scripture and the Creeds, and commended it to the churches, including the section that said that no part of Scripture could be considered as having "independent revelational significance." (Acts, 1961, p. 78.)

5. Synod in 1959 adopted the Reformed Ecumenical Synod Conclusions regarding inspiration, including the conclusion that “. . . Scripture in its whole extent and in all its parts is the infallible and inerrant Word of God.”

6. The admitted crisis in the church regarding biblical authority makes a clear and unambiguous statement necessary.

II. That synod counsel the member churches of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod to give full consideration to making the judgment expressed in I. above their own for the reasons given.

*Ground:* Such mutual counsel given in brotherly concern for each other is part of the duty of member churches for each other.

Decision of the classis, January 12, 1972.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jack Stulp, S.C.

### Overture 8—Change Classis Florida in Calvin Area Quota Plan

Classis Florida overtures Synod of 1972 to reexamine the place of Classis Florida in the area quota plan for Calvin College and Seminary with a view to making those adjustments which will place Classis Florida in a more equitable position in the area quota plan according to the stipulations adopted by synod in 1962. This overture is not motivated by any unwillingness to pay quota for Calvin College and Seminary, but rather by a desire to achieve equity under the terms of the plan.

*Grounds:*

1. At present Classis Florida is located in “Area No. 5” with Classes Hackensack and Hudson. In 1972 the churches in these classes are paying \$39.75 per family, which is the very top figure in the area quota plan, equal to the quota paid by the churches of Classes Grand Rapids East, Grand Rapids South, Grand Rapids North (West) and Grandville.

2. If Classis Florida is taken by itself with 17 students listed as enrolled from the 437 families of the classis (according to the figures of February 1971), its quota for 1972 under the terms of synod’s 35%-65% formula would be \$9.61 (35%), plus \$15.51 (65%) for a total of \$25.12 per family.

3. It is apparent that the high quota for the Florida churches is due to the fact that Classis Florida is bracketed with Classes Hackensack and Hudson under “Area No. 5.” Classis questions the validity of this arrangement, arrived at presumably for the historical reason that Classis Florida came out of Classis Hackensack (in 1965). This historical reason is hardly adequate to maintain an obviously inequitable arrangement. And Florida’s geographical location hardly fits in with a *regional* concept of “Area No. 5.”

4. If we compute the relationship of the number of students enrolled from certain classes to the number of families in these classes in terms of percentages, it seems obvious that Classis Florida is much more properly placed in Area No. 6 than in Area No. 5. Using the figures that were used in determining the 1972 quota, we get the following percentages in the cases of the classes concerned:

Classis Hackensack (77 out of 1159) .....	6.6%
Classis Hudson (175 out of 1953) .....	9.0%
Classis Florida (17 out of 437) .....	3.8%
Classis Columbia (19 out of 736) .....	2.5%
Classis California (102 out of 2359) .....	4.3%
Classis Central California (47 out of 1056) .....	4.4%
Classis Pacific (71 out of 1662) .....	4.3%
Classis Rocky Mountain (70 out of 1483) .....	4.7%

Classis Florida,  
Richard Wezman, S.C.

### Overture 9—Notification Rules for Ministerial Discipline

Classis Grandville requests synod to establish the following guidelines for consistories and classes when it becomes necessary to inform the churches of the denomination concerning the suspension, the deposition, or the resignation of ministers:

1. In the case of the suspension of a minister by a consistory with the concurring advice of a neighboring consistory, the consistory shall notify the stated clerk of its classis. The stated clerk shall then notify the stated clerks of all other classes concerning the action. Each stated clerk then shall notify each consistory within the classis.

2. In the case of the deposition of a minister by a classis with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies, the stated clerk of that classis shall notify the stated clerks of all the other classes concerning the action, and each in turn shall notify each consistory within the classis.

3. In the case of the resignation of a minister, the stated clerk of the classis in which the resignation has taken place shall place an appropriate announcement in *The Banner and Wachter*.

*Grounds:*

a. At present there are no guidelines that have been established.

b. The varied practices create a measure of confusion. 1) In some cases the stated clerk of a classis informs all other stated clerks of classes, who in turn notify the consistories concerning suspension, or deposition or resignation of a minister. 2) In other cases no such notification is made to the churches. 3) In a few cases an announcement concerning the deposition or the resignation of a minister is published on the announcement page in the official church papers.

c. All consistories should be informed concerning the suspension of a minister in order to prevent the nomination or calling of such a minister during the period of suspension and to prevent a suspended minister from being engaged in the duties of his office.

d. The publication of the deposition and reasons for such deposition of a minister in our church papers in some cases and not in others appears inequitable and such publication does not serve to honor Christ, promote the church or edify the people of God.

e. Since the resignation of a minister is not disciplinary, an announcement in our church papers is appropriate.

Allen J. Bultman, S.C.

### Overture 10—Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship

Classis Lake Erie overtures synod to place the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship of the U.S.A. and the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship of Canada on the list of Causes Recommended for Financial Support.

*Grounds:*

1. The Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship is a campus ministry that is committed to the historic Christian faith and thus is an organization that warrants the support of the denomination.

2. The increasingly important role of colleges and universities today and the impact they make on future leaders from all the world, places upon us a heavy responsibility to become concretely involved with an evangelical campus ministry such as carried on by Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship.

3. Past experience indicates the benefit many of our Christian Reformed students have received from association with Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship. With an increasing number of our Christian Reformed students enrolling in state colleges and universities, there is an even greater potential for this in the future. Financial

support of Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship by our churches would not only promote this work which has this potential benefit, but indicates to these students that there is a Christian organization at state colleges and universities, which warrants their participation.

Respectfully,  
Sidney Draayer, S.C.

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### Overture 11 — Limitation of Quota Increase

Classis Pella overtures synod to limit quota increase so as to reflect the cost of living increase.

*Grounds:*

1. The increase in quotas over the past several years have far exceeded the cost of living increase, placing a burden on the churches.
2. The rapidly increasing quotas make it more difficult to support other non-quota kingdom causes.

Sincerely,  
Gordon T. Stuit, S.C.

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### Overture 12 — Supervision of the Lord's Supper

Classis Pella overtures synod to make a declaration of our church's position concerning the method of supervision of the Lord's Supper with respect to participation by guests.

*Grounds:*

1. There is no clear official statement in our present Church Order or ecclesiastical documents.
2. The present lack of uniformity in the practice of the Lord's Supper among our churches.
3. The exigencies provided by an expanding home mission program which brings a more heterogeneous group of people with varied backgrounds into our churches.

Sincerely,  
Gordon T. Stuit, S.C.

(Note: Classis Pella has appended reports made to the classis for the information of synod. William P. Brink, Stated Clerk.)

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### Overture 13 — Change Usage of Church Order Article 41

Classis California South overtures Synod of 1972 to add the following questions on the classical credentials under questions under Article 41, Church Order —

“Does the consistory diligently stimulate and sponsor programs of evangelism in its community?” (The aforesaid question is couched in language taken from Articles 73 and 74 of the Church Order.)

*Grounds:*

1. In order to promote a more intense, positive attitude towards community evangelism thus helping our churches to more fully fulfill the great commission of Jesus Christ.
2. Church visitors meet only once a year in order to help supervise sister churches in this matter whereas classis meets at least three times a year. Therefore, this question would more frequently keep this matter in the forefront.
3. There is specific value in including this question on the classical credentials since “The attention of the churches is directed to the fact that these questions

should never be answered in a perfunctory manner but should serve as a basis for further examination."

4. "Some churches and consistories are apt to be lukewarm and unfaithful. Consequently this supervisory question" must be asked. (Quotations above from Monsma, *The New Revised Church Order Commentary*, page 171.)

Respectfully yours,

Henry Radius, S.C.

### Overture 14 — Women at Congregational Meetings

Classis Hudson overtures the Synod of 1972 to alter the position taken by the Synod of 1957 (Acts of Synod, 1957, Art. 155, p. 90) with reference to the right of women to participate in congregational meetings, by declaring that it is the right, and therefore the calling, of women members, as full members of Christ and his church and sharers in the office of believers, to participate in and vote at congregational meetings on a level of equality with men, and that this is not subject to the judgment of individual consistories.

#### *Grounds:*

A. This right was clearly reflected in the biblical study presented to the Synod of 1957. As was indicated by the study committee, and nowhere controverted: "The Word of God teaches very clearly the equality of man and woman as image-bearers of God (Genesis 1:28). The New Testament teaches very plainly the spiritual equality of man and woman in the New Testament church (cf. Gal. 3:28; I Peter 3:7). It is significant that in fulfillment of Joel's prophecy, women shared in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. According to I John 2:20, all believers share in the 'anointing from the Holy One,' and thus participate in the office of believers." (Acts 1957, Supplement 19, p. 312.)

B. The right of women to so participate was acknowledged by the conclusions of the study committee of 1957, which were apparently accepted by the Synod of 1957. The relevant conclusions are these:

"1. The Word of God teaches the spiritual equality of man and woman as image-bearers of God and as heirs of the grace of life and as participants in the office of believers . . . .

"4. In the congregational meeting the government of the church rests with the consistory. Participation in such meetings by the membership of the church is by virtue of the office of believers . . . .

"6. Church politically speaking, there is no essential difference between the right of approbation, which we do already exercise, and participation in congregational meetings with the right to vote" (Ibid, pp. 313, 314).

C. The present position of the church, that "women *may* participate in congregational meetings with the right to vote subject to the rules that govern the participation of men," with the proviso that "*whether and when* the women members of any church *shall be invited* to participate in the activities of its congregational meetings is left to the judgment of each consistory" (Acts, 1957, p. 90; italics added), is subject to several serious strictures:

1. It is an essential denial of the right of women to participate in congregational meetings, and makes of their participation a controlled privilege which may or may not be extended by the consistory of a given church.

2. It is contrary to the clear teaching of Scripture that women are equal with men as image-bearers of God (Gen. 1:28), share fully as one with them in the life of Christ (Gal. 3:28), are "joint-heirs of the grace of life" (I Peter 3:7), and share in the anointing "from the Holy One" and therefore in the office of believers (I John 2:20).



3. *Permissive participation* is contradictory to the concept of the office of *believers*. One who holds the office of believer has both a *right*, which may not be denied or withheld, and a *duty*, which a responsible member of Christ and his church must be called upon and exhorted to exercise.

4. The delimitation of the right of women to participate in congregational meetings is not only unjust to those who are full members of Christ and his church and sharers in the office of believers, but also deprives the church of the fullness of the gifts divided by the Spirit in the body of Christ (I Cor. 12, cf. Rom. 12: 3-8). It further enfeebles, indeed contradicts, the exhortation of the consistory to all members in full communion to exercise themselves in congregational meetings as their office requires; for if any of those who share equality of office and calling *only may* discharge the duties of the congregational meeting, how can the consistory say that any full members *should* so exercise themselves?

Respectfully submitted,  
R. Opperwall, S.C.

### Overture 15—Re SCORR and Lawsuit

Classis Chicago North presents the following overture to synod pertaining to the Synodical Committee on Race Relations and Law-suit against the Timothy Christian School Board, etc.

#### A. History:

The Synod of 1970 authorized the Race Commission "to assist parents in taking whatever legal action is necessary to obtain *protection of law* (italics ours) as may be necessitated by any enrollment of black covenant children in the Timothy Christian School in Cicero." (Cf. Acts 1970, Art. 119, 4, p. 65.) Further, the Synod of 1971 admonished "Classis Chicago North with respect to its failure to address the Cicero civic and social community, reminding it of its obligation to obey the law of the land, specifically by not obstructing compliance with the law, or allowing others to obstruct compliance with the law." (Cf. Acts 1971, 103, 3, p. 88.) Furthermore, the Synod of 1971 instructed the Committee on Race Relations to "Assist in obtaining legal and economic aid where specific problems require." (Acts 1971, Art. 142, 3, b, 4, p. 114.)

The Committee on Race Relations misinterpreted this synodical instruction. Following the meeting of synod, representatives of the Chicago West Side Christian School Association began discussions with the Timothy Christian School Board. Attorney Case Hoogendoorn stated that the group of parents he represented was contemplating legal action against the Timothy Christian School Board and Society. In response to an inquiry of the board as to the source of finance for such legal action Attorney Hoogendoorn stated that some expenses were to be underwritten by the Race Relations Committee of the denomination.

Disbelieving that the Race Relations Committee would underwrite such legal action, other than perhaps that action necessary to obtain the full "protection of the law" as synod seemingly warranted, the consistory of the Elmhurst Christian Reformed Church initiated correspondence with the Race Relations Committee. A reply, dated November 1, 1971, under signature of Mr. Karl Westerhof states: "In response to these deliverances (of synod), the Committee on Race Relations responded affirmatively to the request for assistance which came from the Chicago West Side Christian School Association, and we have so informed the association's legal counsel." (Cf. File—Elmhurst Chr. Ref. Church, Consistory, 1971.)

#### B. Observations:

1. It is observable from the decisions of both the Synods of 1970 and 1971 that the synod did authorize the Race Relations Committee to assist the black and

white parents involved in the controversy to obtain the full "protection of the law." What, however, did the synod authorize? Did the broadest assembly of the denomination envision that one segment of the church of Jesus Christ would take another segment of the same church of Jesus Christ to court? As it has now turned out, did the synod actually authorize the Race Relations Committee to take sides and give assistance ONLY to the black parents and their children, and leave the white children and their concerned parents without the same protection? Or is it, out of fairness to all, intending to assume financial responsibility for the attorney(s) hired by the Timothy Christian School Board to protect also the interests of the innocent children who are now students in the Cicero Elementary School? That would most certainly appear to be synod's intention when it specifically spoke of giving assistance to "*parents, without reference to their color, whether black or white.*" (Cf. Acts 1970, Art. 119, 4, p. 65.) (Italic ours)

2. What exactly did the Synod of 1970 mean when it spoke of securing the "protection of law"? Calling on the Cicero police department? the president of Cicero? the Governor of Illinois? the Federal Marshall who was used to serve the summons on the Timothy Christian School Board members at their homes on Sunday, November 7, 1971? Requesting the governor of the state to mobilize, if necessary, the National Guard as in Selma, Alabama, or Little Rock, Arkansas? Most noteworthy, furthermore, is that the Synod of 1971 urged Classis Chicago North to "recommend to the Timothy Christian School Board that every legal avenue be explored and applied for the protection of the Cicero School and its members in connection with the enrollment of black covenant children in the Cicero School." (Cf. Acts 1971, Art. 105, 8, p. 89.) Synod, therefore, encouraged the Timothy Christian School Board to initiate any legal action that might be necessary in order to gain the "protection of law," but it did *not* encourage the Chicago West Side Christian School Association to take such legal action as they have already taken in the civil court.

3. A case could be made that the one provision of the law suit filed in the U.S. District Court of Chicago on October 27, 1971, seeking "preliminary and permanent injunctions barring the school board from denying the children admission to the school on the basis of their race" *might* fall within the legal action envisioned by synods.

However, the Christian Reformed Synod certainly neither envisioned nor could possibly condone a suit which seeks a total of \$122,000 in "actual and punitive damages" from the Timothy Christian School Board, society, and individual school board members, when such action is a violation of Scripture!

4. Regrettably, the law-suit joins as co-defendant the Timothy Christian School Board, society and individual board members and the concerned citizens of Berwyn and Cicero. No distinction is made in the law-suit between our Christian Reformed community and others in the Cicero community, regarding attitudes toward black people. While it is almost universally and unanimously agreed that racist elements are clearly present in Cicero itself, Classis Chicago North has consistently judged that the members of the Timothy Christian School Board are not racists, nor are they racist in their adoption of a policy that permits the enrollment of both black and white children in the Timothy system from kindergarten through high school graduation. The Advisory Committee No. 7, Church Order III concurred with the classical judgment in its report to the Synod of 1971 by stating, "We are also pleased to note in response 4.C (1 and 2) that the junior high school was integrated and that the Timothy Christian School Board is cooperating with the negotiating committee of classis." (Cf. Acts 1971, Art. 91, E, 1.b) p. 82.)

5. Additionally, the "actual and punitive damage" discrimination suit was filed at a time when progress was being made by the Negotiating Committee of Classis Chicago North. At its session of November 10, 1970, classis appointed a "committee for the purpose of negotiation. The charge of this committee will be to

call together representatives of the Lawndale Church and Garfield Chapel and representatives of the Timothy Christian School Board to discuss the problems confronting each in regard to the education of black children. The goal of this committee is to help resolve the differences of the parties involved and develop a workable solution to the problems." (Minutes of Classis Chicago North, Nov. 10, '70, Art. 67.) Negative reactions to the appointment of the Negotiating Committee were publicly expressed in some of the denominational church papers that this was "just one more stalling tactic on the part of the classis." Significantly and gratefully the Synod of 1971 not only did *not* concur in this judgment made by some "observers" from a distance, but synod urged the Lawndale Consistory to meet with the Negotiating Committee of classis, and accept its share of the responsibilities necessary to bring this delicate problem to a successful conclusion." (Cf. Acts 1971, Art. 103, 5, p. 88.) As one of its grounds for this action the Synod of 1971 said that "if problems are to be solved, Christian brethren must meet and speak together, in spite of frustrations." (Cf. Acts 1971, Art. 103, 5b, p. 88.)

Obviously, a law-suit which seeks punitive damages does *not* fall under the category of negotiation! Is it conceivable that in the U.S. District Court the parties involved will negotiate as synod urged? Will any court judge serve as the mediator? On the contrary, the filing of the law-suit has not only sharply increased the alienation between black and white throughout the entire Classis Chicago North area but has radically impeded the progress already made through negotiation. If Christians may not act out of fear, as some contend, may they act out of *frustration*?

*C. Scripture's Testimony: I Corinthians 6:1, 4-7.*

"Dare any of you, having a matter against his neighbor, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? . . . . If then ye have to judge things pertaining to this life, do ye set them to judge who are of no account in the church? I say this to move you to shame. What, cannot there be found among you one wise man who shall be able to decide between his brethren, but brother goeth to law with brother, and that before unbelievers? Nay, already it is altogether a defect in you that ye have law-suits one with another. Why not rather take the wrong? why not rather be defrauded?"

*D. References from the Community of Christian Scholars on I Corinthians 6:1, 4-7:*

These references do not serve as judgments on any particular person(s). We cite these to confirm the general teaching of this passage with respect to law-suits:

1. "While Christians ought to endure injuries with patience, they inflicted injury on others, rather than allow themselves to be subjected to any inconveniences.

"We treat our brethren disdainfully when we of our own accord subject them to the decision of unbelievers.\* It is wrong, therefore, to institute of one's own accord a law-suit against brethren before unbelieving (secular)\* judges.

"What Paul, then condemns in the Corinthians is this—that they harassed one another with law-suits. He states the reason of it—that they were not prepared to bear injuries patiently. And, assuredly, as the Lord commands us (Matt. 5:44; Romans 12:21) not to be overcome by evils, but on the contrary to overcome injuries by acts of kindness, it is certain that those who cannot control themselves so as to suffer injuries patiently, commit sin by their impatience. If contention in law-suits among believers is a token of that impatience, it follows that it is faulty.

"Let us therefore bear in mind that Paul does not condemn law-suits on the ground of its being a wrong thing in itself to maintain a good cause by having recourse to a magistrate, but because it is almost invariably accompanied with

corrupt dispositions, as for example, violence, desire of revenge, enmities, obstinancy and the like."<sup>1</sup>

2. "It was indeed not to be expected that man governed by heathen (secular)\* laws and principles of morals, would be fair and as just as those governed by Christian principles; but what Paul complained of was not that the Christians could not get justice at the hands of heathen (secular)\* magistrates, but that they acted unworthily of their dignity as Christians in seeking justice from such a source. Paul himself appealed to Caesar. It was, therefore, no sin in his eyes to seek justice from a heathen (secular)\* judge, when it could not otherwise be obtained. But it was a sin and a disgrace in his estimation for Christians to appeal to heathen (secular)\* magistrates to settle disputes among themselves.

"These law-suits are already, or in themselves, an evil irrespective of their being conducted before heathen (secular)\* judges . . . why, instead of going to law with your brethren, do you not rather submit to injustice and robbery? This is a clear intimation that, under the circumstances in which the Corinthians were placed, it was wrong to go to law, even to protect themselves from injury."<sup>2</sup>

3. "The ground of Paul's warning is the thought that a pagan (secular)\* judge cannot decide in a case between Christians since he is not acquainted with the things of the kingdom of God (2:8).

"They might be well versed in worldly wisdom but in the practice of Christian life they were lagging behind so far that they did not even think of the possibility of finding within their circles a wise man who might handle their judicial disputes. Paul condemns every form of going to court before a pagan (secular)\* judge on the part of brethren. The use of 'brother' two times in vs. 6 points in the same direction, for it emphasizes the intimate connection between arbiter and defendants as over against the great difference between pagans and Christians.

"Paul wants to demonstrate above all that not the external things, such as the seeking of justice in this specific instance, must be thought to be of the highest value, but rather a life according to the law of love, which included the doing of no injustice."<sup>3</sup>

4. "Having a matter against a neighbor, dare any of you to go to law before the unrighteous\* and not before the saints" . . . The implication is that to do any such thing would be to violate the very principles of their life. Their action was a violation of the very genius and value of their life as Christians . . . To take the matter of disputes within the church outside the church and ask the arbitration of heathen (secular)\* tribunals was to violate the very principles of the church's life.

"Is that the case, that you cannot find in that fellowship one able to judge, and arbitrate and adjudicate among you? If so, there is another alternative. Why not rather take wrong? why not rather be defrauded? Why not rather suffer? Why not rather submit? That is their very sense. Why not rather take wrong? Rather than what? Than take the disputes to the heathen (secular)\* tribunals, where disputes cannot be dealt with because they cannot inherit the kingdom of God, the very principle of which is strict, impartial eternal judgment and justice. If you have not got one wise man you had better stay where you are, suffer your wrong, and be defrauded. This is tremendous, Rather suffer injustice than seek for justice before a wrong court."<sup>4</sup>

\**Comment:* We have taken the liberty of including (secular) behind the harsh-judgmental words, e.g., "pagan," "heathen," "unbelieving," etc. It is understood that the world Paul addressed in the day when he wrote his first letter to the Corinthians was largely pagan or heathen. By the grace of God that situation has significantly changed so that these selections from Christian scholars are to be clearly understood as exegetical comments on I Corinthians 6, and *not* as judgments on any present day judge, court or court procedure.

5. "What a bad spectacle to see one Christian brother going to law with another Christian brother before unbelievers!\* Are they unconcerned about the real matters of faith that are involved in their dispute? Is their entire concern only about secular law and justice? Do they care nothing about their hearts? Is the Christian wisdom of their own faithful brethren in the church, which might, indeed, do something for their faith, nothing at all to them? Even when they obtain full justice, is that all they want? Yet even that is not always obtained in secular courts. Jesus did not obtain it from pagan Pilate, nor Paul from the pagan government of Palestine?"<sup>5</sup>

6. "Of course this does not mean that a Christian must never go to law. There may be circumstances when it is necessary. But disputes and divisions among brethren should be settled within the church and not outside it. Here is the extent to which strife goes, the damages it causes when we forget who we are, and parade our disputes in front of the world."<sup>6</sup>

#### E. Overture:

We vigorously protest the use of denominational funds, collected by quota assessment, for the Race Relations Committee in the support of the law suit against the Timothy Christian School Board, the society and individual board members, and overture synod to take these immediate and forthright actions:

1) Admonish the Race Relations Committee for its support of and condoning of the punitive damage law-suit of the Christian Reformed Parents at Garfield and prepared by the "Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under the Law."

2) Synod instruct the Race Relations Committee to immediately cease any and all financial and/or moral support of the legal action against the Timothy Christian School Board, the society and individual board members.

*Ground:* I Corinthians 6:1, 4-7.

#### *Bibliography:*

<sup>1</sup> Calvin, John, *Commentaries—Corinthians, Vol. 1*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1948, pp. 198-9, 201-207.

<sup>2</sup> Hodge, Charles, *Commentary On The First Epistle To Corinthians*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1950, pp. 93-94, 96, 97.

<sup>3</sup> Grosheide, F. W., *The New International Commentary On New Testament—First Letter to Corinthians*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1953, pp. 132-33; 135-139.

<sup>4</sup> Morgan, Campbell, *Corinthians Letters of Paul*, Fleming-Revell Co., Westwood, New Jersey, 1946, pp. 86-90.

<sup>5</sup> Lenski, R. C. H., *Interpretation Of I And II Corinthians*, The Wartburg Press, Columbus, Ohio, 1937, pp. 243.

<sup>6</sup> Redpath, A., *The Royal Route to Heaven*, Studies in First Corinthians, Fleming-Revell Co., Westwood, New Jersey, 1960, p. 67.

Respectfully submitted,  
Classis Chicago North,  
Oliver Breen, S.C.

### Overture 16—Shorten Acts of Synod

Classis Chicago North overtures synod to adopt a rule for synodical procedure that will require the Stated Clerk of synod to *omit* from the Acts of Synod all reports, overtures, protests, and the like, *which have already been printed in the Agenda*.

#### *Grounds:*

1. The duplication of all such printed materials is an unnecessary task, a waste

of time, money and energy. For example, the *Acts of Synod* 1971 required only 165 pages out of a total of 702 pages for the complete "*Acts of Synod*."

2. Only the most highly valuable reports *not* previously printed in the *Agenda* are to be printed in the *Acts of Synod* since this is consistent with the procedure of each classis in publishing its minutes. References and cross references to the *Agenda* will be published in the *Acts of Synod* for consistory members and ministers.

3. Consider the letter of the Stated Clerk of synod, dated August 17, 1971, page 1, which quotes from the *Acts of Synod*, 1971, Art. 58, page 46: "The materials that are printed in the *Agenda* and *Acts of Synod* should meet the demands of intrinsic value and good stewardship in the elimination of needless expense."

Classis Chicago North,  
Oliver Breen, S.C.

### Overture 17 — Synodical Examination of Candidates

Classis Sioux Center overtures synod requesting that the examination of candidates for the ministry in the Christian Reformed Church again become the proper task of synod rather than that of the Board of Trustees of Calvin College and Seminary.

#### *Grounds:*

1. The Board of Trustees of Calvin College and Seminary is not an ecclesiastical body, but rather an executive committee appointed by synod, and therefore its task should be limited to that of informing synod that the prospective candidates have satisfactorily completed their educational requirements and meet all qualifications necessary for consideration to candidacy.

2. Under the present system candidates are recommended on the basis of a 20 minutes interview conducted by a committee of approximately 10 men and not by the entire board.

3. Synod should not be satisfied with the recommendation of persons for candidacy by a committee within a committee.

4. The eldership of the church is not represented on the board and therefore has no part in the examination.

5. Synod is not acting responsibly when it declares individuals as candidates who have not personally appeared before the entire body of synod permitting all the delegates to participate in their examination.

6. The declaring of candidacy for the ministry of the Word and sacraments should be one of the major items on the synodical agenda, and yet it is dealt with in a matter of minutes.

Humbly submitted,  
Leonard Van Drunen, S.C.

### Overture 18 — Change Church Order, Article 52b

Classis Rocky Mountain overtures synod to change Article 52c of the Church Order to read as follows:

The consistory shall see to it that the synodically-approved Bible versions and liturgical forms are used, and that the principles and elements of the order of worship approved by synod are observed. The consistory shall also approve all songs used in worship. These shall ordinarily be those approved by synod.

*Grounds:*

1. As our denomination becomes more culturally heterogeneous, it becomes increasingly difficult for synod to anticipate and satisfy the cultural needs of the varied congregations.

2. The local consistory will better be able to satisfy this need through the selection of hymns used in the worship service.

3. The congregational singing should not be more restricted than the choir. Refer to Supplement 10 of Article 52, Church Order, regarding choir singing, "or such anthems or hymns which have previous consistorial approval as to their scriptural soundness."

John Zwaanstra, S.C.

**Overture 19—Re SCORR and Lawsuit**

Classis Kalamazoo overtures the synod of the Christian Reformed Church with the following:

I. That synod express its disapproval of the support given by the Committee on Race Relations to the civil lawsuit against the Cicero Timothy Christian School Board.

II. That synod clarify its mandate to the Committee on Race Relations in order that it may be clear that the synod does not mandate the committee to initiate or support any civil suit involving Christian brother against Christian brother.

*Ground:* I Corinthians 6:1-8 discourages the engagement of the church in any civil suit involving Christian brother against Christian brother.

Respectfully submitted,  
Gilbert Vanderlip, S.C.

**Overture 20—Retire SCORR**

In order to insure a proper understanding of our overture as well as our motives in presenting this overture, the Consistory of the First Christian Reformed Church of Pella, Iowa, wishes to inform synod:

1. That it has taken note of the decisions of the Synod of 1971 to appoint a new Committee on Race Relations, and to establish a quota of \$1.40 per family.

2. That we readily concede:

a. that racism is a sin which we as a church must confess to be real among us.  
b. that the sin of racism among us deserves the sincere, pastoral concern of all in the church and demands the use of our best resources to eradicate this evil.

3. That we are convinced that synod erred in the appointment of this committee with its mandate. Our conviction that this was an error is based on:

a. Our belief that this is not the Reformed way of dealing with sin in our midst. Secularism, materialism are also grievous sins of our time but who would suggest the appointment of a committee to eliminate these sins? Rather the synod should call upon the church to exercise more vigorously and faithfully the keys of the kingdom in opposing this sin of racism among us.

b. Our belief is that the mandate of the committee is too vague for a committee of synod to function properly. In 1968 the Race Commission was appointed to "design, organize and implement programs . . . to eliminate racism. . . ." (p. 18, Acts, 1968); in 1971 this mandate was reassigned to the new Committee on Race Relations, and among other things, the committee is to serve as "agents of reconciliation, in consultation with ecclesiastical and related agencies . . ." (p. 112, Acts, 1971).

Such a vague mandate will only tempt the committee to pursue a course of ferreting out supposed (or real) racist tendencies with the result that we may expect a dangerous case of meddling with all the attendant results. An illustration of such meddling and erroneous conception of synodical action is already evident from the report (cf. *Banner*, Nov. 26, 1971, as well as Chicago and Grand Rapids Press reports) that the present committee provided funds for the suit filed in Chicago against the Cicero Timothy Christian School Board.

c. Our belief is that resorting to a synodical committee will not eliminate such sins among us but may in fact promote further polarity and prejudices among our people. Witness the history of the previous race commission which, in spite of large sums of money expended, proved ineffective and altogether unproductive in healing the sinful racial tension existing among us. Furthermore, the action taken to provide financial assistance in the court case in Chicago can be expected to produce diminishing returns.

4. Because of our convictions expressed above, we want synod to know that we have genuine conscientious objections to the payment of the quota of \$1.40 per family.

Therefore, the Consistory of First Christian Reformed Church, Pella, overtures synod to retire this Committee on Race Relations and to admonish the churches pastorally to exercise the keys of the kingdom in combatting the sin of racism among us.

*Grounds:*

1. According to sound Reformed church polity, synod should be involved in adjudicating specific matters which have come to synod by way of classes and consistories and ought not to be involved in a hierarchical eradication of sins which are common among all of us.

2. This would point the way for a more effective dealing with the problems and sins of racism, recognizing the autonomy and primary responsibility of the local church in applying the discipline of the Word of God and in the exercise of the keys of the kingdom.

Sincerely,

Godert C. VanderHart, Clerk

Note: This overture was presented to Classis Pella but was not adopted by classis.

## Overture 21 — Requesting Censure of Classis Chicago North

The Consistory of the Lawndale Christian Reformed Church of Chicago overtures synod to declare that until Classis Chicago North affirms its agreement with the church's teaching on race relations, (particularly as this teaching is related to Article 29 of the Belgic Confession by item 6 of the Declarations on Race) its delegates shall be prohibited from serving on denominational boards and agencies.

That synod further declare that the foregoing matter must be acted upon at the September 1972 meeting of Classis Chicago North, with the stipulation that it be done by roll call vote of the delegates, that shall be recorded in the published minutes of Classis Chicago North.

*Grounds:*

a. The integrity of the church's Declaration on Race, as well as the ecclesiastical order of the Christian Reformed Church, is at stake in the crisis brought on by the recalcitrance of Classis Chicago North with respect to the deliverances of synod.

b. The Church Order recognizes that suspension from official functions is the



appropriate first step in disciplining office bearers (cf. Church Order, Articles 88, 90, 91, and 93).

c. Synod has the same authority over a classis, as a classis has over a consistory (cf. Church Order, Article 27b).

d. This matter is of long standing and must be brought to a decisive conclusion.

Respectfully submitted,

The Consistory of Lawndale  
Christian Reformed Church  
Luther Benton, Clerk

cc: Classis Chicago North

## PRINTED APPEALS and/or PROTESTS

### 1. — Classis Muskegon vs. Synod of 1971

DEAR BROTHERS:

Classis Muskegon protests the action of synod (1971) pertaining to Overture 61 (see Acts of Synod, 1971, p. 666 and Art. 49, II, C, p. 36, 37) and re-submits its overture for the consideration of synod on the following grounds:

1. Synod in its action did not answer or refute any of the grounds which were presented in this overture. Consequently, we consider these grounds to be valid and we believe that each of them is weighty enough in itself to constitute sound reasons for a change to be made. If this is not so then our grounds should be answered by synod.

2. Synod in its consideration of this overture introduced material which was not pertinent to the issue and which did detract from an objective consideration of the basic principles involved. We refer to the fact that under the materials for consideration of this overture is listed correspondence between Mr. Stoepker and Attorney Vander Ploeg concerning a concrete case under the Relief Fund. The overture, however, deals with the question of providing protection for all children under the pension plan, both present and future.

3. Synod as a ground for rejection of our overture has said, "The present funding and rate of contribution do not provide for these benefits." While this is technically true, we have difficulty in accepting the relevance of this argument. In effect what it says is that if a widow has children there are sufficient funds to provide for her and her children. However, if the mother should die at the same time as the husband, or after, then there are no longer funds available. It would seem that there would have to be an extremely accurate prediction of mortality to rule out the availability of funds for the extremely rare cases when there are minor unmarried orphans of our ministers, while there are funds available while the mother is still living. Whatever funding would be required should be provided.

4. The present pension plan, in excluding the orphan children of ministers, makes such children dependents on the charity of the church. To this we object strenuously.

Classis Muskegon,  
Walter Tolsma, Stated Clerk

### 2. — Classis Chicago North vs. the Synods of 1968-1971

DEAR BROTHERS:

Classis Chicago North presents a direct appeal re the Race Resolution of 1968, and many subsequent declarations evolving out of the long history of this issue.

The appeal which we direct to synod is composed of three sections:

I. HISTORY

II. THE ETHICAL DILEMMA

III. CHURCH POLITY MATTERS

### I. HISTORY

*Note:* In this appeal we are not rehearsing the entire history of the process through which this issue has traversed. We are introducing history which is not recorded in any of the previous Acts of Synod and therefore appears as new information, not heretofore appearing in the form of an appeal or protest.

A. We would note that the Declarations of the Synod of 1968 re race originated in essence in the consistory of the Ebenezer Christian Reformed Church of Berwyn, Ill. In the minutes of the Ebenezer Christian Reformed Church of February 5, 1968, Article 13, we read: "An overture for synodical consideration was introduced by Rev. Bradford. It was pertinent to the growing racial tensions in our city and country. After considerable discussion, a motion was made to accept the overture as formulated. This was supported, discussed, and adopted." (Note: the consistory of Ebenezer Christian Reformed Church has granted its permission to quote from the minutes of its consistory meetings.)

This overture did not meet the stipulations of the synodical rules in that the overture was forwarded directly to synod. The synodical rule states that: "Overtures as communications of individuals or consistories which have been carried as far as possible in the minor assemblies" (Synodical Rule V-B, Acts of Synod 1959, page 23).

On March 4, 1968, one month after this overture had been adopted by the Ebenezer Consistory, it was decided by the Ebenezer Consistory to seek classical endorsement of this overture. The minutes of the Ebenezer Consistory on March 4, 1968, Article 20, read: "A motion was made to send our synodical resolution on race (see Art. 13, Feb. 5, minutes) to Classis Chicago North for endorsement. Adopted." It is significant that at this juncture, these resolutions were already called a "Synodical Resolution on Race."

In a letter dated March 4, 1968 and addressed to Classis Chicago North by the Ebenezer Consistory, we find acknowledgment that the rule of synod was not followed:

"Esteemed Brethren:

"The consistory of Ebenezer Christian Reformed Church, Berwyn, Illinois, respectfully requests Classis Chicago North, in session May 15, 1968, to express to synod its endorsement of the attached overture, which we have already transmitted to the Stated Clerk of synod. We give the following explanation.

"The overture was proposed and adopted in our meeting of February 5, 1968. The magnitude and the extreme urgency of the matter with which it deals constrained us to send the overture directly to synod in order to meet the March 15th deadline for inclusion in the printed Agenda. If we had waited until this meeting of classis and followed the usual route, the overture would not have received the wide circulation throughout the denomination we believe it deserves and the careful study the delegates of synod should give it.

"Respectfully,

Eugene Bradford, President  
Eugene Veurink, Clerk  
Done in Consistory  
March 4, 1968"

This irregularity was noted by synod when it adopted the following motion: "That synod declare that Overture 4 from the consistory of the Ebenezer Christian Reformed Church of Berwyn, Ill., did not fulfill the stipulation for Synodical Procedure of Rule V, B, before it was forwarded to synod" (see Acts of Synod 1968, page 18).

We would judge that although synod did acknowledge this irregularity, synod erred in not insisting on proper procedure in this matter. The churches of Classis

Chicago North were not aware of the existence of this overture until it appeared in the Agenda for Synod, 1968. This is in violation of Article 28b of the Church Order which states: "A major assembly shall deal only with those matters which concern its churches in common or which could not be finished in the minor assemblies." Synod violated its own rules by considering the overture from the Ebenezer Consistory. A simple acknowledgment of this violation does not make the violation right. The Church Order and the Rules for Synodical Procedure are adopted to see to it that all things are done "decently and in good order" in the church. In the consideration and adoption of these resolutions, synod violated the Church Order and, by its own admission, its own rules.

B. In the history of these declarations the minutes of the Ebenezer Christian Reformed Church are also instructive on several other points. We would quote from the minutes of the consistory meeting held on June 3, 1968: "Article 12: 'A document, originated by the pastor, duplicated and brought by the clerk, was acted upon. After a motion, discussion, and changes, it was adopted. It was also decided to authorize Mr. R. Hoekstra to print 500 copies for distribution to the congregation on June 9'."

#### "THE EBENEZER OVERTURE: ITS SPIRIT AND PURPOSE, AND ITS BEARING ON THE LOCAL CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

##### "1. What is the purpose of the Ebenezer overture to the Synod of 1968?

To glorify God by means of a serious attempt to help in the present racial conflict in America and throughout the world.

##### "2. Has the Christian Reformed Church taken any sort of stand in the question of race relations?

Yes. In 1959 the synod adopted a 12-point *Testimony of the Christian Reformed Church on Race Relations*.

##### "3. What does this *Testimony* say about our relations with Christians of other races?

A great many things. Examples: 'If the members of the other race are . . . believers (the Christians) should receive them as his brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ (Philemon 12; Ephesians 4:3, 6). In such a relationship all human distinctions, no matter how much weight they carry in social life, become considerations of secondary importance.' Also: Christians of any other race 'should be made to feel that they are being regarded as fellow-members in the body of Christ, bound to us by the closest of ties.' Also: '. . . the church, by its teaching and example, should guide and prepare its members for the practice of Christian communion with believers of other races. . . .'

##### "4. Does the overture of Ebenezer go beyond the present stand of the church as expressed in the 1959 *Testimony*?

No. However, because of the increasing seriousness of the problem, the overture asks the synod to make it very clear to all Christian Reformed members that the biblical teaching of the church must be taken seriously, that discrimination against any fellow-Christian is sinful.

##### "5. Does the overture contemplate discipline of specific persons or groups?

Certainly not. It contains principles intended to help believers one and all. It is 'aimed' only against the sin of discrimination wherever it may be found among Christian Reformed people all over the world, now and until Jesus comes again.

##### "6. Why then, does it speak of discipline?

A careful reading shows that it simply says that if members of the Christian Reformed Church clearly practice or advocate discrimination they must be dealt with as the Church Order requires whenever any person persists in any sin.

- "7. What does the Church Order require?  
That the elders give kindly, biblical counsel and admonition to those whose sin comes to their attention.
- "8. According to the Church Order, what must the elders do if a member obstinately rejects their patient admonition and counsel?  
When all efforts fail, the elders are empowered to deny the Lord's Supper to the offender for a time. If still the offender stubbornly goes on and on in his sin, public discipline is applied, whether the sin be lying, stealing, Sabbath desecration, race discrimination, or any other sin.
- "9. What if the member believes he is right while the elders think he is sinning?  
He has the right to appeal the elders' decision to the classis and, if necessary, to the synod. This is similar to the processes in civil courts.
- "10. Is it assumed that adoption of the overture by synod will immediately solve all the difficult problems, such as the reception of Negro children in the local Christian schools?  
By no means. The overture recognizes that persecution and adversity can arise out of obedience to Christ in this regard. It only exhorts all Christians to recognize their duty of obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ and implies that they should carry out that duty with all deliberate speed.
- "11. Is it realistic to suppose that Negro children can be received in our local Christian schools without harm coming to the children of both races?  
Another matter must be faced first. The prior concern of Christians must be obedience to Christ, in faith that he will surely be with us.
- "12. But what of our children and our properties? Should we jeopardize our children and risk damage to our valuable properties?  
We surely love our children and we recognize that our properties are necessary for their instruction. Yet we must obey Christ. Therefore, the Christian community should quickly and determinedly unite in the development of a very careful plan to bring about an orderly reception of Negro children in obedience to the demand of Christ who included them also in his covenant of grace.
- "13. What might such a plan involve?  
Communicating with selected representatives of the neighborhood (nearby residents, businessmen, professional men, service organizations), with the town officials and with county, state and federal authorities, who, by law, are required to protect citizens in the pursuit of their God-given rights.
- "14. What has the local Christian School Board done?  
We rejoice that the board received three Negro children in the high school in 1966-67. Also, the board has gone on record against the principle of discrimination. However, it is believed that more progress would have been made if more support were evident from the constituency.
- "15. Is there hope of solution to the problem?  
Of course. With God all things are possible. Our community must face the situation with earnest prayer to God that he will make us all sensitive to the crisis which is upon us; and that the board and the entire community will be given the necessary insights and courage to follow the mandate of Christ, our Savior-King.
- "16. Why, then, an overture to synod?  
If it is adopted, the guidelines will be clearly drawn and direction will be positively given. The synod will be declaring, in the 1968 context, what it believes to be the biblical teaching that must bind the Christian conscience. It is to be hoped that the members of the denomination all over the world will then heed the synod and act accordingly."

*Note:* The above declaration of the Ebenezer Consist . . . y re the overture that it originated, are contradictory to subsequent calls for the discipline of the school

board and classis. The Ebenezer Consistory did not envision the discipline of individuals but speaks rather, of "kindly biblical counsel and admonition."

C. We also call to the attention of synod the analysis of this matter as given by the Advisory Committee 7, Church Order III in its report to the Synod of 1971:

"Does this now mean that classis is 'in open disregard of the judgment of the church of Jesus Christ' on this point? In the judgment of your advisory committee, 'open disregard of the church of Jesus Christ' means that a classis, consistory, congregation, or individual does not fully comply with the decision of synod *and* does not appeal these decisions. We conclude that classis has begun to comply with the decisions of synod. However, it has not complied with item 6 of the Declarations on Race of 1968, but rather has indirectly appealed the validity of item 6 of the Declarations on Race of 1968 when it says in points (1) and (5) of Overture 65 that "the church is not dealing scripturally in declaring that 'they must be reckoned as disobedient to Christ and be dealt with according to the provisions of the Church Order regarding admonition and discipline.'"

"We can sympathize with the problem which the classis faces. There is a deeper issue here which may help to explain the fact that classis hesitates to express *disagreement* with point 6 of the 1968 Declaration on Race as a *generally* valid statement, but one which it is reluctant to apply in the concrete situation it has faced and continues to face. We shall now attempt to clarify that issue.

"Classis Chicago North and the Timothy School Board are apparently basically convinced that they face a genuine moral dilemma, a conflict between two equally valid, equally divine requirements. This is hinted at in the reply to Mr. Jon Sharpe (cf. Communications 14, p. 12, point 3) where classis alludes to scriptural examples of 'flight for physical safety' " (see Acts of Synod 1971, pages 84, 85).

In this brief history, we would call attention to the decision of the Synod of 1971 found on page 87 of the Acts of Synod:

"Synod declare that Classis Chicago North has refused to comply fully with the decisions of Synods 1968, 1969, and 1970 *and* has not directly appealed these decisions."

Ground: Classis has begun to comply with the decisions of synod. However, it has not complied with item 6 of the Declarations on Race of 1968, but rather has indirectly appealed the validity of item 6 of the Declarations on Race of 1968 in point (1) of Overture 65, and when it says in point (5) of Overture 65 that "the church is not dealing scripturally in declaring 'they must be reckoned as disobedient to Christ and be dealt with according to the provisions of the Church Order regarding admonition and discipline.'"

D. From the above analysis by the Advisory Committee, we note that statements are made that Classis Chicago North has refused to comply fully with the decisions of synod *and* has not *directly appealed* these decisions. The Advisory Committee also speaks of an "indirect appeal" of the validity of item 6 of the Declarations on Race of 1968 contained in points (1) and (5) of Overture 65 to the Synod of 1971.

The history and content of Overture 65 is such that it was intended by classis to be a direct appeal to the validity of item 6 of the Declarations on Race of 1968. The overture was dealt with by classis at its January 20, 1971, meeting. At this meeting, Overture 65 was adopted by the classis (see Minutes of Classis, Article 36, items e, f, g, h, i, k). However, this overture was not forwarded by the Stated Clerk of classis to the Stated Clerk of synod as an overture to be considered as such by synod and to be included in the Agenda of synod for publication as an overture. It was rather included in a report prepared by the

Stated Clerk of classis which appeared in the Agenda of synod under the heading: "Classis Chicago North Report" (see 1971 Agenda, pages 385-395).

At its meeting of May 19, 1971, classis adopted the following motion to ensure the proper consideration of this overture by synod: "That the Stated Clerk of classis forward to the Synod of 1971 the two overtures adopted by classis at its January 20, 1971 meeting. The Stated Clerk of synod is to be informed that these are formal overtures duly endorsed by classis and are to be considered as such by the Synod of 1971) (see Article 29c of the minutes of Classis Chicago North, May 19, 1971).

If Overture 65 had been properly handled, it would have constituted a direct appeal to item 6 of the Declaration on Race of the Synod of 1968 rather than as an "indirect appeal" as stated by the Advisory Committee of Synod.

## II. THE ETHICAL DILEMMA:

*Note:* The undersigned are convinced that "the history" just given not only fails to support the previous actions of synod since 1968, but ethical dilemmas do exist which place both Classis Chicago North and many members of our Christian Reformed churches in severe straits. Our dilemmas are these:

It is our position that any action taken against people of other races, arising out of hatred, is sin. On the other hand, certain actions taken with reference to people of other races, arising out of fear, is not sin. We realize, however, that this presents a complex ethical problem. We are convinced that the Declarations of 1968 on Race have not taken this dilemma into consideration. We are presenting the following biblical proof and historical instances to substantiate the reality of such a dilemma.

### A. *Biblical Proof from the Old Testament:*

1. Genesis 27:41ff. In which the life of Jacob is threatened by his brother Esau and counselled by his mother, Rebekah, to take flight to save his life. By this action Jacob determined to save his life. Should he have remained to test the veracity of Esau's threat?

2. Joshua 2:1ff. In which we have the account of the hiding of the two spies sent by Joshua. Certainly this was a means of saving life motivated by fear.

3. I Samuel 20:1ff. gives the account of David fleeing from King Saul. II Samuel 15:14 pictures his flight from the throne before the threat of his son Absalom.

4. I Kings 18:3, 4 gives the account of Obadiah who hid a hundred prophets whose lives were threatened by Jezebel.

### B. *Biblical Proof from the New Testament:*

1. Acts 19: 30, 31 in which Christian disciples persuade the apostle Paul not to enter the crowd or the theater. Again, Acts 20:3 says that the apostle Paul changed his plans because of a plot by the Jews against him.

2. Matthew 10:16-39 presents very strong statements on discipleship, and the cost of discipleship, but nowhere is it stated that Christians are to place their loved ones in jeopardy.

3. The New Testament references used as proofs for the Declarations of 1968 are supreme prescriptions for the Christian life. These passages are praiseworthy of the believer who acts courageously to the point of great sacrifice. They fall short, however, of demanding discipline for compelling individuals to act with equal courage. No Christian desires to escape the challenge of these texts. However, no Christian can compel another Christian to exercise this courage. We are not arguing or building a case for cowardice, that the church or her members may and/or should act out of fear. We simply call synod's attention to the dilemma which has not been faced realistically and scripturally by many.

### C. *Proof from Church History:*

There are many instances in the history of the Christian church in which the church acted out of fear; e.g.,

1. When the Communists prevailed in China, the missionaries of the Christian Reformed Church were permitted to return home in 1949.

2. More recently in the Nigerian-Biafran conflict, our missionaries moved across the river for reasons of safety.

3. During the struggle in The Belgian Congo, the Protestant missionaries were authorized to leave. Dr. Paul Carlson, by personal choice, chose to remain and suffered martyrdom there in November, 1964.

4. Many Christian Reformed families by personal decision have moved out of neighborhoods, deemed by them unsafe for their families.

It is noteworthy that in these cited instances there is no official rebuke of the actions taken nor is there any thought of placing one's status in the church in jeopardy.

### D. *Conclusions:*

1. That an ethical dilemma in the Timothy-Lawndale situation exists, none can deny. Granting the sincerity of all who take opposite positions in the controversy, proponents for and opponents against a specific position ought to proceed with great caution and not speak in an apodictic manner as to what the Scriptures do or do not teach. In many instances the Bible gives guidelines but no specific mandates.

2. In a Christian's ethics, based upon the Holy Scriptures, final decisions in specific situations are to be left to the exercise of the conscience of the Christian individual or community. Another individual, a consistory, a classis, a synod may not command that a certain action shall be taken by an individual or a community. No one may compel another to suffer for his faith. This must be an individual choice and the individual or community of individuals is responsible to God for any action. No church can demand martyrdom. This is an individual matter. Illustrative was the martyrdom of Dr. Paul Carlson who chose to stay in the Congo. This was his decision while other missionaries, equally within their rights, chose to leave for safer areas. We honor the martyr but do not condemn the others.

3. In all "fear" situations it is possible to seek the protection of the civil authorities but this does not countenance irresponsible action by the church of Christ. No church assembly, by demanding that families expose themselves to danger, is acting responsibly. Moving into a specific area or situation is a matter completely outside the authority of the church. The individual Christian or community will have to determine, in their own locality, the possible results of their actions. These may or may not decide upon certain actions to be taken, but the decisions are wholly outside the ecclesiastical structure of the church.

4. While the Scriptures demand of Christians perfect obedience to the laws of God (E.g. "Be ye holy," or "Be ye perfect") it is neither permissible or possible for the church through any of its assemblies, to enforce this ideal of perfection. Precisely this our broadest assembly is endeavoring to do in its Declaration of 1968, which, if applied consistently in the way of procedural discipline, leads to the eventual exclusion of fellow Christians from our communion.

5. The history of our "Timothy-Lawndale" problem is demonstrating that the approach of the Declaration 1968 is not moving toward real solutions.

We note:

a) The progress of the church's mission in our area is impeded. Time and energies are concentrated on a problem which grows more complex because of unscriptural interference by the synod of the denomination.



b) There is increasing polarization in the body of Christ. Because of confusion in properly delineating the relationships between church and school in a Reformed manner, it becomes increasingly difficult for members of the church to work together toward attaining common goals.

c) Polarization is increasingly evident on the broad level of our Christian Reformed Church as synod instructs a local negotiating committee to work on an ecclesiastical level and the Race Commission of the Christian Reformed Church financially supports an "Appeal" to the civil court.

d) Some progress has been made in several negotiating meetings in the fact that parties understand each other better, and certain arrangements have been made for the Christian education of all our children, from kindergarten through high school. Admittedly these arrangements are not entirely satisfactory but they do require some sacrifice on the part of all Christians in our area.

### III. CHURCH POLITY MATTERS:

There are four areas of concern with respect to church polity matters in our appeal:

*A. The relation of the church and the Christian school, or the relation of the ecclesiastical institution to the non-ecclesiastical institution.*

The history of the relationship between the church and the Christian school shows that these are two separate institutions, even though often members of the church are members also of the school society and school board. The relationship between the church and the Christian school is reflected in Article 41 of the Church Order. The interpretation of this article is found in the Acts of Synod, 1936, p. 36f., and reads, "the term 'schools' . . . refers to the Christian primary and grammar and high schools (or academies) where the bulk of our children get their general school education as distinguished from technical and professional schools, while the college falls under the question of Article 41 in the measure in which it might become the common instrument of a general education. The expression "support of the cause of Christian schools" means that it is the duty of the consistory to use every proper means to the end that a Christian school may be established where it does not exist . . . , and to give whole-hearted and unreserved moral backing to existing Christian schools, and a measure of financial help in case of need. If, in the judgment of classis, a consistory does not support the cause of Christian schools, classis should continue earnestly to admonish such a consistory publicly in its classical meetings and privately through the church visitors until it truly repents."

There are several conclusions which can be drawn logically and legitimately from this interpretation of Article 41 with respect to the relations of church and school as it concerns us as a classis:

1) The church's relation to the schools is supportive, morally and financially, but it is not supervisory and jurisdictional of philosophy or policy.

2) The admonishment received by a consistory and given by a classis is the discipline of the Word but not procedural discipline, where support of the existence of a school is lacking. It is quite significant that synod did not authorize a classis to begin procedural discipline with a consistory that does not support Christian schools. It is illegal to authorize a classis to enter into procedural discipline with members of a school board, which is not a member of classis and not integrally related to the classis.

The relationship between the church and the Christian school is delineated further by recognized authorities on Reformed church polity. We wish to quote representative selections which are comments on Church Order Article 28. "Individual believers and groups of believers have rights and obligations extending over all domains of life, but the organized church, though it stands related to all

of life, cannot act authoritatively beyond its own domain" (1). "If churches should busy themselves with secular matters, they would in all likelihood neglect their real task. The right management of the churches and the promotion of things spiritual would suffer if the churches should spend their time and efforts on *non-ecclesiastical* territory, even as a farmer cannot do justice to his farm, if he is constantly employed in town. Furthermore, the transaction of non-ecclesiastical affairs would most naturally lead to undesirable entanglements. It would lead the churches concerned into conflict and trouble repeatedly" (2). "Neither does it mean that the instituted church as such has no message for and interest in things governmental, social, economic, and *educational*. It assuredly has. Through the preaching of the word, e.g., the instituted churches must proclaim the will of God for all of life, and condemn sin and evil in all spheres of life. But though the churches have a directive and enlightening task, *they have no legislative and executive task* regarding the secular affairs and departments of life" (3). (italics ours.)

Therefore, we appeal to synod to prove from Scripture and the Church Order that it is proper for synod to enter into the legislative and executive task, with respect to the operations and policies of Christian schools. The Scripture texts which are assigned to points five and six of the Race Resolutions of 1968 refer to the theological concepts set forth, but not to the concept of administering discipline. We take strong issue with the 'interference' of synod into a purely local matter, even though that local matter has overtones that are denominational in scope. The Synod of 1969 declared that it could not "*enter* into the ecclesiastical disposition of the matter at this time because the matter is in process of being dealt with by Classis Chicago North . . ." (Cf. Acts 1969, Art. 134, I, C. 2, p. 94). What the Synod of 1969 refused to do, that is enter into a matter that was being dealt with in the minor assembly, the Synods of 1970 and 1971, in violation of their own established rules, proceeded to do!

Moreover, we take serious exception to the synodical insistence upon disciplinary procedures against members of a non-ecclesiastical organization. (cf. Acts 1968, IV, 6, p. 19.) Significantly, however, we note that the Synod of 1971 obviously faced the same dilemma which confronts us. In response to the recommendation of its advisory committee that "Synod remind Classis Chicago North and its churches of the necessity of using procedural discipline when members refuse to heed the discipline of the Word in this matter," synod "*decided to withhold action.*" (Italics-synod's). (cf. Acts 1971, Art. 103, 7, p. 89.) The Rules for Synodical Procedure provide that "if synod prefers not to take action regarding a matter, it may adopt a motion to withhold action." (Cf. Rules for Synodical Procedure, VII, D, 3, pg. 14.) By "withholding action" on this matter of procedural discipline against members of a non-ecclesiastical organization, synod admittedly neither rejected nor accepted the motion, but the effect was to kill it!

Though synod did well in "withholding action" on the matter, it would have served our churches 'best' had it rejected the motion in line with Reformed Church polity. In order to indicate that the jurisdiction of the church reaches only to a certain point, we quote selections from *Kerkelijke Adviezen* by Dr. F. L. Rutgers. "A school board can fall away. However, in the face of opposition from the consistory it would find it hard to persist in this unless sustained by at least a majority of the society and of the parents. In such a case the school might permanently continue in a wrong spirit; and there would be nothing for the consistory to do other than to establish a Reformed school over against it. . . . The consistory must remonstrate with the board, and if it deems necessary, with the society and with the parents. Then if the board maintains its course, the consistory withdraws its moral support, and even changes this eventually to opposition by working toward the establishment of a truly Reformed School" (4). Note that no disciplinary action is advised or contemplated in these comments from an historic Re-

formed authority on the Church Order. Further it is noted that while the relationship between consistories (and classis) and the school board(s) is close, the church cannot and should not go beyond remonstrations.

Another Reformed authority on church polity matters, Dr. H. Bouwman, in his book *Gereformeerde Kerkrecht*, wrote: "Only ecclesiastical matters are to be transacted at the ecclesiastical meetings. Worldly, economical, and political, society matters must not be dealt with anymore than scientific questions at these assemblies. Under Roman hierarchy all kinds of non-ecclesiastical matters were decided at the synod. The Roman Councils could do this by reason of their principle that the church had authority over all spheres of life and that the entire life, art, science, state and commonwealth were subservient to the church.

"The Reformer, however, pointed out that the state, the home and politics each had their own sphere of life, given it by God. Therefore, according to Calvin, the church must cease to be patron of the natural life, and be nothing else but a gathering of believers. And from that principle must follow for the practical life of the church that at the ecclesiastical assemblies only ecclesiastical matters should be dealt with.

"The meaning of the Reformer has always been, that those cases which do not belong to the task of the church, should not be treated at the ecclesiastical meetings. The church has no right to that. She misses the capability as church to pronounce a judgment in cases pertaining to state, society, science, art, etc.

"The task of the church pertains to things sacred. She has the calling to let the Word of God shine upon the natural life and to inspire her members, that they, each in their own office and calling, conduct themselves according to God's Word, in order that the ordinances of God in every sphere of life are followed, but the church must not endeavor to *rule* in the sphere of the natural life." (5)

In addition to what these two Netherland scholars wrote many years ago we find the following paragraphs in the "Monograph Series" published by Calvin College in 1963, "*The school system and the Christian Reformed Church: its ecclesiastical roots*"—"The plea that the church should control the school has sometimes been made in the name of the cultural separation and sometimes in the name of the need for continued doctrinal purity. Had these voices continued to reflect majority opinion in the Christian Reformed Church, there would today be no Calvinistic school. *There would be only Christian Reformed parochial schools*" (Italics ours) (6).

"These Kuyperian Calvinists spoke out loudly against the parochial idea, and were so persuasive in the Christian Reformed Church that she was convinced that she should give up the parochial schools which she had begun and turn them over to societies of parents. The denominational paper of the time, *De Wachter*, there appeared an article by a certain P. R. Holtman, a spokesman for the Kuyperian view, which shows the strong feeling which existed against the parochial idea. He said: 'The Christian school must not be a child of the churches, or live by the grace of the churches, so that it would flourish or decline in the measure that spiritual life of the church rose and declined. The unprofitableness of the system which lowered education to the status of preparation for catechism, the highest ideal of which was that with the use of ruler and whip the Formulas of Unity were implanted, has long since been evident. *The Christian school requires a lifesphere of its own, with its own rationale, not as concerns principles but as concerns administration*' (June 22, 1892)" (Italics ours) (7).

"Evidently convinced by this type of argumentation, the synod of the Christian Reformed Church in 1892 adopted a resolution favoring the organization of a society for the promotion of Christian Reformed education and promised such a society its moral support . . . Thus the administrative break was made, and the Kuyperian ideal was achieved in theory at least . . . Although the Christian

Reformed Church has never changed its official decision concerning abandonment of the control of the school . . ." (8).

Most recently, the Rev. Edward Heerema, delegate from Classis Florida to the Synod of 1971 wrote in an article in *The Outlook*, dated September 1971: "The question that was raised on the floor of Synod in 1968 when the pertinent resolution was adopted still forces itself upon us: *How can an ecclesiastical body deal ecclesiastically with the decision-making process of a Christian non-ecclesiastical agency?*" (9).

The Synod of 1971, intentionally or unintentionally, but in reality used a *double standard* in that regard. Faced with allegations and charges against the Association of Christian Reformed Laymen, and an appeal for an investigation of said organization, the Synod of 1971 ruled that the "ACRL is *not* an ecclesiastical organization, and there are therefore no provisions in the Church Order for synod to deal with this organization." Cf. Acts 1971, II, B. C., p. 108) (Italics ours)

Why didn't synod, consistent with its own acknowledgment in the handling and disposition of this case, apply the same rule of necessity to the Timothy-Lawndale matter? Synod would be hard pressed to make the point stick that what it said about the ACRL does *not* also apply to the Timothy Christian School or any other Christian school in the National Union system. They are *not* ecclesiastical organizations, and therefore, synod does *not* have provisions made in the Church Order to deal with such organizations.

We need to get back as quickly as possible to the basic "roots of the Calvinistic day school movement." In an article under that name, Prof. Donald Oppewal wrote as far back as September 1958 in *The Reformed Journal*: "Their presence (Kuyperian Calvinists) here resulted not only in more interest and enthusiasm for education itself, but it led eventually to the administrative break between the Christian Reformed Church and the school system around the turn of the century. The schools became officially parental rather than parochial, and this was directly attributable to the educational ideas and ideals of this Calvinistic revival in the Netherlands" (10).

**B. The concept of "discipline" envisioned by the synod in its resolutions of 1968, and its decision of 1971:**

The common concept of discipline in the Christian Reformed Church is that discipline as a process once initiated continues to the end, leading to excommunication. The process is halted *only* by the repentance of the offender. If it is assumed that the policy of the school board is sinful or disobedient to Christ (and that is questioned in another area of this appeal) discipline should be administered, resulting in the excommunication of all board members that hold to this policy. This is the concept taught by the Lord Jesus in Matthew 18.

Discipline, however, according to the Bible and the Church Order is not static but progressive. (Cf. Matthew 18:17; II Thess. 3:6, 14.) A member of the church is not placed under silent censure or the first step of public censure and kept there, even though there is no change of mind, attitude or outlook. If discipline is initiated, the consistory initiating action must be ready and of a mind to proceed through the entire process of discipline, which appears to be the underlying concept of the 1968 resolutions, to be used as a measure to compel repentance. Discipline, however, is not to be used as a threat nor as a club to force agreement. The action of the Synod of 1971 in "withholding action" on the recommendation of its advisory committee that "Synod remind Classis Chicago North and its churches of the necessity of using procedural discipline when members refuse to heed the discipline of the Word in this matter," clearly demonstrates that synod realistically found the same difficulties that Classis Chicago North has had with this static and/or threatening concept of discipline. (Cf. Acts 1971, Art. 103, 7, p. 89.) The history of the origin of this original overture from the Ebenzer consistory, as well as public statements made by the consistory, will sub-

stantiate this question about the concept of discipline that underlies the second half of Resolutions five and six of 1968. The late Prof. Martin Monsma in his Commentary on the Church Order assumes that discipline is not a static concept when he wrote: "As will be understood, the process may be halted at any time by sincere repentance on the part of the transgressor" (11). However, if there is no repentance, discipline proceeds to the eventual excommunication of the member.

C. *The present Timothy School Board policy on "admissions":*

The Timothy Christian School Board sent a letter to Classis Chicago North under date of December 21, 1970. The letter was sent as a response to the "Pastoral Letter" addressed to the board by the classis, in which the classis requested the board to "review our admissions policy." (Cf. Agenda 1971, Report 46, pp. 386-387.) The board informed classis that "we are now able to provide a Christian education for Lawndale children within the Timothy School System, instead of looking to others to provide such facilities. We are therefore pleased to announce the following general admissions policy for the Timothy Christian Schools:

1) The Timothy Christian School System will accept for admission, without regard to race or color, the covenant children of Reformed and Christian Reformed parents in all grades, kindergarten through twelve.

2) All other children, without regard to race or color, will be considered for admission into the Timothy System after a successful, indepth interview concerning religious matters is conducted by a board committee.

3) Assignment of students to buildings and grade sections is the sole responsibility of the board and is dependent on several factors, including but not limited to balancing class size, welfare and safety of the student, security of the buildings, and the educational aspects of the total programs . . ." (Cf. Classis Chicago North file—letter of December 21, 1970.)

Classis Chicago North in response to the new admissions policy of the Timothy School Board declared that in its judgment "the Timothy Board is sincere in its attempt to provide Christian education for all covenant children." (Cf. Classis Minutes—January 20, 1971, Art. 24-2.) No covenant child is being refused admission to the Timothy School System! No one having appeared to challenge the sincerity of the Timothy Board, namely, in providing a Christian education for all covenant children from kindergarten through high-school graduation, that judgment of Classis Chicago North stands.

The Timothy School Board retains the right of assigning all students to the buildings and grade sections within its system. Who can challenge the right of any private school board, on any educational level, to set its own admission policies, and assignment of students to particular buildings and grade sections within its own system? That right cannot be infringed upon!

Furthermore, the matter of distance or proximity to a school within a given private school system is *not* a legitimate determining factor in the placement of particular pupils. Ideally every child within a school system would preferably attend the school closest to his/her own home. The ideal, however, is not always possible to achieve, especially in a Christian school system in which finances necessarily demand that the best possible use be made of existing facilities and facilities, etc. Sacrifices become necessary and are made, even though they are not always appreciated. The Lawndale and Garfield children are located approximately 2.5 to 3.5 miles from the Cicero Elementary School but they have been assigned by the Timothy Board to the Western Springs Elementary School at a distance of about 15 miles from their homes. This is admittedly not desirable, but what of the many children already within the Timothy system who live in Elmhurst, Villa Park, Lombard, etc., and surrounding communities, closest to the Western Springs School, who are assigned by the same Timothy Board to the

Cicero School, and travel each day a distance comparable to that from Lawndale and/or Garfield to Western Springs. And what of the many families who have the additional hardship of having children from within their own family assigned to two widely separated elementary schools in the same Timothy system? Membership in any given association does not preclude cooperation and compliance with the policies of said association until such time as they are altered or revised by majority decision.

*D. Re: Legal action to be explored by the Timothy board to attain an open school in Cicero:*

The Synod of 1970 authorized the Race Commission to "assist parents in taking whatever legal action is necessary to obtain *Protection of Law* as may be necessitated by any enrollment of black covenant children in the Timothy Christian School in Cicero." (Cf. Acts 1970, Art. 119, 4, p. 65, Italics ours). Further the Synod of 1971 admonished "Classis Chicago North with respect to its failure to address the Cicero civic and social community, reminding it of its obligation to obey the law of the land, specifically by not obstructing compliance with the law, or allowing others to obstruct compliance with the law." (Cf. Acts 1971, 103, 3, p. 88.) Furthermore, the Synod of 1971 instructed the Committee on Race Relations to "assist in obtaining legal and economic aid where specific problems require." (Cf. Acts 1971, Art. 142, 3, b, 4, p. 114).

It is unquestionable that both the Synods of 1970 and 1971 authorized the Race Relations Committee to give assistance to *parents*, without specifying their race or color, in obtaining the full protection of the law. *What, however, did the synod authorize?* Widely differing answers can be and have already been given to that question because of synod's lack of precision and clear delineation of its desires. The Race Relations Committee interpreted the authorization both broadly and narrowly. Broadly, in guaranteeing financial assistance to a committee of lawyers representing the Chicago West Side Christian School Association in their law-suit against the Timothy Christian School Board, society and individual board members. Narrowly, considered in confining its assistance exclusively to only one party in the controversy, namely, to black parents versus white parents.

Furthermore, the Synod of 1971 urged Classis Chicago North "to recommend to the Timothy Christian School Board that every legal action be explored and applied for the protection of the Cicero School and its members in connection with the enrollment of black covenant children in the Cicero School." (Cf. Acts 1971, Art. 105, B, p. 89.) Before Classis Chicago North had an opportunity to meet and do as synod urged, the Timothy School Board was threatened early in the summer with legal action against it, and *not* for measures of "protection of law" as the synod envisioned and encouraged. The legal avenues synod encouraged the Timothy Board to investigate have been left unexplored due to the board's necessary concentration on the "actual and punitive damage discrimination" suit brought against it by the Chicago West Side Christian School Association.

Therefore, we appeal to synod to state in unequivocal terms what legal action(s) would fall within the scope of its approval. Also, we appeal to synod to delineate exactly what it meant by the use of the term "protection of law." Calling on the Cicero police department? the President of Cicero? the governor of Illinois, etc? Furthermore, is it the business of the church, or even of the Christian school to take such legal actions? May we humbly request synod to substantiate its answers with sound biblical proof?

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- 7) Op. cit., pp. 18-19.
- 8) Op. cit., p. 19.
- 9) Heerema, Rev. Edward, "Racial Matters at CRC Synod," *The Outlook*, Sept. 1971, p. 8.
- 10) Oppewal, Donald, "The Roots of the Calvinistic Day School Movement," *The Reformed Journal*, September 1958, p. 13.
- 11) Monsma, Op. cit., p. 313.

#### IV. APPEAL

1. We urge the Synod of 1972 to sustain this *direct appeal* of Classis Chicago North that the Synod of 1968 *did* violate its own "Rules for Synodical Procedure," as well as Article 28b of the Church Order in considering and adopting Overture 4 - "Requests Re Racial Matters." (cf. Acts 1968, p. 561.)

##### *Grounds:*

a. Rules for Synodical Procedure, V, B: "Overtures or communications of individuals or consistories or classes on matters which have been carried *as far as possible* in the minor assemblies" (Italics-synod's). The new history included with this "Appeal" clearly demonstrates, without any doubt or uncertainty, that "Our synodical resolution" (Berwyn Consistory Minutes, March 4, 1968, Art. 20) was sent directly and intentionally to synod without any thought of classis consideration, much less "as far as possible in the minor assembly."

b. Church Order Article 28b: "A major assembly shall deal only with those matters which concern its churches in common or which could not be finished in the minor assemblies." *Note:* The matter at hand could not be "finished in the minor assembly" because it did not begin with classical consideration.

2. We appeal to synod that no solid scriptural evidence having been adduced to substantiate the synodical declaration that "fear of persecution or of disadvantage to self or our institutions arising out of disobedience to Christ . . . they must be reckoned as disobedient to Christ . . ." that Point 6 of the Declarations on Race 1968 be immediately deleted.

*Ground:* The many Scripture references appended to Point 6 of the Declarations on Race 1968 (cf. Acts 1968, IV, 6, p. 19) are supreme prescriptions for the Christian life, but do *not* specifically demand either procedural discipline or the ecclesiastical declaration, *ipso facto*, that a person who acts out of fear must be "reckoned as disobedient to Christ."

3. We appeal to synod to recognize with Classis Chicago North, as well as synod's own Advisory Committee No. 7, Church Order III, 1971, that an ethical (moral) dilemma does exist between "two equally valid, equally divine requirements," namely, to admit black covenant children to all facilities of the Timothy system, and also insure the safety of all children in its facilities, etc. (cf. Acts 1971, Art. 91, 3, p. 85.)

##### *Grounds:*

a. Classis refusal to "declare that the practice of excluding black covenant children from the Timothy Christian School in Cicero out of fear is disobedient to Christ" does *not* indicate obstinacy, contradiction or inconsistency but the ethical (moral) dilemma which it realistically confronts in the given situation.

b. Advisory Committee No. 7, Church Order III, Synod of 1971 so recognized this dilemma when it stated: "While recognizing this dilemma . . ." (Cf. Acts 1971, Art. 91, 3, p. 85).

4. We appeal to synod that it demonstrate principally and primarily from the Scriptures, as well as from the Church Order, that synod may intrude upon an area which is non-ecclesiastical.

*Ground:* Such biblical testimony has not yet been brought forward in the present controversy. The Synod of 1971 in harmony with the Church Order stated that it had *no* provisions in the C.O. to deal with non-ecclesiastical organizations. (Cf. Acts 1971, II, B.C. p. 108.)

We appeal, therefore, to synod that if it cannot be established scripturally, and consistent with Reformed Church polity, that synod may deal with a non-ecclesiastical organization, that synod forthwith disengage itself from any and all present or future involvement in the Timothy-Lawndale matter, etc.

5. We appeal to synod to repudiate the concept of "discipline" fostered by the Resolutions on Race 1968 as foreign to the Christian Reformed denomination, and rather encourage "its churches to continue to use the discipline of the Word to effect necessary changes in the situation." (Cf. Acts 1971, Art. 103, 6, p. 89.)

*Grounds:*

a. The common concept of discipline in the C.R.C. is that discipline is a process, once initiated, that continues to the end, excommunication, unless there be, of course, true repentance.

b. The Synod of 1971 in "withholding action" on the recommended use of "procedural discipline" demonstrated forcibly that it found the same difficulties with the static and/or threatening concept of discipline some advocate. (Cf. Acts 1971, Art. 103, 7, p. 89.)

c. The Synod of 1971 so urged! (Cf. Acts 1971, Art. 103, 6, p. 89.)

6. We appeal to synod to state in unequivocal, as well as scriptural, terms what legal action(s) would fall within the scope of its approval.

*Grounds:*

a. The Synod of 1971 failed to offer any explanation, as well as scriptural proof, for the recommended course of legal action it encouraged. (Cf. Acts 1971, Art. 105, 8, p. 89.)

b. The general encouragement of "every legal avenue," without specifics, has increased the tension and polarization through the unbiblical actions of the Christian Reformed parents of Garfield, with the support of the Race Relations Committee of the denomination in their law-suit against the Timothy Christian School Board, society, and individual board members, etc., rather than working toward solutions.

7. We appeal to synod to substantiate scripturally as well as from the Church Order that a Christian, who though not acting out of fear, *may* act out of "*frustration*."

*Ground:* "Frustration" is an argument that has frequently been used against continuing negotiation, etc. (Cf. Acts 1971, Art. 103, 5, b. 1, p. 88).

Classis Chicago North,  
Oliver Breen, S.C.

### 3. — Wheaton Consistory Appeals Procedures of Classis Chicago North

DEAR BROTHERS:

The Council of the Wheaton Christian Reformed Church wishes to alert synod relative to a number of apparent improprieties in connection with Classis Chicago North's treatment and acceptance of a document from a Consortium of six churches of classis on January 19, 1872. The consortium's document will be on your agenda as an overture from our classis challenging the declarations of synod



on racial matters. We hereby appeal to synod to adjudicate the matter based on the following grounds.

1. The concept and existence of a consortium of churches within a classis is contrary to the wording and spirit of Article 95 of the Church Order. "No church shall in any way lord it over another church, and no office-bearer shall lord it over another office-bearer." If Article 95 is concerned with the possibility of ONE man and ONE church exerting undue pressure in the ecclesiastical process, it speaks still more emphatically to a GROUP of office-bearers and a GROUP of churches. The "lording" need not be overly coercive; it may be subtle, unspoken, and even denied. Nevertheless, the fact that six of the churches in Classis Chicago North have banded into a consortium (by definition a legal, official body for action) creates a pressurized atmosphere that militates against the wise provision of Article 95.

2. The concept and existence of a consortium of churches within a classis violates the spirit of all normal procedures specified by classis and synod relative to the manner in which overtures, protests, and appeals are lodged before an ecclesiastical assembly. These rules consistently refer to "individual" action. One man, one consistory, or several individual persons may avail themselves of proper channels in order to gain a hearing. Nowhere do the rules mention, encourage, or permit an organized block of consistories and churches to pool their resources and numbers for concerted action at an ecclesiastical assembly.

3. The concept and existence of a consortium of churches within a classis violates the deliberative nature of the assembly. A consortium of any size is a formidable body. It is a body that has met together, carefully studied the issue in advance of the session of classis, is unified in position, and thus ready to speak powerfully as one voice.

4. The consortium's document was voted upon in a manner which may be contrary to Article 34 of the Church Order: "A delegate shall not vote on any matter in which he himself or his church is particularly involved," in that the votes of the delegates of the churches presenting the document were included in the final decision.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. George Vanderhill, President  
Donald Sjaardema, Clerk

Done in Council 3-6-72.  
Wheaton Christian Reformed Church

Note: Elders G. Edema and H. Venema register their negative votes.

#### 4. — Garfield Consistory Appeals Decisions of Classis Chicago North

DEAR BROTHERS:

The Consistory of the Garfield Christian Reformed Church, Chicago, appeals to the Synod of 1972, protesting Classis Chicago North's persistent failure to affirm the teaching of the church on race relation as declared by the Synod of 1968, applied in 1969, judged in 1970, and clarified in 1971. Specifically, we protest the classis' rejection of appeals and overtures brought by Garfield members and consistory to classis in May 1971, September 1971, and January 1972.

The above mentioned appeals and overtures involve two cases. In the first case the classis was asked finally "to note officially" a consistory's "persistent failure to admonish a member of the congregation guilty of public offense in the matter of race relations." In the second case the classis was asked to "require" a consistory "to admonish" an individual "for action contrary to Scripture as a member of a decision-making body." In both cases the classis chose *not* "to require such

admonition and discipline on the part of minor assemblies as is consistent with the position adopted by the major assemblies." (Acts 1971, Article 110c. 2 & 3.)

We now appeal to synod to require the appropriate response from the classis to these consistories.

*Grounds:*

1. The Belgic Confession (Article 29) specifies the exercise of church discipline as one of the three marks of the true church.
2. The scriptural grounds for the church's teaching on race relations and for the Reformed concept of church discipline have been supplied abundantly by the Synods of 1968, 1969, 1970, and 1971.
3. Although many individuals are implicated in the public scandal which these two cases touch (and so, according to synod's earlier declarations on corporate responsibility (Acts 1945), other consistories might also be obliged to proceed to ecclesiastical discipline in other individual cases), these two cases involve direct and acknowledged responsibility for published statements contradictory to the church's teaching as well as direct and acknowledged leadership in forming and executing a social policy which, according to the declarations of synod, is sinful.
4. Any failure to bear common witness on matters of faith and morals threatens the unity of our denomination.

Respectfully submitted,

Garfield Christian Reformed Church  
Consistory

James LaGrand, Jr., President  
Benjamin Powell, Clerk

(Note: The Garfield Consistory has appended two overtures to Classis Chicago North, dated August 12, 1971, and December 13, 1971. These overtures ask Classis Chicago North to adjudicate allegations against two consistories and an individual and are available to synod.

William P. Brink, Stated Clerk)

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### NOTIFICATION OF APPEALS and/or PROTESTS

1. Mr. Peter Teerling appeals decision of Synod of 1970.
2. Mr. Martin La Maire appeals decisions of Classis Chicago North.
3. Messrs. Jonathan Bradford, Stephen Dieleman, Dewey Hoitenga, Jr., Marvin Meyer, Robert Penning, Jr., David Timmer, and Bruce Triemstra appeal synodical decisions of 1939 and 1969 relating to the Christian and conscientious objection.
4. Mr. Jon R. Sharpe appeals decisions of Classis Chicago North.
5. Central Avenue Consistory of Holland, Michigan, appeals to synod to adjudicate allegations re doctrinal views of Dr. W. De Boer.