

Form of Subscription

We, the undersigned, faculty of Calvin College, an institution of the Christian Reformed Church of North America, by means of our signatures declare truthfully and in good conscience before the Lord that we sincerely believe that all the articles and points of doctrine set forth in the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dort fully agree with the Word of God.

We promise therefore to teach these doctrines diligently, to defend them faithfully, and not to contradict them, publicly or privately, in our preaching, teaching, or writing.

We pledge moreover not only to reject all errors that conflict with these doctrines, but also to refute them, and to do everything we can to keep the church free from them.

We promise further that if in the future we come to have any difficulty with these doctrines or reach views differing from them, we will not propose, defend, preach, or teach such views, either publicly or privately, until we have first disclosed them to the Board of Trustees for examination. We are prepared moreover to submit to the judgment of the Board of Trustees, realizing that the consequence of refusal to do so is suspension from office.

We promise in addition that if, to maintain unity and purity in doctrine, the Board of Trustees considers it proper at any time—on sufficient grounds of concern—to require a fuller explanation of our views concerning any article in the three confessions mentioned above, we are always willing and ready to comply with such a request, realizing here also that the consequence of refusal to do so is suspension from office.

Should we consider ourselves wronged, however, by the judgment of the Board of Trustees, we reserve for ourselves the right of appeal; but until a decision is made on such an appeal, we will acquiesce in the determination and judgment already made.

To be signed by professors, ministers, evangelists, elders, and deacons when ordained and/or installed in office. The original Form of Subscription was adopted by the Synod of Dort in 1618-19. The translation appearing here was approved by the Synod of 1912 and modified by the Synod of 1988.

Guidelines as to the meaning of subscription to the confessions by means of the *Form of Subscription*:

The person signing the *Form of Subscription* subscribes without reservation to all the doctrines contained in the standards of the church, as being doctrines which are taught in the Word of God. The subscriber does not by subscription to the confessions declare that these doctrines are all stated in the best possible manner, or that the standards of our church cover all that the Scriptures teach on the matters confessed. Nor does the subscriber declare that every teaching of the Scriptures is set forth in our confessions, or that every heresy is rejected and refuted by them. A subscriber is only bound by subscription to those doctrines which are confessed, and is not bound to the references, allusions, and remarks that are incidental to the formulation of these doctrines nor to the theological deductions which some may draw from the doctrines set forth in the confessions. However, no one is free to decide for one's self or for the church what is and what is not a doctrine confessed in the standards. In the event that such a question should arise, the decision of the assemblies of the church shall be sought and acquiesced in.

From the majority report of the study committee reporting to the 1976 Synod of the Christian Reformed Church, edited for gender inclusiveness.